

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

GOD has a purpose in all things, but that purpose is not always readily apparent. There is always a way which seems right to man but that way is never, the right way, and is that which leads to death when pursued. This is demonstrated quite clearly in the manner in which men approach the law of GOD and the purpose for which they think it was given. The natural man looks at the law as a catalog of requirements which GOD has set forth, to give men a guideline as to how they should live their lives. There is no doubt that this law does set forth some very stringent guidelines, but the purpose of them is not to give the sons of GOD a simple rule to follow but rather to reveal the depravity of their own hearts as they see the enmity of their mind against such rules and to teach them of their utter inability to keep the law. The rich young ruler asked the LORD for a simple rule whereby he might inherit eternal life. The LORD told him what seemed to him (at the time) a simple enough plan, *“Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.”* He replied, *“All these have I kept from my youth up.”* He was quite satisfied with his performance as many are who claim that they keep the commandments of the LORD, all the while shaking their heads in disgust at those who are lawbreakers. Yet when the LORD revealed to this young ruler what the true nature of the law was, he went away sorrowing. What he thought the purpose of the law was and what the LORD showed him it was were two different things. The LORD used the law to teach him of the hardness of his heart. By this revelation HE manifested to him how far short of keeping the law he was, and therefore how far he was from inheriting eternal life by his own effort. The man who thinks he can keep the law and is satisfied by his own performance of it, he is going about to establish his own righteousness. Paul testifies that he had the exact same mindset until, by the grace of GOD he was shown his own depraved heart, by a revelation of the absolute holiness of the law. *“For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.”* He testifies that he was satisfied with his performance when he considered himself to be a lawkeeper, but he was void of an understanding of the nature of the law. So when the LORD revealed to him the purpose of the law he was judged in his mind as a wicked man, and slain in his conscience, seeing the utter impossibility of his keeping the law. He discovered that the law which he expected to be justified by could only condemn him, not because of a fault in the law, but because the depravity of his own heart which precluded him from keeping it.

As long as a man thinks that he can and does keep the law of GOD, that man will go about to establish his own righteousness before GOD and being unable to see himself for what he is, shall perish in his own righteousness being void of that one and only true righteousness which is found in CHRIST alone. Yet when the LORD in sovereign mercy acquaints a man with his own innate depravity and secret rebellion against the law of GOD, contrasted against the backdrop of the utter immutability and holiness of that law, then that man will fall down and confess of a truth that he is a sinner without any hope of being found righteous before the LORD by his own obedience.

There are many who would confess that they are true believers in CHRIST, who nonetheless continue on with a notion that since they are now believers, they are somehow able to perform the deeds that they are exhorted to do in the New Testament. It is no less a principle of legalism for those who claim to be saved by grace through the faith of JESUS CHRIST to look at the exhortations of the New Testament as a list of requirements which they faithfully work on keeping as obedient sons of GOD, than it was for the Jews to think that they could keep the Law of Moses and be justified thereby. The exhortations of the New Testament must not be neglected in any wise, yet for a man to consider that he is able to perform them in his own power is the same error which the Jews were destroyed by. The reason that we are exhorted to perform acts of obedience, which we gladly confess are beneficial and good, is to drive us to CHRIST as our PERFORMER. The SPIRIT of GOD will teach HIS children of that perfect law (or principle) of liberty to which the sons of GOD are called. HE will remind them of their continual weakness in the flesh. HE will acquaint us with the character of CHRIST as that perfect MAN who did no sin neither was guile found in HIS mouth. All of those things we are exhorted to perform, HE has already demonstrated a complete obedience to. Would we pray without ceasing? CHRIST has already prayed that our faith fail not. Would we rejoice evermore? CHRIST is our rejoicing. When we are enabled to see CHRIST as our ALL in ALL; then the law has had its perfect work. What is your source of righteousness?

“Thy free grace alone,”#11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net**