

Christ, our Safety and Assurance

As John Knox, the great hero of the Scottish Reformation lay dying, he related to his friends how that Satan had tried to steal away his hope of salvation. First, Satan attempted to shake his faith by pointing out the sins and failures of his life and ministry. Knox told how he sent the enemy packing with the powerful argument of the blood of Christ. Then Satan presented his final temptation, his masterpiece of deceit. He whispered to the reformer, "Surely God will have mercy upon you. You have nothing to fear, for the Holy Spirit has worked mightily in you to bring the gospel to this land." But John Knox knew that his salvation and right standing with God neither rested on his work for God nor the Spirit's work within him, but was grounded exclusively in the finished work of Christ. With this knowledge, he was able to route Satan and put him into retreat.

When we look to anything other than Christ and His blood for our assurance and safety, we deny the sufficiency of Christ's finished work on our behalf.

Pastor Ralph 'Yankee' Arnold of Tampa, Florida observed the following, "Some say if you're really saved, it will manifest itself in your life. Well, if everybody looked at their life as the evidence of their salvation, [the] majority of people (I would say most people) would have to come to the conclusion, that they're not saved. If I had to look at my life, as the evidence to prove that I'm saved, I'd come up to the conclusion, I'm not. Because, how many sins would I tolerate? How many sins can I commit? How many questions and doubts? What about my thought life? Every person has enough in their life, that could be used as evidence that they're not really saved. But you see, that's because you would lose assurance of your salvation; Our salvation doesn't depend on us, it depends upon Christ.

Christ's finished work, and that work alone, is enough to guarantee full salvation ... not our feelings. Too often we look to some change in our character or to some work which we have done to secure our salvation ... but this is a wretched error! While salvation brings change and produces good works, these new qualities in us are never the ground and basis of our acceptance before God. Christ alone is made unto us righteousness (1Corinthians 1:30)."

What are we resting upon? Is it something to do with us, or is our confidence in Christ alone? The mighty 19th-century English preacher, Rowland Hill, said it like this; "People talk about looking back on a well-spent life; I look up to Him who spent His life gloriously to redeem the life of my precious soul, and there alone I dare to look."

But, says someone; "We must have infused righteousness to guarantee our acceptance with God. We must have sanctification otherwise, we can't know whether we are saved or lost."

This is anti-gospel, religious, legalistic nonsense! Baalam's ass talked better sense than that!

Our acceptance with the Father is not grounded on any quality in us or on anything we can do or have done but on the worthiness and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel is about the good works of the Eternal Word made flesh. The Gospel of God is, "concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" and His divine virtues. It is neither about us nor our merits (see Romans 1:1-4).

On my best day, I'm a sinner saved by grace; on my worst day, I'm a sinner saved by grace. It's grace, more grace and continual grace that is the lot of the believer. And of His fullness have we all received and grace for grace. (John 1:16).

Our security is bound up in the gospel.

Our acceptance is based on the gospel blessing that we have already been sanctified by the will of God through the doing and dying of Christ.

We read, "By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:10).

Again, we read, "For by one offering, He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14).

Also, our sins have already been purged and put away. (Hebrews 1:3; 9:26).

Furthermore, eternal redemption has already been obtained for us. (Hebrews 9:12).

And all this is according to the good pleasure of God's will. (Ephesians 1:5-8).

Now we can approach the Lord in unashamed freedom, nothing doubting! He has already cleansed us. All charges against us have already been answered!

Acquittal and acceptance are not given to us because we deserve them, but because we need them. We are received because of our need, not our worth. That's grace, and that's love.

We are safe!

Does God lie? No? Then listen to this, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith . . . " (Hebrews 10:19, 22). Here then is the certainty of our acceptance . . . Jesus and His shed blood plus nothing.

We are safe!