

Articles and Sermons :: You are not saved by what you do but by what Christ did

You are not saved by what you do but by what Christ did, on: 2015/8/28 16:12

Self-righteousness will always find a lodging somewhere or other. Drive it, my brethren, out of the ground of our confidence; let the sinner see that he cannot rest on his good works, then, as foxes will have holes, this self-righteousness will find a refuge for itself in the warrant of our faith in Christ. It reasons thus: "You are not saved by what you do but by what Christ did; but then, you have no right to trust in Christ unless there is something good in you which shall entitle you to trust in him." Now, this legal reasoning I oppose. I believe such teaching to contain in it the essence of Popish self-righteousness. The warrant for a sinner to believe in Christ is not in himself in any sense or in any manner, but in the fact that he is commanded there and then to believe on Jesus Christ. Some preachers in the Puritanic times, whose shoe latches I am not worthy to unloose, erred much in this matter. I refer not merely to Alleyne and Baxter, who are far better preachers of the law than of the gospel, but I include men far sounder in the faith than they, such as Rogers of Dedham, Shepherd, the author of "The Sound Believer," and especially the American, Thomas Hooker, who has written a book upon qualifications for coming to Christ. These excellent men had a fear of preaching the gospel to any except those whom they styled "sensible sinners," and consequently kept hundreds of their hearers sitting in darkness when they might have rejoiced in the light. They preached repentance and hatred of sin as the warrant of a sinner's trusting to Christ. According to them, a sinner might reason thus—"I possess such-and-such a degree of sensibility on account of sin, therefore I have a right to trust in Christ." Now, I venture to affirm that such reasoning is seasoned with fatal error. Whoever preaches in this fashion may preach much of the gospel, but the whole gospel of the free grace of God in its fullness he has yet to learn. In our own day certain preachers assure us that a man must be regenerated before we may bid him believe in Jesus Christ; some degree of a work of grace in the heart being, in their judgment, the only warrant to believe. This also is false. It takes away a gospel for sinners and offers us a gospel for saints. It is anything but a ministry of free grace.

From The Warrant of Faith

Rev. C. H. SPURGEON,

Re: You are not saved by what you do but by what Christ did - posted by JFW (), on: 2015/8/28 17:08

Brother Tuc,

Do you believe this indeed to be the proper/fair framing of the gospel of grace?

If so, may I inquire of you on this?

Re: Do you believe this indeed to be the proper/fair framing of the gospel of grace?, on: 2015/8/30 7:14

YES – absolutely - yes! This is the only proper/fair framing of the gospel of grace.

True Christianity must have its foundation in what God has already done for us in Christ.

A true Christian is one who has Christ living and reigning in them. Jesus Christ becomes this person's life and source from all of their actions flow. Christ is their ONLY hope of glory.

This gospel is the ONLY gospel that contains the power of God/

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

We all need to see and know just what God in Christ has done in us and for us, BEFORE we can rightly respond in faith.

How did we become one with God and union with Him? Was by works of the law? No! Was it by our works of righteousness? No! Was it our faith? No! Was it our repentance? No! The truth is, it was not done by our effort or anything we have done, are doing, or will ever do.

God made us one with HIM because NOTHING mankind could ever do, could make this possible.

1 Corinthians 1:30

New International Version (©1984) "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption."

New Living Translation (©2007) "God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; He made us pure and holy, and He freed us from sin."

English Standard Version (©2001) "And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,"

New American Standard Bible (©1995) "But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,"

King James Bible (Cambridge Ed.) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"

International Standard Version (©2008) "It is because of God that you are in union with the Messiah Jesus, who for us has become wisdom from God, as well as our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

Gal 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Now the Gospel of what God has already accomplished for us and in us in is the ONLY gospel that contains the faith that is required. It is by hearing THIS GOSPEL that faith can even begin to get a hold on this Good News.

Gal 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Gal 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

Gal 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Gal 3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

When we hear and see this gospel then we can rightly respond. Look at God's love and grace towards you. Feel His embrace of love and then you can hug Him back.

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2015/8/30 9:40

Very good.

Where is boasting then?

Re: , on: 2015/8/30 9:47

"For faith comes by hearing, that is , hearing the good news about Christ."
Romans 10:17

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/30 9:49

Tuc-

In your view how does a person "enter in" if not by faith, repentance and all those other things the Bible says we need?

Do we just get carried in by the arms of angels?

Re: , on: 2015/8/30 10:09

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Luke 18:8-9

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?
And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

God is always looking for faith.

Faith = belief

No Faith = Unbelief

Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Heb 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Lord, increase my faith!!

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2015/8/30 10:36

Brother Tuc,

Thank you for responding as I have a sincere interest in your understanding as it does seem, but may not be, different from my own and would like to learn if you would be so inclined to continue to be patient and share with me the thing you possess, I would be grateful.

You posted a lengthy and passionate response to which many of the things (tho not all) you wrote a hearty Amen! come forth in fellowship. So I hope you see this is an inquiry into and not so much a challenge of your understanding of the gospel and its power.

