

may 23, 2023

as good as it gets

"hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied." prov 27:20

many people look around at their lives and say, "is this as good as it gets?" certainly that is a question asked by non-christians, but i have recently heard the same sentiment voiced by a christian as well.

the other day i was watching dr michael brown on youtube and he had a caller who voiced essentially the same sentiment. he said he had been saved over forty years ago and he was just worn out. he said he didn't have a testimony and why in the world would he ever witness to someone else. he kept quoting scriptures like: "he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin" - "i am crucified with Christ" - "i will cause you to walk in my statues" etc. he said all he could do was to barely manage sin and he was just worn out.

dr brown was very sympathetic and even offer to send him some free materials if he couldn't afford them. believe me, i understand this man's dilemma as i too struggle with sin. anyone living in this flesh and not struggling doesn't have an appreciation of the holiness of God.

the thing is, this person was living in condemnation and not appreciation of the finished work of Christ. it's like he was trying to be good enough to earn heaven and no one ever could. "there is therefore now

no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." rom 8:1 the perfect way is hard to flesh. it is not hard to love. we all need to fall in love with Jesus anew everyday.

bless this man, but he kept quoting the scripture about God causing him to walk correctly. he expected to be free from all temptation just as he was believing to be free from the punishment of sin. that is just not what the scriptures teach. God has given us all free will and He will no more "cause" us to walk in righteousness than He will "cause" (or essentially make) us believe in Him. but, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." rom 10:4

we are the righteousness of God in Christ. we stand that way before Him in the heavenlies. meanwhile we are being transformed into His image here on earth. "but we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 cor 3:18 we will never attain the full measure of transformation until we are fully redeemed. right now we only hold to that promise.

does that mean we are free to continue to live in sin? the apostle paul dealt with this extensively in the romans epistle. we "reckon" ourselves dead to sin, but we continue to die daily. we are never "comfortable" with our mistakes, knowing they displease our Lord. "resist the devil and he will flee from you." james 4:7 "wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold

temptations." 1:pet 1:6

we will never be free of temptation in this life. our fleshly lusts entice us. temptation is what we must overcome. that's what makes us overcomers. but what spirit are we walking in? do we feel guilt over something or is our conscience clear? we all stumble in many ways; some even unaware. just be sure to keep short accounts with God. our Lord's blood is there to make up the difference.

and now some bad news. if you don't believe in Christ and His redeeming blood, this "is" as good as it gets. "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable." 1 cor 15:19 make sure today where your eternity stands. He's only a cry away - Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner!