

THE GOSPEL

4. ASSURANCE

David C F Wright DD

We all need to be reassured. Life can be difficult and stressful at times.

We have to remind ourselves that we have a freewill, the right to choose.

We are sinners, like everybody else. There are sins which we commit unwittingly, not knowing that we are wrong; they are also called sins of ignorance. There are people who distress us so that we may sin. One of the kings of Israel caused Israel to sin and God punished that king.

But we do and say things that are sinful.

Sin is any disobedience to God. It is missing the target; it is falling short.

But there is a remedy for sin and that remedy is not of ourselves. It is of the love, mercy and grace of God who sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, into this world to save sinners and grant them salvation and eternal life if they will accept the Lord Jesus as Saviour.

We must hold on to the truth that God loves us, Christ died for us and has paid our debt in full and for all our sins and promised afterlife with Him in Heaven.

The prophet Isaiah in 32.17 speaks of righteousness being peace and the effect of that righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever. Righteousness does not show itself in noise and demonstration but in quietness and confidence is our strength.

Romans 8. 16 says that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. We have been adopted into God's family and God is our heavenly Father.

As a result of this, we have access by faith in Christ and confidence by our faith in Him writes Ephesians 3.12.

It is our confidence in His completed work that gives us assurance.

No wonder Philippians 1. 6 tells us that we are confident of this that God who has begun this good work in us will perform it until the day of Christ Jesus. In other words, He will keep us safe in the hollow of His hand as the old hymn says.

This assurance is our security. God has delivered us from sin, death, hell and judgement. This is our confident realisation.

But sometimes we doubt. It may be in times of illness, upset, family troubles or the annoyance caused to us by others. We may doubt that we are saved; we may doubt the love and mercy of God or that we are not good enough. No, none of us are good enough yet God in His mercy loves us and believers are saved and free from any condemnation as stated in John 5.24.

Salvation is not of works or any personal merit. It does not depend on your circumstances or your position. The Queen and the elderly residents in an old people's home with only a small pension have to come to Christ the same way.

Assurance comes from believing in the Word of God. This is what faith is. Faith does not come from the experience of any other and you are not called upon to have faith in the pastor, elders or asset of rules. Romans 10. 17 states that Faith comes from hearing and responding to the Word of God.

But like everything else relationships have to worked on and maintained.

To maintain this assurance we can do no better that follow 1 John:

Keeping God's commandments, that is desiring to do Hi will and so please Him 2 v 3

Keeping His Word and having respect for the truth of God 2 v 5

Doing what is right. God is righteous and those who are His should be likewise. We are predestined to salvation but to be conformed to be like Christ 2.29

We must not continually practice sin, that is contrary to God and the Christian. 3.9

We must love each other. That is not an emotional matter but the idea of respect and general kindness 3. 14

We should recognise the true Christian and the messengers of God 4.16

We should overcome the world which means saying no to the standards of the world 5.4

Uncertainty is the chief feature of the world today but we are assured that God does not go back on His Word. He is immutable. He does not change and it is impossible for God to lie.

Isaiah 26. 3 states that God will keep us in perfect peace when our minds are stayed on Him.

Ephesians 2. 14 states that the Lord is our peace.

In 1 Timothy 2 we read that we should lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Yet sometimes we doubt. The Lord knows our infirmities and weaknesses and is touched by them writes the anonymous author of the Hebrew epistle

Assurance is our complete satisfaction.

God has not promised us a smooth voyage but a safe landing.

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