I'd like to direct my question to the initial posting and not your words, as the original posting had several areas where I was "checked" in my spirit. This could be my own bias, tho it could also be the Holy Spirit and while the belief is its the latter I would not be so presumptuous to not consider the possibility of the former.

Brother Tuc do you believe a saint can sin?

If not, how does he not?

If so, what is required of him and who preforms this requirement? Which is to say where does the responsibility lie?

Re: The Warrant of Faith - posted by proudpapa, on: 2015/8/30 15:03

full sermon : <http://spurgeon.org/sermons/0531.htm>

very good

add: also a good one is :

The Key to Understanding Righteousness by David Wilkerson

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=4531&commentView=itemComments>

our part - walk in what God has done, on: 2015/8/31 6:35

John 1:16, "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

Philippians 4:19; "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Our experiencing of this supply depends on our trust in Christ who is our very source of Faith, Love and Life. Therefore, we can experience an increase of this supply of the power of the Holy Spirit by realizing that He is in control and we are not. Experiencing His Fullness comes by fully trusting in Jesus and recognizing that our old selves have been crucified with Him and we now have a completely new nature that is totally roughhouses, holy and perfect. When we see all that has accomplished for us and in us we are able to surrender all of our own efforts, abilities, ourselves in faith. The more we yield control of our lives to the Spirit, the more we'll hear the Lord whisper to our soul: "Now you are coming into power. True power is unwavering trust in my Spirit. Yes, real power is at work in you now."

Someone who is full of the Holy Spirit and power is distinguished by how much they truly realize that the Spirit is in charge of his life. There is NO other power available to us to live in Christ but the power of the Holy Spirit. Picture the Holy Spirit as a boundless ocean: a vast body of living water beyond all measurement, an endless supply. We have this supply because we have been made one with Christ and have the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead living and reigning in our physical body.

As the Holy Spirit leads us we are able to follow. The words He brings us will be clear and assuring. We receive clear direction from the Holy Spirit moment by moment. His leading never ceases. We can be totally assured in the fact that there is a power at work in us. We are assured that His voice is directing us because He is our only true source of Power that exists.

How does the Holy Spirit work in us during difficult times? His power is released as we receive Him as our burden bearer. Remember that Spirit's abode is not in heaven but in our inner man. He is near, and He is continually at work in us. The Holy Spirit who abides in us is greater than all the powers that exist. We can cast all of our cares and burdens on the Spirit. This is all part of our witness to the world - as one who has cast his every burden on the Lord.

Many times God allows us to be in impossible situations and by these we only can realize that after having exhausted all of our human efforts and having tried every way to solve our own problems and having come to the end of ourselves we finally give up and let God accomplish it in you by His Spirit." The Holy Spirit reveals to us God's purpose behind it. It was meant to force us to never trust in ourselves, but to fully trust the Holy Spirit to deliver us.

This reliance on the Spirit is more than a normal "trust" in God. This trust has Christ, Himself at its very core. He alone is the source of the required trust. This trust is one that relies on the fact that "God which raiseth the dead". The message here is powerful: "He is able to deliver us even from this helpless, death-like situation."

As we trust the power of the Holy Spirit, we can experience the freedom that is in the Life of Christ. Yes we have been delivered and are now being delivered and we know we will continue to be delivered. We can have complete confidence knowing that the Holy Spirit will continue lead and direct us into all truth. We can say that the Spirit has delivered us out of a hopeless situation. He is delivering us even now. And he will continue to deliver us in any affliction we face. We are given ever-growing light about His care, His burden-bearing, His delivering power on our behalf. As we fully trust in him, we will commit our self to give Him the reigns of my life - all of it. And that surrender will become a testimony to the world that our God cares - and He forever supplies grace, strength and deliverance in us.

Re: our part - walk in what God has done, on: 2015/8/31 6:46

Look back at your past - was not the Holy Spirit and Christ always with you?

Romans 5:8; "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Eph. 2:1-9; "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Even your repentance was the work of the Holy Spirit. Only as the Holy Spirit draws you and begins to open your eyes are you given the ability to respond. You will see that all of your efforts have been totally in vain but begin to see that Christ is in you NOW and He will never leave you or forsake you. As your eyes are opened you will experience true joy and His joy will flow forever. It is Christ's joy within you. This is the key and real secret of true repentance. This was not something that you have accomplished for God. True repentance is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit opens your eyes to the reality of Christ, His holiness, His perfection, His fullness, His mercy, His Love, His faith and His faithfulness then you will be able to fully repent without any effort.

True repentance is a gift of God and only exists as the Holy Spirit shows you the existing reality of Christ Himself and what God in Christ has already accomplished for you and in you. It is impossible for any true repentance to take place without the Holy Spirit's work in opening your eyes to see Christ.

As the Holy Spirit shows you THE FINISHED WORK you will experience God's gift of repentance giving you the ability to trust and embrace His obedience causing you to turn away from your unbelief and your own dead works. Now this is the ONLY obedience possible.

