

COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Cedar Fields– A Bible Fellowship Church

October 21, 2007

Titus – Part 13: The Grace of Salvation - 2

Vision

The more the Gospel of grace impacts us, the more impact we will have in our community and world with the Gospel.

But more than just service – nowadays people are converted to community FIRST, then to Christ because of that community. In a generation ago, people wanted to align themselves with truth. Propositional truth. What are the facts, what is right. Now, people are more wanting to align themselves relationally then they become open to hear the truth.

READ TITUS 3:1-11

Problem – Cretans - self-righteous, easily offended, gossipers, love trouble and turmoil rather than see others thrive and prosper

In many ways, we don't get the message of the Gospel because we are just like the Pharisees of old – always justifying themselves.

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Luke 10:29

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

Luke 18:9

He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

Luke 16:15

Pharisee Character List

1. Inability to receive correction
2. Submission and authority issues; Boasting; "I only listen to God not men"
3. Inclination to see wrong in others. Faultfinding. Focus on imperfections of others
4. Feel you've been appointed to fix others.
5. Closer to God than other people.
6. Prayer life become mechanical – a performance, if performed at all.
7. Want recognition for what you do in Kingdom.
8. Pharisees-like control. You think your way of operating in the world is THE way.

How does this play out in our lives?

- ∞ You have to be right and cannot face that you hurt someone.
- ∞ You have to be right, because otherwise you will not be loved.
 - Deep sense of not being loved because you don't deserve it.
 - Deep sense of wanting to be loved because you earned it.
- ∞ You have to be right because otherwise you cannot be in control.
 - Deep need to be morally superior therefore you get to call the shots

What is the solution?

Solution – Gospel of God's grace

Those who embrace and have riveted to their heart that God completely forgives them and they are perfectly righteous and okay with Him, have a concurrent rush in their heart that they then are accepted, approved, loved and totally in the care of God.

So that they don't need to control or earn love or despair of love or get messed up in poor relating habits. Their justification by faith leads them quite naturally to their sanctification.

Walter Marshall quotes in blue from

The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification

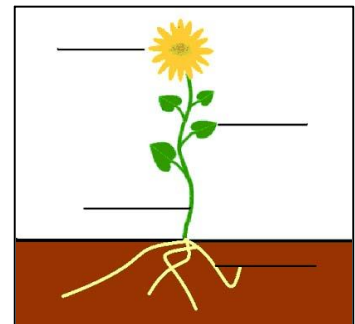
Therefore, saving faith must necessarily contain two acts - believing the truth of the gospel, and believing on Christ, as promised freely to us in the gospel, for all salvation. [It is like] the act to receive ... cup in which milk or wine are conveyed, and another act ... to drink the wine in the cup. The reason why many [struggle] with shame and confusion after they have a long time labored with much zeal and industry for the attainment of true godliness, is because they were never acquainted with this holy art, and never endeavored to practice it in a right gospel way.

It is a manner of practice far above the sphere of natural ability, such as would never have entered into the hearts of the wisest in the world, if it had not been revealed to us in the Scriptures and, [even though it is] there most plainly revealed, [it] continues a dark riddle to those that are not inwardly enlightened and taught by the Holy Spirit; ... many godly persons guided by the Spirit do in some measure walk in [this manner], yet do but obscurely discern [how they do it]: they can hardly perceive their own knowledge of it and can hardly give any account to others of the way wherein they walk...

Illustration: flowers (sin or good works) and roots (faith) and soil (gospel of grace or lies and idols)

Some make no more of living and walking by faith than merely a stirring up and encouraging ourselves to our duty by such principles as we believe.

You must not seek to procure forgiveness of sins, the favor of God, a new holy nature, life and happiness, by any works of the moral law, or by any rites and ceremonies whatever; but rather you must work as those that have all these things already, according to your new state in Christ; as such who are only to receive them more and more by faith, as they are ready prepared and treasured up for you, and freely given to you, in your spiritual Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.



Dr. Fred Tomaselli, The Fold, VT.

GOOD NEWS

1. reconciled
2. forgiven
3. new identity
4. redeemed
5. secured
6. accepted
7. work of art
8. assured
9. empowered
10. given LIFE

BAD NEWS

1. separated
2. condemned
3. "you'll never change"
4. trashed
5. lost
6. rejected
7. worthless
8. endangered
9. powerless
10. dead meat

Therefore, your way to a holy practice is first to conquer and expel such unbelieving thoughts by trusting confidently on Christ, and persuading yourselves by faith that His righteousness, Spirit, glory and all His spiritual benefits are yours, and that He dwells in you, and you in Him. In the might of this confidence, you shall go forth to the performance of the law; and you will be strong against sin and Satan, and able to do all things through Christ that strengthens you. This confident persuasion is of great necessity to the right [frame of mind] and disposing our hearts to walk according to our new state in Christ. The life of faith principally consists in it.

How should it be rationally expected that a man should act according to his new state, without assurance that he is in it? It is a rule in common [wisdom] ~~prudence~~, in worldly [vocations and situations] ~~callings and conditions~~, that every man must know and well consider his own state, lest he should act proudly above it, or sordidly below it. And it is a hard thing to bring some to a right estimate of their own worldly condition. If the same rule were observed in spiritual things, doubtless the knowledge and persuasion of the glory and excellency of our new state in Christ would more elevate the hearts of believers above all sordid slavery to their lusts, and enlarge them to 'run cheerfully in the way of God's commandments'. If Christians knew their own strength better, they would enterprise greater things for the glory of God. But this knowledge is difficultly attained: it is only by faith and spiritual illumination. The best know but in part; and hence it is, that the conversation of believers falls so much below their holy and heavenly calling.

Two easy statements to end:

"Our willingness and ability to give grace or to forgive others is an accurate indicator of how well we know God." Spencer Perkins, CT, July 13, 1998

"I really only love God as much as I love the person I love the least." Dorothy Day