

I Will Give You Rest



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) October 19, 2020

God's Cure for Fear, Guilt and Condemnation

God has promised his people a glorious, incomprehensible rest, a peace and security for the soul. When the Lord offered this wonderful rest to the children of Israel, it meant a life full of joy and victory, absent of fear, guilt or condemnation. That same rest has been available to every person in every generation.

Up to the time of Christ, however, no generation of believers ever walked fully in this promise of blessed rest. As the Bible makes very clear, they never obtained it because of their unbelief. "They could not enter in because of unbelief" (*Hebrews 3:19, NKJV*).

Because of their unbelief, God's people went through life full of misery, doubt and restlessness, from the period of the kings and prophets to David's generation and beyond. They left this glorious life unclaimed, unembraced and unenjoyed. "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God" (*4:9*).

This same passage from Hebrews tells us, "Some must enter it" (*4:6*). This is meant for present-day Christians, admonishing us, "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it" (*4:1*).

Thousands claim to be filled with God's Spirit, yet they are still restless and guilt-laden with no security in Christ.

As long as struggling Christians are around believing friends and everything is fine, they can talk confidently about walking in victory. Then, when the enemy blows his ferocious winds of trials upon them, they are pushed and pulled, cast down with no strength to resist. They completely fall apart, wiped out by adversity.

Christ is telling us, "Don't attempt to take on a walk with me until you are at rest in your soul." "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (*Matthew 11:28-30*).

I believe the key for us lies in Jesus' phrase, "Learn of me." He's telling us, "Once you learn what I've done for you on the cross, your soul will be at rest. Then you can take on my yoke and burden, which are light and easy."

How do we learn of him so that we can enter his rest? The best way is to know the biblical doctrine of justification by faith. This one truth ends all attacks of insecurity.

Two things are involved in our justification. First, Christ's work on the cross achieves for us pardon for all sins, clearing us of all guilt and iniquity. Second, we are accepted by God as righteous in Christ through faith. This means God accepts us not because of our works or any good deeds but on the merits of what Jesus did on the

cross. “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies” (*Romans 8:33*).

Nevertheless, when we sin, we are accused by two powerful forces. The first is Satan, whom the Bible calls “the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night” (*Revelation 12:10*). The devil stands before the heavenly Father, accusing us of every fresh failure and demanding, “God, if you are holy, you’ll do something about this. You’ve got to condemn him to the same hell you’ve damned me to for my pride.”

The second powerful force that accuses us is our own conscience. “Their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them” (*Romans 2:15*). We stand before God with our head hanging low because our conscience lets us know, “I am guilty before God.”

God does not deny our guilt because he cannot lie. He never sees us as innocent because we are plainly guilty before him, caught in the web of sin. Indeed, our justification has nothing to do with our being innocent. When we are pardoned by God because of the cross, it is as guilty law-breakers. He never vindicates us but instead forgives us, pardoning our sins by his grace and mercy alone.

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins” (*Isaiah 43:25*). “You have cast all my sins behind Your back” (*38:17*). “You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (*Micah 7:19*).

The pardon God gives us is completely undeserved.

Because of our sins, we deserve judgment and damnation. Yet here comes our lawyer, our advocate, stretching forth his nail-scarred hands to the court.

He smiles and whispers to us, “Don’t be afraid, for none of these charges will stand. You’re going to walk out of this courtroom free and fully pardoned. When I’m finished, your accuser won’t have one charge left against you.”

There is still the matter of justice to settle. What about the very real charges against us?

We listen in absolute wonder as our advocate pleads our case. “Judge, you know that I fulfilled the law, living a sinless life. Then I took this person’s place, taking on all the punishment for his crimes. Through these nail-scarred hands and my pierced side, blood came forth to blot out all of their transgressions. All of these accusations and charges you’ve heard today were put totally on my back. I have paid the penalty for every one of them.

“Satan, accuser, you have no grounds to charge my client. Each of their sins was placed on me, and I have fully pardoned them all. They are not guilty because their faith in the victory of my sacrifice gives them full, complete pardon. You have no case. My client is free.”

As the devil slinks out of God’s court, you can hear the blessed Lord cry out, “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies” (*Romans 8:33*).

The second part of our justification is our acceptance into God’s beloved.

“You were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (*1 Corinthians 6:11*). The people Paul writes to here were saved out of horrible sin. How did they become righteous before God? What happened so that they were no longer evil but rather fully, lovingly accepted by the Lord?

The second part of our justification explains it. When Jesus went to the cross, he crucified our “old man.” Now that old man of our flesh has been wiped away in God’s eyes. Instead, there is only one man left, the one whom God will deal with, and that is his own Son.

When Jesus finished his work on earth and was set down at the right hand of the Father, God said, “From now on, I recognize only one as righteousness. Anyone who comes to me must come through him, my Son. All who would be righteous must accept his righteousness and no other.” We are accepted in God’s eyes only by faith in Christ and his work. “He made us accepted in the Beloved” (*Ephesians 1:6*).

Do you see how important it is to abide in Jesus, to come to him quickly whenever you fail? You must learn to run to him, crying, “Jesus, I’ve failed you. I can’t work this out. No matter what I do, I can never be recognized before the Father except as I come to him in you. My only plea is your blood.”

The only thing we have to boast in is Jesus and his great work for us.

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the Lord’” (*1 Corinthians 1:30-31*).

Justification by faith is the most humbling thing in the world. It is hard to see that God doesn’t accept our flesh, that we must set aside our constant strivings and rest in Jesus’ obedience. Indeed, we must learn to depend wholly on Christ for all power to obey.

Our old man is dead, and the new man in us is Jesus. When we put our faith in him, God fully accepts us. He considers us righteous, hidden in the bosom of his dear Son. So, whenever you sin or fail, run quickly to your lawyer, your advocate. Confess your failures to him, and rest in his righteousness.

Once you realize what Jesus has accomplished on the cross, you will hate sin more than ever. You will begin to obey him, pray to him and yearn for him joyfully because he has secured you on the solid rock of his grace. Then you can say, “Who can accuse me now? Christ has justified me. I rest in him as my righteousness.”

“If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (*1 John 2:1*). You’ve got a lawyer; run to him now. Let him plead your case, and enter into his rest by faith in his wonderful work on your behalf.

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