You do have His Life. You are In Him and He will never leave you or forsake you. If you are unfaithful God will remain faithful to you. God will keep you by His Love. You can NOT keep yourself.

Acts 5: 31; "Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins."

Acts 11:18; "And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."

2 Timothy 2:25; "In meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth,"

God has accomplished all of your obedience, repentance and trust for you and in you. Are you ready to really enjoy the reality of Christ? Can you say, "Lord, I believe - Help my unbelief?"

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2015/8/31 7:03

Quote: "If you are unfaithful God will remain faithful to you. God will keep you by His Love. You can NOT keep yourself."

This is not said ANYWHERE in scripture. The oft quoted 2 Tim 2:13 verse does not say this either. It says He is faithful to HIMSELF, not faithful to the faithless! It does say He WILL deny those who deny Him.

How can God 'Keep you' at the same time you can become faithless as you state???

When single verse are quoted picked from different books, then we should be wary. We need to read the whole passage

e, if not the whole letter, to understand what is being taught.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 8:33

We are told to "Keep ourselves" in the love of God. God will not do that for you.

Jude 1:21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

We are also commanded to "Keep ourselves" from idols.

1Jn_5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

God will not do what we are commanded to do.

God will not take you over and control your "members".

It is our responsibility what we do with our members.

Rom 6:19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 8:44

Heydave -

I read your response on 2 Tim 2:13 in the other "once saved, always saved" thread. I do not agree with your interpretation of the verse.

"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim 2:13)

The verse is saying that Jesus is faithful to us, even if we are struggling with trusting Jesus fully. We are part of His body (1 Cor 12:27), and to deny us is to deny Himself.

This interpretation does not contradict the preceding verses. It is in fact consistent with them, as all the verses take on the form of: "If...., then ."

Ultimately - regardless of whether others agree with me on this verse, the Christian life is not about your faithfulness. It is about God's faithfulness, and trusting Him to be faithful in every circumstances.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/31 8:47

I'd there a name or a doctrine for the ideas Tuc is endorsing?

I am a pretty educated guy but whenever I read these posts they seem so nebulous that I really have no idea what is being stated.

However, there is enough to raise red flags.

Something is amiss.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2015/8/31 9:19

Quote: "The verse is saying that Jesus is faithful to us, even if we are struggling with trusting Jesus fully. We are part of His body (1 Cor 12:27), and to deny us is to deny Himself."

Yuhan, BUT it does not say that! You are interpreting it to suit yourself. I am just taking it for what it is. You are saying that Jesus cannot deny us and completely contradicting the statement in the preceding verse that says He does deny those who deny him. Does that not worry you? If not, it should.

Who should we believe, you or Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit?

Edit: Do you accept the scripture says He WILL deny us if we deny Him?

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 9:34

Heydave - You are assuming that I am interpreting it to suit my whims. I do not carry such motivations, and I have not accused you of doing the same.

I gave a cordial reply why I genuinely do not agree with your interpretation - arguments which you have not addressed, and unfortunately have not prompted you to re-evaluate your understanding.

As much I have disagreed with your interpretation, I have not attacked your character. Your response has been curt and ungracious.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 9:46

Quote:

-----Edit: Do you accept the scripture says He WILL deny us if we deny Him?

2 Tim 2:11-13 does speak about the consequences of denying Jesus. But that does not contradict God's faithfulness, which is emphasized in far more many verses - and even by example through Peter's restoration, who had denied Jesus three times.

2 Tim 2:13 is similar to 1 Cor 1:4-9, which also emphasizes God's faithfulness:

"I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2015/8/31 10:12

Yuhan,

I'm sorry that you thought I was being ungracious, it was not my intention to attack you, but what you said.

The thing is the 'consequence', as you put it, of denying Jesus is He will deny us. You stated quite clearly that God will not deny us. That has to be challenged, as it contradicts the clear word of God.

Regarding God's faithfulness, see my post on the OSAS thread. God is always faithful. He does not change His mind, but that also means He is faithful to only accept those who have Christ as their saviour, not those who reject Christ. Or are we universalists?

Question. If someone once had saving faith in Christ, but then spent the rest of their lives as an enemy of Christ and they are saved and heaven is their destination, where is the justice and faithfulness of God to those who never professed faith?

ith in Christ and end up in hell?

What part do we play?, on: 2015/8/31 10:23

What part do we play?

For many of us, the concept of grace holds no power in our daily walk. We know God has bestowed on us precious, costly gifts in his Son and the Holy Spirit; therefore, we think we shouldn't fail or fall short. So when we do, we're surprised. It doesn't compute that we could still be awful sinners after all God has done for us. We picture him shaking his head in regret. Then we convince ourselves that we can do better. We re-double our efforts at prayer, at Bible reading, at getting involved in ministry. We pledge to ourselves we'll make up for the ways we've fallen short. Here's the crazy thing about this default system: We do this knowing full well our works do nothing to gain right standing with God. Do we really think more works are what God wants from us? Two hours of prayer instead of one? Does He really want us busier?

