

Saving Face or Saving Faith?

If I really want to connect with God significantly, I will have to stop making excuses; stop ignoring, dismissing or denying the evidence; stop trying to do it *my way* – by presumption, pride or proof – and do it *his way*. After all, I am the spiritually sick patient and God is the Great Physician. He knows what's wrong with me and it is he who prescribes what will make me whole. Believing and acting on that biblical prescription will save my soul.

"...the holy Scriptures...are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). (See also 1 Corinthians 15:2.) I don't have to do my own biased and erroneous self-diagnosis. I don't have to mix my own useless remedies. I don't have to write detrimental prescriptions for myself or for others.

I need to know that, ultimately, I will meet my Maker. Meanwhile, I can accept his forgiveness and eternal salvation through Christ, or I can reject his marvelous grace now and reap his warranted anger later. It's my choice. I can't buy my salvation in Christ. He already paid for it with his life.

"Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment... For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 11:9;12:14).

God knows very well that people are ignoring him *deliberately* and, for that (if they continue), he will deal with them severely. *"Because they have no respect for the works of the Lord, or for the things which his hands have made, they will be broken down and not lifted up by him"* (Psalm 28:5. BBE).

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews cautions us in Chapter 2:2-3: *"For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?" "So, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts'"* (Hebrews 3:7-8). Thank God for his timely warning!

The Sovereign Lord declares: *"As surely as I live, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live."* (Ezekiel 33:11). However, if we insult God's grace we will incur his wrath. This is no cheap scare tactic. This is no joke, no fiction. It's all very real. I'm sharing biblical certainties we all need to be aware of. We have to know what awaits us if we snub the Gospel. God's grace, revealed through his plan of salvation, is marvelous beyond expression. When rejected, it justifiably provokes wrath beyond description. In this life, we may choose what we want to believe; we may, in effect, live as we please. God will not stop us; he will not use force to make us believe in him, to live for him. But, the eventual consequences of rejecting, ridiculing or rebelling against God and his Christ are unparalleled in human experience.

"Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot...and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?... It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:28,29,31). There is a fate far worse than death. ◇◇◇