

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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Forest Hill Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE THE BIBLE? BECAUSE IT TELLS ME THAT JESUS LOVES ME

(Part Three)

Barry M. Grider

“Jesus loves me when I’m good, when I do the things I should. Jesus loves me when I’m bad, though it makes him very sad.” Parents and friends should never say to a child, “if you do what is wrong, Jesus will not love you anymore.” Jesus loves us despite what we do!

Jesus Loves Even Me—The Self-Righteous!

How sad for one to be filled with self and not with Christ. Those who are self righteous, like the Pharisee who prayed in the temple (cf. Luke 18), glorify themselves and are so satisfied with themselves, they do not see the need for a Savior. Yet, Jesus loves the self-righteous. He demonstrated this love when He went into the home of Simon the Pharisee. Remember the following account:

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at this feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little (Luke 7:36-47).

Despite Jesus’ disappointment in Simon, His willingness to enter his home, to dine with him and to teach him, proves His love.

On another occasion a rich, young ruler came to Jesus seeking eternal life. When

Jesus told him to keep the commandments, the young man boasted he had done so from his youth. Knowing he still lacked something, the text declares, "Then Jesus beholding him loved him..." (Mark 10:21).

Jesus Loves Even Me—The Jew!

Under the old economy, God worked through a fleshly nation, Israel. Jews were descendants of Judah, the great grandson of Abraham. Jesus Christ "sprang out of Judah" (Heb. 7:19). Remember God made a promise to Abraham. "...In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). This was a seed promise. Paul stated, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Jesus was born into a Jewish family. He began His ministry preaching and teaching to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." This was only right since unto them had been "committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:2). Yet, despite His love, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). Furthermore, Jesus' love was so intense that on one occasion He wept over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Jews crucified Jesus, yet they were the first recipients of the gospel message (cf. Acts 2). If Jesus did not desire the salvation of Jews, why would Paul write, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek [Gentile]" (Rom. 1:16)?

Jesus Loves Even Me—The Gentile!

Notice in the previous passage the gospel is for the Jew and Gentile. Paul asked, "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes of the Gentiles also" (Rom. 3:29). Jesus did not die for a few. He did not die just for the Jew. He died for the world. He tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). Jesus demonstrated His love for the Gentile when a Centurion requested that his servant be healed. Concerning the soldier's faith, Jesus said, "...Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matt. 8:10). The scope of the Gospel is clearly seen in the great commission. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). Though it was difficult for Peter to be convinced, he finally preached the gospel to Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:34,35). Upon their reception of the message, they became the first Gentile converts. Hence, no one is excluded from the Lord's loving invitation.

Jesus Loves Even Me—The Friendless One!

Have you ever in pity asked, "Does anyone care for me?" David cried, "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Psm. 142:4). Most all of us have shared the pathos expressed by the

Psalmist. One does care, even when it appears all others have forsaken us. Jesus is the friend to the friendless. He cares for the one who is hurting. When Jairus' daughter died and when Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha died, Jesus came to the respective families to comfort and heal. When a woman alone in the crowd, touched His garment that she might be healed, He knew about it and reached out to her (Matt. 9:22). Lepers were truly the out-cast of society, but Jesus did not cast them out (Matt. 8:3). Those deranged because possessed of devils, He reached out in compassion to heal. So often we try to avoid problem people, but not Jesus. He gave us the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. Whose character represents the Good Samaritan? None other than Jesus.

He loves the lonely. He understands what it means to be alone. While in the garden of Gethsemane He experienced exceeding sorrow, while the dearest on earth to Him slept nearby. He went to the cross alone, forsaken by all. Therefore, even when we feel no other human cares about us, we can turn to Him.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:14-16).

Jesus Loves Even Me—The Penitent!

It was Jesus who declared, "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). While the words of the Savior are strong, man is fortunate that our Lord has allowed us the opportunity to correct our ways. Peter wrote, "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2Pet. 3:9). The fact that He is longsuffering is an indication that He deeply loves us and desires our salvation. Peter understood this. After promising his Lord he would never deny Him, he turned around and denied Him three times. He repented with tears. Did Jesus give him another opportunity? After Jesus arose from the dead, the angel said to the women, "But go your way, tell his disciples **and Peter** that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you" (Mark 16:7). Yes, Jesus gave Peter another chance. Are we not thankful? Can we imagine New Testament Christianity without Peter? Jesus loved him so much, he forgave him.

(To be continued.)