Only two things result from these efforts to save ourselves. First, we avoid facing up to our sinfulness. Second – and much worse – we rob ourselves of drinking from God's deep well of grace. Paul faced this dilemma early on in the church. When the Christians in Galatia tried to please God through works of the law, Paul confronted them: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?" (Galatians 3:1-2). Paul was asking, "Do you really think you can improve on the cross?"

It's easy to get confused over our responsibility to God because of two conflicting realities in our lives. The first reality is Jesus' words to us: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

When I think of the perfect Christian life, my thoughts turn to the book of Acts. According to this amazing biblical record, our faith can move God to work miracles. Our testimony can lead the lost to a transformed life. Who among us doesn't aspire to this? That brings up the second reality of our lives: We are imperfect. We continually, consistently, seriously fail God. What a contrast.

I listen to sermons by certain Christian leaders because I admire the ways they live for the gospel. Their stories stir me and I think, "I want to do what they're doing." But after the sermon is over I realize, "This stirring in me feels familiar. What does it remind me of?"

The answer is: my childhood. The church I grew up in regularly hosted preachers, evangelists and missionaries. These were heroes to me because they accomplished amazing things in God's name. They usually ended their message by saying, "If you truly want to please God, you'll give everything you have to go and serve him."

Talk about exciting. I would race to the altar and pray, "Lord, make me a missionary like this person." Later I would open my parents' National Geographic magazine and see how people actually lived in Africa. Gradually, my prayer changed to, "Lord, don't send me!"

Next I would hear a healing evangelist testify of the miracles she had seen God perform for suffering people. But when I prayed for my sick friends, I only caught what they had.

I'm not making light of these things. We all have a responsibility to bring hope and healing to a lost and hurting world. But when we don't see the same results in our lives that others have, it's easy to get discouraged. How do we reconcile these conflicting realities?

Any work that God calls us to has to be empowered by His grace.

God's grace has to cover whatever he calls us to do. See if these words describe your walk with the Lord: Burdened. Stressed. Heavy laden. Mentally drained. Physically fatigued. These are the outcomes whenever we re-double our fleshly efforts to please God. They're clear signs that the law, not God's grace, is in operation. Now consider these words: Obligated. Dutiful. Indebted. Guilty. Ashamed. Condemned. Do these words describe someone who has been set free?

The freedom Christ won for us on the cross isn't just good news for the lost. It's good news for every believer. Yet many continue to live under a cloud thinking they're not a quality son or daughter to God. They think he loves them because he has to, not because he likes them.

The gospels tell us differently. Jesus called all twelve of the sinful, flawed, imperfect disciples to him because he wanted their friendship: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).

Jesus chose to share the deep desires of the Father's heart with these friends. He has also done that with you when you chose to follow him. So when you go to him in prayer or walk into church, his attitude isn't, "Not you again." The opposite is true! He wants to be with you, to sit beside you, to be your friend, because he is actually pleased with you.

You may think, "How could that be? Nothing I see in my life could possibly be pleasing to the Lord." That's why Scripture tells us, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4). It's impossible for anyone to live according to the law for very long. We may keep telling ourselves, "I'll get it right tomorrow. I just have to reenergize myself" but we can't maintain it. Eventually we're overcome by an impossible burden, and we come to the end of ourselves.

As the "end" of the law, Christ is its very fulfillment - meaning He has made right all that the law would correct. And Jesus is the one waiting for us at the end of all our self-efforts. Only in him do we find true freedom - not in any "works" we seek to accomplish.

Now let me ask you: Do the following words appeal to you? Life, Joy, Delight, Boldness, Liberty, or Unselfconsciousness. Can you imagine having this kind of enjoyment in your service to Christ? How can you obtain such empowering joy?

It doesn't come through works of righteousness. We don't have the power to be righteous on our own. We may do our best, strive our hardest and offer all sincerely to God, but it still amounts to no more than filthy rags. Freedom comes through Christ's righteousness alone. When his righteousness becomes ours, we are set free from striving. And his Spirit is in us, freeing us from the law of sin and guilt and making all things new.

That freedom is everything. It means liberty to carry out the godly responsibilities He calls us to do. Suddenly we are able to witness with abandon. We have a boldness not of our own making. Grace flows through us rather than a deadly, binding legalism.

There is only one way to walk in the freedom and joy Christ has won for us: by accepting his gift of righteousness. Doing this means embracing grace, not works. It doesn't mean shirking our responsibilities; on the contrary, it's the only way to take on real responsibility - by coming under the covering of his grace. We can't accomplish anything in his name otherwise!

The only true responsibility of the Christian is that which is born of God's grace.

Isaiah prophesied, "They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations" (Isaiah 61:4). Isaiah's listeners couldn't fathom the kind of freedom and exploits he was describing here. For generations God's people had been crushed under the law, devastated by its burden.

The same was true for the people of Jesus' day. They were hard on themselves, accepting the legalistic burdens placed on them by religious leaders. That's why Christ's words were so revolutionary when He quoted directly from Isaiah to announce his ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (Isaiah 61:1).

