

A Word to the Anxious

by Kenneth MacRae

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in Christ and His work on the cross for salvation, and provides a clear outline of the steps to take to trust in Him.

Scripture: Job 1:12, Acts 5:3, Acts 13:10, 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 6:11, 1 Thessalonians 3:5, Hebrews 2:14, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 12:10

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Faith And Strength"

Description

The preacher delves into the concept of 'methodeia,' which refers to the devil's orderly, logical, and effective schemes to deceive and mislead believers. These schemes involve accusations, afflictions, conquests, deceptions, hindrances, murders, perversions, temptations, threats, and more. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being alert, putting on the full armor of God, and standing firm in faith to resist the devil's cunning tactics. Through various biblical examples, the preacher highlights how Satan's schemes are tailored to exploit individual weaknesses and vulnerabilities, urging believers to be vigilant and rely on God's strength to overcome the enemy.

Transcript

This tract is for the anxious. Others probably will scarcely trouble to read it. Those who have no anxiety as to what is to become of their souls are not likely to find much of interest in it. But the Lord may see fit to bless it to the anxious, awakened soul. That He would do so is the humble prayer of the writer.

The awakened sinner always has a question, the marrow of which is, "What must I do to be saved?" The Word of God gives an answer to that question, and man cannot give better: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But what does "believe" mean? It does not mean to live a good life or to begin a life of good works; it does not mean to become religious, to read the Word, or to pray. All these are good and well in their own place, but none of these things is meant by the simple word "believe." "To believe" means just "to trust in" - to trust in Christ. This is faith, and once faith is put in exercise in trusting in Christ upon the warrant of His Word, then follow the works of a renewed life and the exercises of a new creature as the spontaneous fruits of faith. Faith without these fruits is dead, is useless, is a snare.

Now this faith is the gift of God, and therefore it must be earnestly sought. Many excuse their inaction on the ground that the exercise of saving faith is beyond their power. But this excuse can never stand, for their inability makes it imperative that they should seek this power.

To believe in a person is simply to trust in him. To believe in Christ is the very same thing - to trust in Him. You believe in a person because you have reason to believe that he is trustworthy. You trust the care of your house to a person just because you are persuaded that that person will discharge faithfully every obligation entailed in that duty. In the same way the renewed sinner comes to entrust Christ with the care of his soul for time and for eternity, and for the same reason, i.e., that he is persuaded that he can safely do so. The act of faith then is consequent upon a persuasion of the fact that Christ is both able and willing to save. Apart from this, the act of faith, the closing of the sinner with Christ's offer of salvation, is impossible.

Now what precisely does this persuasion involve? It involves several important things which we shall specify below: -

I. - It involves an implicit belief in the Divine Record concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Any questioning of the veracity of the Word is fatal. Many claim to believe in Christ who refuse to accept the inerrancy of His Word, but their faith is in a Christ of their own imaginations. Saving faith will have nothing less than the sure Word of God.

II. - It involves the belief that He suffered and died for sinners.

He came as a Substitute. Taking the nature of man, while yet God, in that nature He satisfied the claims of the law by a life of spotless obedience and its penalty by dying the cursed death of the Cross. This He did in the room and stead of those whom He came to save. And these by nature were all sinners, and it was as sinners that He died for them. This is the point which we wish to emphasize, and it is a point which must be grasped by the inquirer, that he suffered and died for sinners.

III. - It involves the belief that the efficacy of His work is offered to sinners.

It is not offered to the elect alone. Rejecters among Gospel hearers will be held responsible for what they have done. Christ's ministers are commissioned to preach the Gospel to every creature. This must be fully realized - that Christ is genuine in offering salvation to all who hear the Gospel, no matter how sinful they may be.

IV. - It involves the belief that this offer is to be received by faith.

You cannot buy it by your good works, by your repentance and your reformed life, or by your prayers; nor can you merit it by getting your heart into suitable frames or possessed of warm, spiritual feelings. You must realize this if there is to be any compact between you and Christ.

V. - It involves the conviction that His word is a real personal message to you.

Thus God speaks. You need wait for no dream or vision as a messenger from God. When you hear His Word - or read it - God speaks to you - to you personally as apart from all others - and He means what he says. You will never be saved until you accept the Word as bearing directly upon your own case.

VI. - It involves the persuasion that He will save you from the wrath to come if you look to Him to do so.

There is a day appointed in which God will judge the world in righteousness, and all will receive according to the measure of their sins. Only those shall escape the penalty of their transgressions who have entrusted their souls to Christ. He can save them because He has already borne their penalty. You must

be persuaded of this, that He will do as much for you if you only trust Him to do so. "But what warrant have I?" you ask. A better warrant you could not have. The Gospel itself is your warrant, for so to trust Christ is exactly what the Gospel asks you to do. This is what Christ Himself pleads with you to do - Matt. 11:28-30; Rev. 22:17 - and surely Christ's own invitation to your soul is far better than any dreams or visions or frames or feelings.

VII. - It involves the belief that consequent upon trusting Him your sins are blotted out.

This must follow, for immediately you trust your soul to Christ the efficacy of His work is imputed to you, and your sins are blotted out from God's Book of Remembrance. And your trusting in

Him is an evidence of the fact that Christ died for you, and if He died for you Justice will never ask that you again should pay the price.

VIII. - It involves the belief that since you now trust in the Lord Jesus you are accepted in Him.

You are still sinful in yourself, but Christ, now above, is your Substitute still, and God viewing you in Him sees no flaw in you. Consequently you may have confidence before Him and be assured that your prayers are heard.

IX. - It involves the belief that now you have every reason for joy and peace.

You have now come to rest upon Christ on the warrant of His Word, and therefore you may well rejoice for you know that your sins will meet you no more. You may safely banish every fear and be at peace since you have such a Heavenly Advocate upon your side. Who has better reason to rejoice than you?

Now this is what the Gospel requires of you. Go over these nine propositions again slowly, carefully and with prayer. How far can you go with them as to your own experience? If you can reach proposition VI and declare it to be true of you, then you can be assured that He will never cast you off; for none perish that Him trust. And this is just what the Gospel asks you to do. This is just what believing in the Lord Jesus Christ means. But, mark you, if this be your case, you will not have to wait long till your rejoicing be sharply interrupted by the discovery that sin still dwells in your heart. But do not let this discovery confound you. This is but the stirrings of the old nature against which you must strive as long as you are in the body (Rom. 7:23-24; Gal. 5:17), but this cannot annul your compact with Christ. Look to Him, and in the measure in which you do so you will mortify the old man of sin.

But if you cannot reach proposition VI in your experience, then obey now - believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and look to Him for grace and power to do so. Here is your duty. Abide by it: and continue in pleading for grace to perform it until you are able to say that not only proposition VI is your experience, but propositions VII, VIII, and IX also.

Let the anxious beware of losing these solemn convictions which so prey upon the mind. Anything that tends to turn the edge of them is highly dangerous. They are meant to lead you to Christ. Beware then of quenching the Spirit. Seek to improve these convictions. Use the means of grace diligently - both public and private - earnestly resolved by God's grace that you will not rest till you find peace in Christ; for this is a tide that may ebb and never return again. This season of exercise unimproved may seal your doom eternally. Let none therefore tempt you back to the world. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." (Heb. 12:25).

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

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