

April 8, 2018

TODAY: Bible Classes - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship - 10:15 a.m.
Evening Worship - 6:30 p.m.
Messages by PASTOR JIM BYRD
INTERNET: SermonAudio.com
Visit our website at: www.13thstbaptist.org
(webcasting live during listed service times)
WEDNESDAY: Mid-week Service - 7:00 p.m.
Message by PASTOR JIM BYRD

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HOW VAST THE BENEFITS DIVINE

Tune: "Am I a Soldier of the Cross," (CM)

Words by A. Toplady, 1774

*How vast the benefits divine, which we in Christ possess;
We are redeemed from guilt and shame, and called to holiness.*

*But not for works which we have done, or shall hereafter do;
Hath God decreed on sinful men, salvation to bestow.*

*The glory Lord, from first to last, is due to Thee alone;
Aught to ourselves we dare not take, nor rob Thee of Thy crown.*

*Our glorious Surety undertook, to satisfy for man;
And grace was given us in Him before the world began.*

*This is Thy will that in Thy love, we ever should abide;
That earth and hell should not prevail to turn Thy Word aside.*

*Not one of all the chosen race, but shall to heav'n attain;
Partake on earth the purposed grace and then with Jesus reign.*

*Of Father, Son, and Spirit, we extol the three-fold care;
Whose love, whose merit, and whose pow'r, unite to lift us there.*

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Remember Pastor Allan Ison and his wife Gail in prayer as they travel to Almont, Michigan this weekend. Allan is preaching today for pastor Wayne Boyd and the First Baptist Church.

On Wednesday night, April 18th, James Mwale, pastor of the Free Gospel Grace Church in Malawi, Africa will be preaching for us. A time of fellowship will follow. A sign-up sheet for refreshments is on the front table.

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"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).

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It is expected that when a person labors at their job, they should receive a fair wage for their work, that is earned income. When a runner enters an Olympic race and wins the gold medal for their triumph, the award is merited. When an employee performs extraordinary tasks for his company, they deserve a bonus award for their accomplishment. But, when someone is unable to work and earn any money, has no ability to run a race and win a prize, and is unable to do anything, but they receive a gift anyway, that, my friend, is unmerited favor. This is a good picture of the marvelous grace of God to undeserving sinners through the bloody sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ did the work, He won the victory and He rendered faithful, loving service to the Father, up to and including His finished work of redemption upon the cross. While the glory is all His, the benefits of His victories come to us. "Saved by grace, Hallelujah!" —Pastor Jim Byrd

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"We ought to obey God, rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Like Simon Peter, John Bunyan had a determination to continue preaching the gospel though it cost him his freedom. The preacher and author was cast into prison for several years for simply proclaiming the gospel of Christ Jesus. After having spent a lengthy time incarcerated, the magistrates came to his cell and said, "John, we will let you out, but you must promise not to preach again. There are the regular preachers of the country; what have you, a tinker, to do with preaching?" Bunyan did not say, "O my, I can see now that this preaching is not a good thing since it has landed me in prison and I cannot be free to be with my wife and children so I need to be released from this place and get back to earning a living for my family. I therefore will comply with your orders." No, he said nothing of the sort. This is how he responded to the magistrates. "If you let me out of prison today, I will preach again tomorrow, by the grace of God." And when they told him that they would not let him out unless he promised not to preach, he bravely answered. "If I lie in jail till the moss grows on my eyelids, I will never conceal the truth which God has taught to me." God help all preachers of the gospel to be as committed to the truth as was dear brother Bunyan. —Copied

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HOW CAN MY WORKS BE GOOD WORKS?

I am a follower of the Lamb, a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit Who taught me *"the Word of Truth,"* I have renounced every false way and turned to Christ for my salvation, righteousness and everlasting life. While I am indeed saved by free and sovereign grace, nevertheless I remain a sinner and my sinfulness is sadly realized and acknowledged even in my worship and service to the Lord. As John Newton said, "Sin is mixed with all I do." When I look at my faith, I weep over the unbelief of it. When I examine my prayers, there is so much coldness in them. When I read the Scriptures, my mind frequently wonders. When I gather with others to worship, I am easily distracted. My efforts to honor God are stained with inward corruption. I want to love the Lord with all my heart and love you as I ought, but my love only vaguely resembles what it should be. Since vileness mars my best intentions, I ask: how could God ever consider my works to be good and acceptable when I know they are all polluted by sin?

It is written, *"And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD"* (Exodus 28:38). Aaron, a type of Christ, was the high priest of Israel. Fastened to the mitre (turban) which he wore was a plate of pure gold with this engraving, *"HOLINESS TO THE LORD."* Though our *"holy things,"* and *"holy gifts,"* prayers, worship, service, etc., are indeed tainted with iniquity, Christ is our holiness. He is ever and always consecrated to the Lord and He has already paid for, not only the *"iniquity of the holy things,"* but for all the sins of His people. Thank God for the Savior and His work on the cross which is perpetually effectual before God. It is because of His blood and righteousness that this sinner and my pitiful efforts to serve Him are made pleasing to God. As I am *"accepted in the Beloved"* (Ephesians 1:6) so my works, worship and service are *"accepted in the Beloved."* *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 2:5).

—Pastor Jim Byrd