Jesus knew what the gift of grace would do: It would set us free completely. And his message wasn't just for the unsaved. When he spoke of setting captives free, he was speaking to believers: "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Today we are just as hard on ourselves as the people of Jesus' day were. We think of grace as being soft, easy, getting a pass. But grace is the mightiest power you will ever see at work in your life. It's also the only power that brings real fruit to your walk with God - your prayer life, your witness, your good deeds in his name. Only as we enter fully into God's grace will his church be stirred and empowered to walk in the glorious works he has set before us.

After reading this, are you still striving to be perfect? There's only one entrance to the path of perfection: through the gate of grace. You are already perfect in God's eyes, through the righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ. Now, here is your

responsibility: Stop striving.

Your efforts only send you backward, not forward. They cause you to miss God's grace completely - grace that brings freedom, joy and power to do all that God has called you to do. The fact is, you're going to need grace upon grace as you go forward with Jesus. So now is not the time to re-double your efforts. It is time to trust that Christ has provided all the grace you need - at every step - to walk in the unique calling he has for you.

Jesus has called you to friendship, not to increase your efforts for salvation. It is up to you to walk in the freedom that He has provided by His grace. Life, joy, delight, boldness - all of these are yours as you enter the fullness of His amazing work for you on the cross. May His grace reign in your life, for He has made you perfect in Him! Amen.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 10:40

Heydave,

I accept your apology.

Quote:

----- You stated quite clearly that God will not deny us.

I have never made a statement to such effect, be it explicitly or implicitly.

Quote:

-----Question. If someone once had saving faith in Christ, but then spent the rest of their lives as an enemy of Christ and they are saved and heaven is their destination, where is the justice and faithfulness of God to those who never professed faith in Christ and end up in hell?

Another way to look at this question is whether a Christian can lead a carnal life.

The answer is in the regeneration experience - when a Christian is born again, he no longer has a sinful nature. He is a new creation with a new heart, new identity with new impulses - and that is effected by God dwelling in Him.

This is immediately provided to every child of God, when he believes in Jesus. The Christian's identity is no longer a sinner (i.e. someone who wants to sin), but a saint (who occasionally sins).

Can you keep yourself faultless?, on: 2015/8/31 10:43

Jude 1:24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2015/8/31 11:41

Quote: "The verse is saying that Jesus is faithful to us, even if we are struggling with trusting Jesus fully. We are part of His body (1 Cor 12:27), and to deny us is to deny Himself".

Yuehan, forgive me if I misunderstood you, but what then did you mean by this statement, if it does not imply God cannot deny us because that would be denying himself?

Who is it speaking about when it says 'He will deny us'? Is it the same 'us' that can reign with him?

Is your position that a regenerate Christian cannot depart from the faith? In other words, the doctrine of perseverance (guaranteed to remain faithful)? I would not agree with that based on all the scriptures that have already been shared on the other thread and also from experience.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 12:04

Heydave,

Quote:
-----Yuehan, forgive me if I misunderstood you, but what then did you mean by this statement, if it does not imply God cannot deny us because that would be denying himself?

Jesus cannot deny us, so long as we remain part of His body. This is my understanding of 2 Tim 2:13.

Quote:
-----Is your position that a regenerate Christian cannot depart from the faith? In other words, the doctrine of perseverance (guaranteed to remain faithful)?

I actually don't know, which is why I was hoping to learn more about this in the other "once saved always saved" thread (which unfortunately has taken an acrimonious turn).

However, I do believe that Christians can endure to the end only through God's grace. I have understanding of God's keeping at least in this context.

If Peter who knew the Lord personally could deny Him three times, I doubt any person - no matter how resolute or sincere - would be able to endure to the end by his own efforts (flesh).

And yet that's also a hopeful example - because Jesus was more than willing to restore Peter. God is indeed greater than our failings, and believing in His grace does not promote sin (Romans 6:14).

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/31 12:13

OSAS and other such discussions always turn acrimonious. People are too entrenched because there are verses that seem to support both sides.

I believe it is possible to "lose" one's salvation. However, I have no intention of losing mine.

I have no idea what action it would take to actually put a person over the line. Denying Christ is serious but I do think God takes circumstances into account.

My gut feeling based on scripture is that if it is indeed possible to lose salvation is that it would be exceedingly difficult to do so. There is no chance to negligently do so. I believe it would take an affirmative declaration denying Christ when not under any sort of distress, and intentionally living for the devil afterwards.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 12:35

Quote:
-----by yuehan on 2015/8/31 12:04:08

If Peter who knew the Lord personally could deny Him three times, I doubt any person - no matter how resolute or sincere - would be able to endure to the end by his own efforts (flesh).

Who is talking about "enduring to the end", in the flesh?

I have not read where anyone is proposing that.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 12:36

TMK,

Quote:
-----OSAS and other such discussions always turn acrimonious. People are too entrenched because there are verses that seem to support both sides.

Yes, you are right. I'm reminded of Phil 2:3.

Quote:
-----My gut feeling based on scripture is that if it is indeed possible to lose salvation is that it would be exceedingly difficult to do so. There is no chance to negligently do so.

