

Sunday 16 August 2020

Bible reading: 2 Corinthians 5 vv 17–21

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. **For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

DEVOTION: He leadeth me

Some of the most spectacular words in Scripture are found in 2 Corinthians 5:21. The believer has been given the 'righteousness of God', what a reassurance in times where self-righteousness is the order of the day. But these words go far beyond reassurance, if we were to truly appreciate what it means to receive the righteousness of God in Jesus, this truth should completely transform our lives.

For our sins to be forgiven and for us to become reconciled to God if we call upon the name of Jesus is something that we will perhaps never comprehend, and if God's grace were to stop here we would have received infinitely more than we deserve, but the extent of God's reconciliation is such that we even receive the 'righteousness of God' in Jesus. If we were to reflect upon this daily, it would never be enough gratitude.

Our short time on earth may present us with many opportunities, but we will never be presented with a greater opportunity than to receive

the righteousness of God. What is our response to this? There are only two options, we can submit entirely to His leadership and His truth, or we can choose to serve the flesh. The very thought of entertaining the flesh shouldn't even enter our minds, yet it's a battle that each one of us can face:

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. (Galatians 5:17)

After receiving righteousness, it seems offensive that this internal battle would even exist, but Jesus acknowledges this struggle and understands any temptation we suffer, as He experienced temptation in the wilderness:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. (Matthew 4:1)

The Spirit led Jesus and was therefore with Him in His temptation, and if we're led by the Spirit we're set free from the law:

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (Galatians 5:18)

Having been set free from law and received the righteousness of God, is our gratitude increasing? And do we submit entirely to His leadership, even if doing so would take us to a place we wouldn't choose to be?

*He leadeth me, O blessed thought
O words with heavenly comfort fraught
Whate'er I do, where'er I be
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me*

Neil Shack

Clink Evangelical Church is affiliated to the FIEC; Registered Charity, No. 1145751
Clink Road Frome, Somerset BA11 2EN **Contact: 01373 462183**
www.clinkevangelical.co.uk