

### L. S. Chafer: Eternal Life Is a Neglected Feature of the Gospel; Eternal Security Sustains Confidence & Provides Courage under Pressure

- 25) Three things are clarified: (1) one's eternal future is guaranteed by faith in Jesus as the Christ, (2) one's confidence in this fact is a central part of why one would believe in Christ in the first place, i.e., "If He is not sufficient to solve the problem then why bother?" and (3) confidence in one's eternal security is what sustains a believer's courage toward life and his confidence in God.
- 26) The necessity to understand that faith in Christ results in eternal life is a neglected aspect of the Gospel. Such disregard has resulted in false and fuzzy presentations of the Gospel of salvation. Dr. Chafer addresses this issue in chapter four of:

**Chafer, *Systematic Theology: Soteriology*, 3:72-73:**

"Things Accomplished by Christ in His Sufferings and Death: Substitution in the Realms of Divine Perfection."

The words which make up this heading serve to introduce a much neglected feature of the gospel of God's grace. It is assuredly true that righteous forgiveness of the sinner is secured by the substitution of Christ as Sin-Bearer; but the salvation of a soul involves much more than that removal or subtraction of sin from the sinner which forgiveness achieves. A sinner minus his sins could hardly be counted a fully constituted Christian. In the saving of a soul much is added—eternal life is the gift of God, and the righteousness of God is imputed to those who believe. (p. 72)

- 27) Dr. Chafer here quotes Paul who takes up the subject of salvation and several of the things that are both subtracted and added at the moment of faith in Christ:

**Romans 5:18** - So therefore, as through one transgression [ **Adam's original sin imputed to all mankind** ] resulting in condemnation; so also through one sentence of condemnation [ **to Jesus Christ on the cross** ], God's righteousness was imputed to all mankind resulting in justification.

**v. 19** - For as through one man's disobedience [ **Adam's** ] the many were appointed sinful, so also through one Man's obedience the many shall be appointed righteous.

**v. 20** - Now the law came in as a side issue [ **a minor actor playing a minor role** ] in order that the transgression of Adam might be increased; but where personal sin increased [ **the increasing of personal sins throughout history** ], the grace of God increased superabundantly.

**v. 21** - Just as the sinful nature has ruled in the sphere of spiritual death, so also the grace of God might rule through the imputation of righteousness because of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Two features of salvation—the gift of eternal life and the gift of righteousness—are counterparts of the one great fact of union with Christ. In the simplest of words—so far as the English translation is concerned—Christ referred to these two major facts of relationship when He said, "You in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20).

Of the first relation—*you in Me*—it is asserted that all spiritual blessing is secured by the Christian's position in Christ. And the second relation—*I in you*—it is written, "He who believes on the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36); "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has eternal life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-12). (pp. 72-73)

- 28) As the believer grows in grace he develops an inventory of knowledge about God's character. As this knowledge increases it contributes to reciprocity or personal love *for* God.
- 29) As one learns of the divine attributes he comes to the conclusion that God is faithful to do all that He proposes (conditionals, e.g., 1 John 1:9), promises (certainties, e.g., John 14:2), and proclaims (intentions, e.g., John 3:36).
- 30) As we learn Who and what God is we develop an ever increasing confidence in Him, His plan, and His purposes. However, exigencies in life can cause us to stagger spiritually and can result in the weakening or even the loss of confidence in God.
- 31) These exigencies come in many forms: loss of domestic tranquility; loss of national stability; loss of employment or income; diminishment of logistical support such as food or shelter; loss of reputation; victim of unfair, unjust, and undeserved suffering; loss of health through disease, illness, or injury; loss of loved ones; suffering due to natural disasters, injustice, betrayal, slander, theft, crime, or warfare.
- 32) These and many other reasons cause believers to loose confidence in God. This loss of confidence is the result of having doubts about whether God is in control or guilt you have become so reversionistic that He has removed His care and protection.
- 33) But God's love toward us is unconditional and He only permits those things to occur that He knows an advancing believer has the doctrine to endure and therefore profit spiritually.
- 34) Also, through unconditional love, God imposes those things that He knows are necessary for a reversionistic believer to recover from following wheel-tracks of wickedness and return to wheel-tracks of righteousness.
- 35) When a believer has absolute confidence he is eternally secure he never doubts his salvation regardless of what he does or what happens to him.
- 36) This gives him the courage to face all the exigencies, sufferings, challenges, and ordeals of life including physical death.
- 37) In all of these circumstances the thing that sustains his confidence in God is the fact he believes he has eternal life, that when he dies he will go immediately to heaven to be face-to-face with the Lord, and he will eventually receive a resurrection body just like His. Therefore, the possession of eternal life and the concept of eternal security are essential components of salvation.