I agree with you.

Having said that, Jesus did pray for Peter - that his faith would not fail. And He was confident not only in His Father's ability, but also His willingness, to answer that prayer. He goes on and says to Peter, "...when you have returned to Me" (not "if").

I don't know how this works out theologically. But I do know there is God's keeping, and we are free to pray for Him to keep us.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 12:40

Quote:
-----by yuehan on 2015/8/31 10:40:26

Another way to look at this question is whether a Christian can lead a carnal life.

Christians can refuse to "mortify the deeds of the body"

Quote:
-----The answer is in the regeneration experience - when a Christian is born again, he no longer has a sinful nature. He is a new creation with a new heart, new identity with new impulses - and that is effected by God dwelling in Him.

This is immediately provided to every child of God, when he believes in Jesus. The Christian's identity is no longer a sinner (i.e. someone who wants to sin), but a saint (who occasionally sins).

What is the purpose of the cross in the Believer's life, Yuehan?

Why are we commanded to deny the flesh? Could it be that we will be destroyed if we continue to sow to the flesh? Why are we commanded to renew our mind if everything is automatic, now? Could it be that renewing our mind gives us knowledge of the battle and what it takes to win the prize?

Did we get new flesh in our regeneration too, or are we still living in a corruptible container?

Do you have a responsibility to "mortify the deeds of the body"?

Rom_8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/8/31 12:52

There are a lot of theories of flesh mortification in the other "once saved always saved" thread, but not enough practical display of that.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/31 13:01

Lol yuehan!

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 13:28

Yeah, that is quite funny. Tell me then, yuehan, what is the purpose of the cross in the daily life of the believer?

Did you also catch my earlier question? Who was talking about enduring to the end in the flesh?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/31 14:31

Julius-

When I went away to college a good number of years ago, I definitely was not mortifying my flesh. Quite the opposite- I was feeding its appetites (or at least trying to).

The sad thing is that I was a Christian, grew up in Christian home, church, etc. but I definitely was living a "carnal" lifestyle.

However, God did not abandon me nor did I abandon Him. I remember going out to the college bars and later returning to my room and reading the Bible before I went to bed.

God kept chasing me for quite a few years until finally I had a personal revival that has "stuck" praise God.

I guess my point is that while I agree salvation can be lost, I don't think I ever lost mine despite my carnal behavior. I think it would take something very very extreme to lose salvation.

The commands to mortify our flesh is so that we can have abundant life. I don't think we lose salvation if we are not living a mortified life, but we are settling for far less than God wants for us.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 14:36

Yes, TMK, the Lord is very, very merciful. Thank God you did not reach a place where you hardened your heart towards the Lord.

The purpose of the Cross in the Believer's life is to keep us from sin so that it does not harden our hearts.

Mortification is the cross active in a person's life. You cannot abide in Christ if you are not living the crucified life. Because one will love their flesh more than the Lord and you cannot serve two Masters. One will be hated.

Don't deceive yourself or others by floating the lie that the crucified life is not a requirement. It is the mark of the Christian life. One cannot bear fruit without the operation of the cross in their life.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 14:44

Quote:

-----by TMK on 2015/8/31 14:31:30

The commands to mortify our flesh is so that we can have abundant life. I don't think we lose salvation if we are not living a mortified life, but we are settling for far less than God wants for us.

TMK, did it ever occur to you that you lived the way you lived in college, because of your belief system/doctrine (above)?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/8/31 14:58

Don't misunderstand me- I didn't say I believed it is optional. I don't think any of Christ's commands are optional.

The reason I went a little wild is because I was a normal 18 year old. I didn't say it was right, just normal.

The issue is where the line is drawn. What if I mortify the flesh this week but slip next week? Jesus is the only one who lived the perfectly mortified life.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 15:23

Why do you label yourself back then a "normal 18 year old".

Were you born-again? Is that what normal born-again 18 year olds act like. Why can't you call it what the Bible calls it? Backslidden, not normal 18 year old. What then would you call an 18 year old who is born-again and walking in holiness and purity?

Mortification of the flesh is simply the operation of the cross in one's life. Sowing to the Spirit is mortifying the flesh. It is the Normal Christian life.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2015/8/31 15:27

Brothers,

In spite of the few potholes this is (for me) a profitable thread and I appreciate the candor and passionate reasonings from each of you. It does appear that in these types of discussions there is an increase in the potential to discover personal areas where we can grow, being ever more so conformed into the image of Christ as we are all still (hopefully) growing in grace and this is not only found in what we know but also in how what we know compels us to treat our brothers,... our selves being examples to one another honoring others as greater than ourselves.

"Our heart revealed is the life we live" comes to mind in thinking on this.

While my current understanding of scripture is closer to Todd, Dave and Julius theologically/doctrinally, Yuehan and Tucc I have a sincere respect for not only your positions and presentations but more so the gentle and kind character you both display as from where I'm sitting you are both fine examples of what you believe and I could certainly learn from that, after all if our "being right" doesn't lead to our being righteous and loving then what use is it,...but the sound of a rusty gate.

