

The Wednesday Word, March 23, 2016: Gospel Following: John 10:27

"I am born for God only. Christ is nearer to me than father, or mother, or sister - a near relation, a more affectionate Friend; and I rejoice to follow Him, and to love Him. Blessed Jesus! You are all I want - a forerunner to me in all I ever shall go through as a Christian, a minister, or a missionary."

Henry Martyn: 19th Century Missionary to India and Persia

"My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." Jesus

As believers, our entire life is one of continuously following Jesus.

We began our Christian walk by 'looking unto Jesus.' We continue in the same manner.

Do you remember when you first believed? Looking to Jesus brought rest, peace and healing for your soul. It was wonderful! But for many of us, the wonder has gone. The reason is tragic, we are no longer looking unto Christ. Could I be talking about you? Have you left the simplicity which is in Jesus? If so, I'm sure you've noticed how life has become tangled and complicated again. Where did the peace go? Where has the joy gone?

It's time to get back to following, to looking again to the crucified and risen Christ. He is enough! As we look to the Gospel each day, we will recover our spiritual health. Horatius Bonar said, *"As a Christian, should your eye ever be withdrawn from the cross, you will be sure to go backwards, to grow cold, and to forget that you were purged from your old sins (2 Peter 1:9). That cross is life, health, holiness, consolation, strength and joy; let nothing come between it and you."*

The way to follow is to look unto Jesus. May we learn to beware of substituting anything else for Him. May we be wary of seeking to build our own Kingdoms and a future of our design. As we follow Him, He will be our refreshment, comfort and Joy. If we follow our own devices, we will wither.

So who are you following today? Is it Him? If so, it is because of Grace!

It's always good to pause to thank Him for his grace. It was grace that won us! We were not coerced, we were conquered. And remember, no matter how dedicated we are, we are saved by His dedication to us. What beautiful grace. Recall how He gives us His grace moment by moment! Why does He do that? Because, although we are righteous in Him, we are yet sinners through and through. What suitable candidates, therefore, we are for the grace of God. Grace is made for the sinner and the sinner is made for grace.

As we look daily unto Jesus and live in His grace, we will not, as some contend, want to sin more. On the contrary, grace will give us a clearer understanding of the nature of sin and make it more wretched and contemptible in our eyes. Grace will break us and cause us to see that the Lord Jesus willingly endured the most painful and disgraceful death as He took the wrath of Heaven for us. Grace will dramatically bring home to us the striking reality of this love and teach us, as His followers, to live, not for ourselves, but for Jesus. Grace will show us that He is enough! As we follow Him, grace will make us willing and ready to present our bodies as living sacrifices.

May we be encouraged to think often of Jesus and to meditate on Him. This is 'Gospel Following.' The more we know of the love of Jesus for us, the more we will hate those sins which put Him on the

CROSS.

*“Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.”*

And that's the Gospel Truth!