

The Wednesday Word, October 4, 2023: Seven Gospel Mercies. Part 3

Over these last few weeks, we have been considering a few of the mercies we receive as believers. We continue today with,

4) A New Heart.

This is what the theologians call regeneration.

Regeneration is neither a process nor an improving of the old nature. In the Old Testament, the Lord prophesied through Ezekiel, “A new heart will I give you and a new Spirit will I put within you” (Ezekiel 36:26). God invades us by His Holy Spirit and makes us spiritually alive. What a wonderful work the Spirit does within us. Not only does He generate new life, He continues to work within every believer both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:12-13). He will cause us to know His will, to love it and to do it! He puts His laws into our hearts and writes them in our minds (Hebrews 10:18). All of this is a wonderful ‘Gospel Mercy’.

As followers of the Lamb, we neither have to work up a feeling of spirituality nor need to feel guilty when we think it is absent. What we need to do is to, by faith, enter into gospel rest and trust the Holy Spirit to draw us out of ourselves to behold the glories of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4).

The new heart has brought us alive unto God and His gospel. The Holy Spirit is now resident within us creating powerful new godly passions and desires. The Holy Spirit causes faith to grow in response to the Word and brings alive such promises as, “There is now, therefore, no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:21).

5) Spirit of Repentance.

Acts 5:31 says, “Him (Christ) hath God exalted with His right hand to be a prince and saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” According to this scripture, repentance is a gift. What wonderful gifts God gives! He gives us repentance to come to Christ and continues to give us repentance as we grow and mature in Christ. In fact, it is usually after we come to Christ that we find out the depth of true repentance. As the old Puritan said, “A true penitent must go on from faith to faith, from strength to strength; he must never stand still nor turn back. Repentance is a grace, and must have its daily operation as well as other graces. True repentance is a continued spring, where the waters of godly sorrow are always flowing.”

A Cabinet of Choice Jewels, or, A Box of Precious Ointment.

Thomas Brooks, 1669

The truth of the matter is that it's often only after we begin to grow in grace that we discover what sin really is. As the old woman said to the minister, “Pastor we didn't know what sin was until you came to this church.” Thank God for His gift of repentance! It always leads us to the Throne of Grace where we confess our sins to Jesus our faithful High Priest. If we have sinned, there's little point in killing ourselves with the guilt of our actions? Some people beat themselves up over and over because of past failures. However, this can be just another form of

self-righteousness whereby they are saying to God, “See Lord, see how sorry I really am. Take note of this and forgive me because I am really repenting here.” But how foolish it is to try to impress God with our repentance! Instead, take everything to the Blood! That’s God’s provision for our guilt. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9).

And that’s the Gospel Truth!