My conclusion is that sometimes we (all) spend so much time getting ready for work (theologically/doctrinally) that we miss much of the day in the fields co laboring together in fellowship with our Lord. It's there with Him that these things as well as sin get dealt with and worked out without them becoming the focus as our gaze forever remains fixed on Him.

Luke 10:2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Also Brother Greg,

I sincerely thank you for your gentle moderation in these threads recently as they have proved of great benefit to me in my own walk. Actually SI as a whole has been used in many ways by the Lord to help grow me in Himself and as such is, for me, an invaluable resource.

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 15:47

Amen, JFW.

Re: the crucified life - posted by proudpapa, on: 2015/8/31 21:18

There seems to be two different views of the Cross and how it applies to the crucified life.

1. an act of the will.
2. an identity.

add:

Tuc, I found your post "What part do we play?"
absolutly wounderful :)

Re: , on: 2015/8/31 23:24

Yes, tuc, that was a good post.

We have been set free to REST in Christ. Rest from our own works of righteousness, our own performance based strivings and we have been set free to love ourselves as God loves us. We are no longer serving a merciless taskmaster.

It is in His rest, yoked up to Jesus, that we are free to love others, and bear much fruit, no longer encumbered by self. Resting in Him takes faith and is the way to receive from Him all we need in every situation.

It is only as we rest in Him that we will be able to overcome, not being easily moved by testings or becoming self-absorbed by trials. Because as we rest in His love, and stay yoked up to Him, His Spirit, as rivers of flowing water within, continually strengthen us and give us joy. And we all know the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Self-improvement is a big lie. (Imitation of Christ, becoming like Him) The Bible calls us temples, branches and vessels. Something about these things is easily missed by the person locked in trying to become a "better" Christian. But there is a sting to these 3 things easily missed, by the person self-absorbed in trying to be perfect. We think the Christian life is what we do or what we do with God helping us (God helps those who help themselves) and yet God is wanting to show us His simple intent from the Scriptures is that He created us for one purpose, to contain Him and express His life in us. We always say, "Christ is in my heart", yet we still live life as if we are the one living it, meaning I live by my efforts plus some supposed help from God, if we even wanted help which we do not most of the time.

God created us to be temples, branches and vessels.

Temples to contain His glory. 1 Cor 6:19. What about me, you say. Wait a minute, Jesus said, "we find our lives by losing them". Not until we agree with God that we have lost our life will we find it. Back up a couple of verses to 1 Cor 6:17 and we find this: "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." 1Co 6:17

God created us to contain Him, but we are to be persons in His image that live lives conscious of being one with Him. He does not obliterate our personality. His will is now our will, His desires are our desires. But we must not think that we are Christ or that we can be like Him. This is what blasphemy really looks like and what Lucifer grasped at and then became Satan. And as the Devil, he has been spinning this lie ever since, especially in the Church.

So, God created us to be creatures that He indwells, but more than indwelling us He wants us to join Him in an inseparable union, where we no longer live but He lives in us and as us. We then find our lives and we find something else out, too. We find that we are totally powerless to be like Him. We can no more be Jesus, than the tabernacle in the OT could be God. But God wants more than a building made with hands to live in. He wants His people to contain Him and express His glory, so that they have fellowship with Him united as one Spirit.

We are also known as branches. Think about branches for a minute. Ever seen them struggle? Struggle to get off the ground and back on the tree and then stay there? Struggle to create fruit? No! They sit insanely at rest. And those who still love doing the "doing life" are in a permanent struggle to get to an impossible destination. Branches actually start out abiding. They never fall off the tree and then have to struggle to get back on it. This is not very good news to the laboring Christian trying to be like Christ. What would they ever do if they got on the tree? Hopefully, they would REST! The stress for the branches abiding on the vine (tree) doesn't come from trying to stay there, but from the Enemy trying to pull us away. Or various trials and tribulations that are just part of living in this world. Of course, only those who really see themselves as branches, experience this kind of stress. They don't experience the stress of trying to get on the tree and stay on the tree. But God, will keep our hearts united to Him in the midst of all of our testings. He is able to keep our spirit strong, while our bodies and souls encounter various attacks.

2Co 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.
2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;
2Co 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Romans 8, says "nothing shall separate us from the love of God". It can be quite excruciating at times to our body and soul, but cannot touch our spirit, united with the Lord. Once we get this, we move on in faith without giving much thought to the negatives because Jesus is occupying our thoughts.

What does it feel like to Rest and not work? What do we do if we only rest? God created us as receivers, not as the initiators of doing. He wants us to know and enjoy His life in us so much that we can't help but doing and yet are not really very conscious of it. Just like a branch bearing a fruit. It's just what it does. Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

And we are also VESSELS. He created us as vessels to contain Him as treasure. The point is what is inside the vessel not the vessel itself.

