



May 31, 2024

Keeping It Real

Part 5, A Clear Conscience Toward God

This month's theme has been "Keeping it Real", i.e., seeing ourselves as we really are. We have talked about self-deception, God's view of reality, how to honestly see ourselves, admitting the truth and telling the truth in love, and now in our last installment, the end goal of "Keeping It Real", a clear conscience toward God.

It is a fact of life: we ALL answer to authorities. As children, we answer to parents. As adults, we answer to bosses, civil authorities, and governmental authorities. And ultimately every soul will one day answer to the Ultimate Authority, God, our Creator. When we stop and seriously consider the ominous truth of Hebrews 9:27—*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*—the priceless value of a good conscience toward God becomes obvious. And we know that a good conscience comes from obeying what we KNOW God asks of us. And so, what DOES God ask of each human being?

First, God pleads with every human being to be redeemed, saved, or born-again. These are all Biblical terms that refer to being Divinely reconciled back to God. Every soul needs this Divine reconciliation because *all have sinned* (Romans 3:23), and our sins have separated us from God (Isaiah 59:2). But God is not willing that any should perish (2Peter 3:9), i.e., be eternally separated from Him in that spiritual prison called The Lake of Fire. Therefore, He sent the Second Person of the Godhead, the Son, to be incarnated in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, a perfect God-Man, to die in our stead. The precious shed blood of Christ has made all sin forgivable but is only made efficacious individually when we cry out to God in contrition, repentance, and faith IN that wonderful Gospel (good news) of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. We appropriate Christ's forgiveness by crying out for it in faith! It's a heart thing! Yes, Jesus made every human being "savable", but we must appropriate His wonderful gift of forgiveness by asking for it! Paul writes in Romans 10:13, *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Consequently, God issues many invitations to spiritual salvation in the Bible but one of the most beautiful was delivered through the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 1:18 reads, *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;*

though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. So first, God pleads with every human being to be saved or born-again.

Second, God expects His redeemed children (the saved) to live “separated lives” for Him! But, separated from what? We are to be separated from the vain philosophies and wicked lifestyles of this lost and dying world! That “faith-applied” blood of Christ redeems and reconciles us back to God positionally. But since we ARE eternally saved, God expects us to practically “work out” our salvation (Philippians 2:12). This does not mean works can earn salvation or can keep our salvation (Ephesians 2:8, 9), rather we are to out-work it, i.e., use it, because we ARE saved (Ephesians 2:10). And God teaches in Romans 12:1, 2 that this separated life is our reasonable service. At the moment of salvation, we become soldiers of the cross. And as good soldiers, we are not to become traitorously entangled again with the enemy (the Devil) and the pollutions of this Fallen World system (2Peter 2:20).

And so, will we end well, i.e., with a good conscience toward God? Friends, it’s more than just possible; it’s readily achievable for every born-again, Holy Spirit-empowered, child of God. Paul said by inspiration that he lived in good conscience before God (Acts 23:1). Will we stand before Christ and hear, *Well done thou good and faithful servant* (Mat 25:21, 23)? OR, as God-rejecting, proud Naturalists will we instead hear, *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity* (Matthew 7:23). The choice is ours! Jesus paid the price for our salvation; he did all the work. It behooves us to accept His sacrifice by faith, and then with a heart of thanksgiving, live our lives for Him as “living sacrifices” (Romans 12:1).

God bless and consider!