

Consider!

by James Smith

The sermon urges listeners to consider their ways, their immortality, their sinfulness, and their salvation, emphasizing the importance of sincere faith in Christ for eternal life.

Scripture: Haggai 1:7, John 3:36, Romans 10:10, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 1:21, Colossians 3:17, James 2:26, 1 Peter 1:15

Topics: "Eternal Salvation", "Sincere Faith"

Description

James Smith preaches a powerful message urging listeners to consider their ways in light of eternity, their sinful nature, and the necessity of sincere faith in Christ for salvation. He emphasizes the immortality of the soul, the reality of sin, the availability of salvation through Jesus, and the importance of living a life dedicated to Christ. Smith highlights that true faith in Christ involves renouncing self-righteousness and fully relying on His finished work, leading to a transformed life of obedience and service to the Savior.

Transcript

"This is what the Lord Almighty says: Consider your ways!" Haggai 1:7

God commands you to consider--and you cannot neglect to do so, but you sin. Your circumstances require it of you--and you cannot neglect to do so, but you must be losers thereby. God complains, "My people do not consider!" Inconsideration has ruined thousands, and will ruin thousands more. But shall it ruin you? It will--if you give way to it. Let me entreat you to do so no longer.

Consider that you are immortal--and must live forever. Your body will die--and perhaps soon; but not so your soul. It never dies. Death changes its place--but not its nature. It leaves earth for Heaven--or for Hell. It lives as much when the body is dead--as it did before. It is conscious, and capable of enjoying the highest pleasures--or of enduring the most dreadful torments. And one or the other will be its lot. Heaven--or Hell; happiness--or misery, always follows upon death. Surely an immortal being ought to consider, Where shall I be after death? What shall I be? Among whom shall I have my eternal portion? Is it rational to confine our attention to the present time, and the present world, when time bears no comparison to eternity, and our stay in this present world must be brief?

Consider that you are a sinner. You have broken God's law. You have incurred God's displeasure. You are condemned by God's word. You deserve God's wrath. What excuse can you make for your sins? You, have not loved God supremely, though he is your Creator, Supporter, and constant Benefactor. You have

not loved your neighbor equally with yourself, though expressly commanded to do so. You have not believed on the name of his only begotten Son. Your conduct has been contrary to God's law, and you have not accepted the invitations of Christ's gospel. Your heart is alienated from God, and you act in opposition to God. Yet you lie absolutely at God's mercy. At any moment he could cut you down, and send you to hell. You have no right to expect anything but justice at his hands; and yet if he dealt with you after your sins, and rewarded you according to your iniquities, your doom would be indescribably dreadful.

Consider that you may be saved. God has raised up a Savior, even Jesus. He came from heaven to earth--on purpose to save sinners. He lived a holy life, and died a cruel death, that he might save sinners. He consented to obey the law which we had broken, and to pay the penalty we had incurred--on purpose to save us. His obedience is the sinner's righteousness; and his death is the sinner's sacrifice. He honored the violated law in his life, and made an atonement for our sins by his death. He can save sinners. Any sinners. He can save you. He has saved millions! He has pledged his word to save all who come unto God by him.

But no one but Jesus can save you. Nothing but the blood and obedience of Jesus will avail for your salvation. Your prayers, tears, sufferings, or good works, will not save you. Nor will they help to save you. They may hinder your salvation, and will if you place any dependence upon them--but they cannot help to save you. Jesus needs none of your help. Jesus will accept none of your help. He will either save you entirely and alone--or he will not save you at all. Mix anything with the work of Christ--and you neutralize it--and it will profit you nothing. Add anything to the work of Christ--and you forfeit your title to it. You must be saved by Christ alone--or perish forever!

Consider that you cannot be saved--but by sincere faith in Christ. "By grace are you saved through faith." "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him!"

What is faith in Christ? It is not merely giving credit to the gospel narrative. It is not merely assenting and consenting to the doctrines of the gospel. It is not something that has its seat in the head--but something that has its seat in the heart. "With the heart--man believes unto righteousness."

Before I can believe in Christ--I must be convinced that I am a lost and ruined sinner; I must renounce all and every good thing of my own--as any plea or ground of dependence before God. I must feel that I am lost, ruined, and undone, if I am left to myself; and I must perceive that the Lord Jesus has done all, and suffered all--all that is necessary for a sinner's salvation.

Then I accept his invitation and come to him. I venture my soul's eternal all on his finished work. I commit my soul into his keeping. I look to him to procure my pardon, acceptance with God, and title to eternal life. I trust in his word, works, and precious blood alone. He undertakes for me--and I trust myself in his hands. The sick man does not more look to the physician for healing; nor the guilty man to the promised clemency of his king for pardon; nor the debtor to his surety who has pledged his word to secure his liberation--than the believer looks to Jesus for a present and everlasting salvation.

True faith renounces and rejects everything--but the finished work of Christ as the foundation of hope! True faith also expects everything at present and in future--from Jesus Christ alone. This is the faith which saves the soul--because it entrusts the soul to Christ, and acquires an interest in all that Christ did, suffered, and possesses!

Consider that, if you are saved by Christ--you will live to Christ. "He died for all, that those who live should not henceforth live unto themselves--but unto him who died for them and rose again." As true faith renounces everything but Christ, and looks to him alone--so it surrenders everything for Christ, and teaches us to live for him alone. It always enthrones Christ in the affections, and endeavors to bring every faculty, and every thought into obedience to him. As that is not saving faith which does not receive Christ, and rest on him alone for acceptance with God--so that is not saving faith which does not consecrate the heart and life to the service and praise of Christ!

Faith is so jealous for the Savior's honor that she will not allow us to mix anything with Christ--in order to salvation; nor will she allow us to withhold anything from Christ--when we have received salvation from him. Thus, faith, receives from Christ all that we need; and then consecrates to Christ ourselves and all that we possess. It strips the sinner of everything of his own, and clothes him with Christ--and then leads the happy believer to the Savior's feet, to ask, "What will you have me to do?"

Faith is the source of all good works. It not only saves us--but sanctifies us. It emancipates us from the thralldom of sin, death and the devil; and then engages us to be the servants of God, that we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Reader! "Consider your ways!"

Consider that you are immortal--and that you must live forever!

Consider that you are a sinner--and that you cannot live in heaven as such!

Consider that you may be saved--for the Lord Jesus Christ is both able and willing to save sinners!

Consider that you can only be saved by sincere faith in Christ!

Consider that you must denounce your own righteousness--and rely solely on His finished work!

Consider that if you are saved by Christ--you will live to Christ.

He will be your Lord--as well as your Savior.

He will be your example--as well as your atoning sacrifice!

Consider that faith is the root of holiness, and a holy life alone proves our faith to be genuine.

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