

The Wednesday Word, Aug. 31, 2011: Satisfied with Jesus

If we were smart, we would line up with the Father's thinking about the Lord Jesus. In that way we would be satisfied with Christ and thus place ourselves in the very centre of the will of God concerning salvation (John 20:31). The Word declares that those who rest on Christ are doing God's work (John 6:29). The first thing, therefore, that the Father asks of us is to come into agreement with Him about His Son. Nothing more is required, but nothing less will do! The Father will not receive us on any other basis than that of the sufficiency of His Son.

"But", says someone, "I must be a righteous person within myself before God will accept me!" Well actually---NO! Our acceptance is not grounded on our worthiness, but on Christ's for the gospel concerns, "His Son" (Rom 1:1-3). The gospel is, therefore, not about us and about how internally holy we can become. Indeed, satisfaction with our supposed inward holiness is like a wilderness path for a stray dog, it is dangerous and leads nowhere. However, satisfaction with Christ Jesus leads to glory, for Christ is ALL (Col 3:11).

The Father has said of the Lord Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:7). Notice the superlatives, Christ is not merely the Son, He is the beloved Son. The Father is not merely pleased, He is well pleased with Him. When, therefore, we are well pleased with the beloved Son, we are in wonderful agreement with the Father.

Are you satisfied that Christ has kept the Law perfectly on your behalf? We make problems for ourselves when we forget the necessity of a fulfilled law and view the gospel as some sort of modified, relaxed legal arrangement with God. This kind of false thinking says, "Keeping the Law is irrelevant when it comes to salvation." God, in this kind of thinking, was too strict in Old Testament times for He demanded perfection, but now in the New Covenant He's a more relaxed version of God. As one young girl naively put it, "God in the Old Testament was God before He got saved."

In this new relaxed theory of things, Christ lowered God's demands because the commandments were too strict. Now we have milder terms more suited to our weakness. But this is sheer nonsense! Think about it, if the former law was too strict it was, as Bonar says, "neither holy nor good." Is it too strict to demand that we love God with everything we have? Has God so lowered His standards that His fundamental requirements are now obsolete? God forbid! Faith, however, does not invalidate the law; it establishes it (Rom 3:31). God still demands perfect law keeping and our faith now rests in the One who has perfectly kept every aspect of the Law on our behalf. We are saved not only by Christ's blood but also by Christ's perfect law keeping---He's the one who both kept the law's precepts and paid the Law's penalties. Christ's perfect doing and dying are now imputed to us, reckoned as ours and received by us by faith alone. This is staggering!

God has nowhere relaxed His standard. It is by the perfect keeping of a perfect law that we are saved; otherwise, it would be an unholy and unrighteous salvation. Thus, Christ alone is our only hope for He has kept the law for us; he has magnified it and made it honourable (Isa 42:21); and thus we have a holy and righteous salvation. Legally, Christ has both lived and died in our place, therefore, when God saves us he does so, not only as a matter of love and mercy, but also as a matter of Justice.

And that's the Gospel Truth!