

May 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>

## **SIMPLE BELIEF IN CHRIST TO SAVE**

*“Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”” ACTS 16:30-31*

“And can it be that I should gain, an interest in the Savior's blood? Died He for me, who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued? Long my imprisoned spirit lay Fast bound in sin and nature's night; thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light; my chains fell off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth and followed Thee. Amazing love! how can it be that thou, my God, should die for me!” These words were written by Charles Wesley in 1738, shortly after trusting in Christ alone to save him from his sin. Charles embarked on a journey of writing 6,500 hymns. Another famous hymn he wrote was “Hark the Herald Angels Sing.” What can God teach us through this man and his hymns?

On May 21<sup>st</sup> of 1738 Wesley trusted Christ to save him from his sin. His hymn writing was propelled by his joy that he found in Christ that day. Charles and his brother John were members of the Oxford “holy club” that also had George Whitefield as a member. Their religious discipline was stellar, but it wasn't founded on Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. Instead, all the religious effort only brought Charles (and John) to further spiritual despair. What changed in Charles to bring him to finding salvation in Christ alone? The messages and examples from the Moravians. Moravians were known for their religious piety. They also possessed spiritual disciplines, but experienced joy and assurance that Charles had never known. Finally, as Wesley was recovering from a lung condition, he read Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians. It was here that he discovered being declared not guilty by faith alone. Theologians call this idea justification by faith alone.

Wesley was forever changed when he trusted Christ. His hymns proclaim the freedom that he found in Christ that May of 1738. The final verse of “And Can It Be” summarizes well why he found joy instead of dread: “No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him is mine! Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine, bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown, through Christ my own.” The Wesley's both possessed lives that would be considered religious. Their religious piety would probably put us to shame and guilt for how cold we are towards God. But the Wesley's didn't know Jesus. They hadn't found assurance in Christ's work but were looking for their own assurance instead through their own efforts. No wonder they sang and praised God so much after trusting Christ!

Men, are we much different from Charles and John Wesley? How often do we seek to impress God or avoid His discipline? How often do we lose sight of our salvation in Christ? How often is our joy robbed because we trade the good news of Christ for works to impress God or other people. The Philippian jailer reminds us of the simple and profound truth of the gospel: “What must I do to be saved? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!” God gives grand joy to us because He saved us. Not because of anything we do now or anything that we did in the past...but because of His work! Amazing Love! How can it be, that You My God should die for me? How will you show your joy today because Christ saved you?

***Spend some time thinking about the time when God saved you. Praise Him for saving you from your sin and ask Him for help to rejoice because He saved you.***

**For Further Reading: Acts 16:16-34**

