

Fill'er Up With the Good Stuff!

"Hope does not disappoint us, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5).

There are three aspects to the fear of man?

- (1). We fear people because they can expose and humiliate us - our source of life comes from people.
- (2). We fear people because they can reject, ridicule, or despise us - our sense of identity is people.
- (3). We fear people because they can hunt, attack, or threaten us - our security comes from people.

Paul Young reminded us that the problem with Adam is that he turned from God and made the ground his idol, and Eve turned from God and made Adam her idol. Return! This is the message of the gospel. The holiness of God: "The other-centered, self-giving relational love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

I. Until satisfaction comes from God's holiness, there will not be contentment in life.

The greatest search in life is the pursuit of happiness. It is what every one of us desires.

"I have learned to be content (self-sufficient) in whatever circumstances I am" (Phil. 4:11).

(A). The word circumstances (KJV "state") is not in the original.

Nothing wrong with adding the word because the translators honestly felt it helped.

The old Puritan Jeremiah Burroughs first drew my attention to this in his classic work *The Art of Christian Contentment*. *"I have learned in what I am to be self-sufficient."*

(B). Knowing who I am by the grace of God should be my focus.

"We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:5). "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (II Cor. 9:8).

"By the grace of God, I am what I am: his grace is not given to me in vain" (I Cor. 15:10).

(C). Learning who you are by God's grace is a process.

This word "learned" means "to unlock the mystery of" by discovering different facts.

II. There are certain facts about the grace of God that can become your self-sufficiency.

Some institutions such as colleges and the military have what is called a "merit" and "demerit" system. Merit is a mark given when something positive is done, something extraordinary. You cannot enjoy the other-centered, self-giving love of God (His holiness) with this type system.

(A). God's grace cannot be withheld because of behavior.

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (I John 4:10).

(B). God's grace cannot be lessened because of misbehavior.

God's grace is not given in "degrees" based upon a person's sins. The cross settles it.

(C). God's grace cannot be increased because of good behavior.

(Romans 4:4) - For you to live a life of grace means you do everything for God - freely! Substitute the words "eternal life" with the relational concept of God dancing over you and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit celebrating your life like they celebrate one Another! Question: "But how do you know the grace of God is yours?" (See Ephesians 4:1-5:1).