Don’t Ignore the Gift

2 Corinthians 6:1-10

Last week I shared with you the words of Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones who said:

Deliverance from spiritual depression begins with an understanding of “justification,” not sanctifi-cation, as one might suspect. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). “This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent” (Jn 17:3). As a believer, are you truly enjoying God? Is He the center of your life? He is meant to be. If He is not, you are living in sin – that is the essence of sin. Remember the “good news” – God made Christ to be the propitiation for our sins – that is, God made Christ responsible for our sins; they were all placed upon Him and God dealt with them and punished them in His Son. So Christ is our salvation – we simply accept Him as our Deliverer and Savior by faith. God then imputed Christ’s righteousness to us – here is the great exchange: He took our wickedness and gave us His righteousness! To get rid of “spiritual depression” you must say farewell to your past! No matter how dark the stains may be, they have all been blotted out! It is finished! Never look back on your sins again! They will only “depress” you! If you focus on “your sinfulness,” you will only conclude that “you are not good enough!” And whether you believe it or not, nobody is good enough! The issue is not our goodness… the issue is God’s goodness.

This is a perfect introduction for our next chapter in 2 Corinthians. In chapter 6 the apostle Paul wrote:

6 As God’s partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God’s kindness and then ignore it. 2 For God says,

“At just the right time, I heard you.

 On the day of salvation, I helped you.”

Indeed, the “right time” is now. Today is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 NLT

Remember Paul has just explained that those of us who know Jesus are his ambassadors. It is as if God were making his appeal through us. What is it that Paul is urging them to take hold of and not ignore? It is the justification that Jesus offers to us at the moment we believe. The justification that Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones spoke of as the “deliverance from spiritual depression.” If we back up a few verses we are reminded:

16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 NLT

When you are tempted to despair, when your old self reminds you of how ugly it is, don’t forget or ignore the gift God has given you through Jesus’ work on the cross. The believer has been saved, in fact, the believer is saved and that day and every day after it can be considered a day of “salvation.” Today I am going to share with you some truths you shouldn’t ignore. The gifts that Jesus secured for us through His sacrifice for us.

**Christ was/is our substitute**—He died in our place. 1 Peter 2:24 says:

24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his woundsi you have been healed.

1 Peter 2:24

**Christ was/is our redemption**—He bought us out of our slavery to sin. In Galatians 3:13 it is written:

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Galatians 3:13

**Christ was/is our reconciliation**—He made peace with God for us. He made us saveable. Isaiah 59:2 says:

your iniquities have been barriers

between you and your God,

and your sins have hidden his face from you

so that he does not hear.

Isaiah 59:2

And Colossians 1:21-22 says:

21 And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciledj in his fleshly bodyk through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—

Colossians 1:21-22

**Christ was/is our atonement**—He took God’s Holy anger that should have been aimed at us. In 1 John 4:10 it is written:

This is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:10

**And lastly, Christ was/is our forgiveness**—In Christ our sins were sent away.

13 And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, Gode made youf alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, 14 erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:13-14

Don’t ignore these truths, because it is the knowledge of these truths that set you free, in Christ, to truly live the new life that God intends for you. It’s not the easy life, it’s the best life. A life that Paul goes on to describe in 2 Corinthians 6:

3 We live in such a way that no one will stumble because of us, and no one will find fault with our ministry. 4 In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. 5 We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food. 6 We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love. 7 We faithfully preach the truth. God’s power is working in us. We use the weapons of righteousness in the right hand for attack and the left hand for defense. 8 We serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us. We are honest, but they call us impostors. 9 We are ignored, even though we are well known. We live close to death, but we are still alive. We have been beaten, but we have not been killed. 10 Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet we have everything.

2 Corinthians 6:3-10 NLT

Our new life in Christ is a gift, ignoring the gift will lead us to believe that life is about our own comforts and temporal prosperity or maybe even our temporal faults and mistakes. In other words, evaluating things from a worldly point of view.

Embracing the gift of life as a gift will lead us to live our lives as servants to God and those around us. So I will finish with the reminder from the words of the apostle Paul:

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