Getting back to trying to be perfect...Perfection is a Person: The Lord Jesus Himself is perfection. We cannot work and improve ourselves until we become like Jesus Christ. I have read the book, "The Imitation of Christ" when I was a young Christian and I don't mind admitting it had some good things in it, but I have to say that the title is all wrong. We can't imitate Christ. We were never created with that capacity. Our hunt for self will end when it is no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us, then we live. This is the mystery of Godliness and yet very practical. Enjoy your union with the Perfect One.

And then all this talk about OSAS, becomes moot, non-issue. We are too busy enjoying the life of Christ to even ever think of leaving Him.

Re: Can we imitate? - posted by makrothumia (), on: 2015/9/1 11:05

"We can't imitate Christ. We were never created with that capacity!"

Really? I thought that's how infants learn most of what they know.

Perhaps before we are born from above, we lack the capacity to imitate Christ, but as new born babes - we begin to imitate men like Paul and other godly men. We may not understand much of what we're doing at first. But as we grow, we learn, and what we began to do in simple imitation, becomes our own actions.

Solid food is for the mature, who by reason of use (much imitation in this phase) have exercised their senses to discern good and evil."

I thank God for the men whom I have imitated. The Apostle Paul told us to mark such men and "imitate" their faith.

Makrothumia

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/9/1 11:18

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

Re: Makrothumia - posted by proudpapa, on: 2015/9/1 11:25

Julius wrote : /// "We can't imitate Christ. We were never created with that capacity!"///

Makrothumia wrote: ///Really? I thought that's how infants learn most of what they know. ///

Infants learn to act like there surroundings.

What I understood Julius to be implying was that Christians do not need to try to make there flesh act like Jesus but instead they need to rest and let Christ work through them.

add : I thought Julius last post was very good

Re: , on: 2015/9/1 12:00

Thank you, PP.

That is exactly what I was trying to say.

Re: - posted by makrothumia (), on: 2015/9/1 13:17

"I have read the book, "The Imitation of Christ" when I was a young Christian and I don't mind admitting it had some good things in it, but I have to say that the title is all wrong. We can't imitate Christ. We were never created with that capacity."

Here is the entire quote. I believe Thomas A Kempis was writing to "believers". I do not believe his intention was to try to help lost people "train their flesh."

The commentary on the book says a lot about how the person views their own understanding in comparison to the author.

If the intent of Thomas A Kempis was to share the grace he had received with "believers" to help them grow to mature saints in Christ, then his title was very appropriate.

Ephesians chapter 4 contains the great benefit that apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers offer babes in Christ. Christ is in every born again believer, but the ministry of instruction, correction, reproof, and yes - example towards imitation is a grace from God.

The goal is total dependence on the indwelling Christ. Helping believers discover "the mystery of Christ in you the hope of glory" is what I sense that you brothers are seeking to promote. This is a highly commendable goal and worthy of careful consideration.

However, men in positions of authority who God has appointed and gifted to set young believers thoughts in order, to reprove, to rebuke, and to train them up like children is also a vital part of what you are attempting to promote.

Who understood this better than Paul, and see what example He himself set before the "infants" of Corinth. "I beat my body and make it my slave." He had no hesitation to exhort self-discipline - "Everyone who competes in the games exercises

ises self-discipline in all things."

Encouraging young believers to discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness will aid them in the quest to discover the fullness of the mystery of Christ in them.

Again, "The Imitation of Christ" was written to encourage "believers" to imitate Christ - not to try to get lost men to train their flesh to obey Christ.

Environment does make a great difference. That's why young believers need to be in a fellowship of saints receiving all the advantages of teaching, correction, reproof, admonition etc.

makrothumia

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2015/9/1 13:38

RE: "but I have to say that the title is all wrong"

I think this was his main point : the title.

I have specifically ignored that specific book because I myself found the title to be disturbing.

RE: "I do not believe his intention was to try to help lost people "train their flesh."

It is not only lost people whom try to train their flesh, Christians get wrapped up into it also.
That was what Paul was combating in the book of Galatians.

Re: - posted by makrothumia (), on: 2015/9/1 13:48

That you have avoided a book, that many other godly men whom you yourself esteem were themselves blessed by, is unfortunate. Thomas A Kempis shares many wonderful truths CHRIST IN HIM taught him.

Many godly men benefitted greatly from CHRIST in Thomas.

Re: , on: 2015/9/1 14:11

I certainly did not want to get off on critiquing the book and that is why I did not. I was only using the title as an example and had no idea people would confuse my post with critiquing the book. I did say that I found some good things in it, too.

Please, the content of my post will be lost, if you stumble over how I was trying to use the title. Just forget about it. If it was as a bad example, fine. But, I know what I was trying to communicate and unfortunately, looks like my point is lost.

As I grew in the Lord through the years, I realized the title conveyed something different than what Gal 2:20 conveys.

Re: , on: 2015/9/1 14:53

These verses do not communicate "imitation" to me.

2Cor 4:11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of JESUS MIGHT BE MADE MANIFEST IN OUR MORTAL FLESH.

John 6:57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: SO HE THAT EATETH ME, EVEN HE SHALL LIVE BY ME.

1Cor 6:17 But HE THAT IS JOINED UNTO THE LORD IS ONE SPIRIT.