

The Whole Christ

By Sinclair Ferguson

Bonus!-The Spirit and the _____ Means of Grace as historically understood

LBC 1.7 *All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.*

LBC 5.3 *God, in his ordinary providence maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them at his pleasure.*

LBC 14.1 *The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word; by which also, and by the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, prayer, and other means appointed of God, it is increased and strengthened.*

LBC 18.3 *This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it; yet being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of means, attain thereunto...*

Lesson 13: What is Faith? Footnote from Thomas Boston

At the end of the Whole Christ, Ferguson includes a lengthy footnote which Boston included in his publication of the Marrow of Modern Divinity. In this footnote Boston is commenting on this phrase made by Evangelista:

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...that is, be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours, and that you shall have life and salvation by Him; that whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, He did it for you.”

Here Evangelista is explaining what saving faith is. Boston notes that this definition of saving faith is composed of three parts and all of it is in agreement with the historic reformed confessions and catechisms. But before getting into the three parts of faith, in this definition, he writes that faith is “an appropriating persuasion of the glad tidings of the gospel, bears not only an assent to them as true but a relish of them as _____.”

1. **“That Jesus Christ is yours”**- *“Christ is ours before we believe; not that we have a saving interest in him, or are in a state of grace, but that we have a _____ interest in Him, and the common salvation, which fallen angels have not (Jude 3); so that it is lawful and warrantable for us, not for them, to take possession of Christ and His salvation.”*

“The great sin of unbelief lies in not believing this record or testimony, and so making God a liar...The great sin of unbelief lies, not in not believing that God hath given eternal life to the elect; for the most desperate unbelievers, such as Judas and Spira, believe that, and the belief of it adds to their anguish and torment of spirit; yet they do not set their seal that God is true; but on the contrary, they make God a liar, in not believing that to lost mankind, and to _____ in particular.”

2. **“And that you shall have life and salvation by Him”**- *“Namely a life of holiness, as well as of happiness-salvation from sin as well as from wrath-not in heaven only, but begun here and completed hereafter.”*

“This persuasion of faith is inconsistent with an unwillingness to part with sin, a bent or purpose of heart to continue in sin, even as receiving and resting on Christ for salvation...for it is not possible to conceive a soul resting on Christ for salvation, without a persuasion that it shall have life and salvation by Him.”

3. **“That whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, He did it for you”-** *“I think none will question, but whosoever believes in the manner before explained, may and ought to believe this, in this order.”*

A person may possess this saving faith and yet still struggle with _____.

“And so one may have this persuasion (saving faith), and yet not know assuredly that he hath it...And thus, as a real saint is conscious of his own heart’s moving in affection towards God, yet sometimes doth not assuredly know it to be the true love of God in Him, but fears it to be an hypocritical flash of affection; so he may be conscious of his persuasion, and yet doubt if it is the true persuasion of faith, and not that of a hypocrite.”

Such a struggling saint needs to be brought back to the _____ and _____ of God for sinners in Christ.

“Faith is a sureness; faith is a sure confidence of things which are hoped for, and a certainty of things which are not seen. The faith of Christ is to believe in Him, that is, to believe in His word, and to believe that He will help thee in all thy need, and deliver thee from all evil.”

Chapter 4-Of the Heart’s Happiness and Rest

In this short final section of *The Marrow*, Evangelista is teaching these three men that only by _____ in Christ alone can the heart and soul truly find _____ and rest.

Satan, like a cunning fisher, bait his hook with a sensual object, to catch men with: and having gotten it into their jaws, he draws them up and down in sensual contentment’s, till he has so drowned them therein, that the peace and rest of their souls in God is almost forgotten. And hence it is that the greatest part of man’s life, and in many their whole life, is spent in seeking satisfaction to the sensual appetites.

I would have you more strong in desire than curious in speculation, and to long more to feel communion with God than to be able to dispute of genus or species of any question, either human or divine; and press hard to know God by powerful experience. And though your knowledge be great, and your obedience surpassing many, yet would I have you to be truly nullified, annihilated, and made nothing, and become fools in all fleshly wisdom; and glory in nothing but only in the Lord.

God in Christ, apprehended by faith, is the only true rest for man’s soul...we shall never find a heart’s happiness, and true soul’s rest, until we find it here...for indeed man’s soul cannot be satisfied with any creature, no, not with a world of creatures.

*“If, through faith, we love what we cannot yet see, how much greater will our love be when we have begun to see! And if, through hope, we love something that we have not yet attained, how much greater will our love be when we have attained it! There is this important difference between temporal things and eternal things: something temporal is loved more before it is possessed, but will lose its appeal when attained, for it does not satisfy the soul, whose true and certain abode is eternity. The eternal, on the other hand, is loved more passionately when obtained than when desired.”-Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine**

There is nothing that doth truly and unfeignedly root wickedness out of the heart of man, but only the true tranquility of mind, or the rest of the soul in God...It is the pleasant face of God in Christ that puts gladness into his heart.

So that, for a conclusion, this I say, that if the everlasting love of God in Jesus Christ be truly made known to your souls, according to the measure thereof, you shall have no need to frame and force yourselves to love and do good works, for your souls will ever stand bound to love God, and to keep His commandments, and it will be your meat and drink to do His will.