

Tuesday's Touch ...#11

...from Pastor Ed ...April 7, 2009

The Mystery of Godliness

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. 1 Timothy 3:16

Giving thanks unto the Father, who has made us qualified to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God... Colossians 1:12-15a

As we again come to this season when attention is particularly focused on the passion and resurrection of our Lord, we are called to stand before the cross and contemplate the unfathomable:

*The bleeding Temple of I AM
Hanging dead upon a tree.*

The incarnation of transcendent Deity exhausts our faculties. The deliberate convergence upon that Holy One of infinite wrath and infinite love brings us to the outer limits of our finiteness, and we are left to exclaim, "Great is the mystery of godliness."

Reasonable men should not entertain such 'foolishness'- yet many of the greatest minds have embraced it and gladly confessed themselves to be fools. Simple men should cower to approach such complexities of intellectual conundrum- yet many a feeble mind, having found unqualified acceptance in the arms of the Savior, have stored up for themselves vast treasures of wisdom and understanding. Let the wise become fools and the foolish wise; let the weak become strong and the strong weak; let the rich become poor and the poor rich; let the great be humbled and the humble great. The ground, indeed, is level at the foot of the cross, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

At the cross- and only at the cross- holiness is satisfied, and love secures the sinner's hope. In the dreadful outpouring of untempered wrath upon the spotless Lamb there comes forth a balm that flows from Calvary's mount to heal the vilest sinner. Because of the cross God remains just as He justifies the godless (Rom. 3:26, 4:5). "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation" (Hebrews 2:3)? "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul" (Mark 8:36)? For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

The command never was, "Understand and live." The command is not now, "Do good and live." But the command of Almighty God to sinners is "Look and live! Look with repentant faith upon the sinless Son of God crucified in the sinner's place, buried in the sinner's grave, and risen for the sinner's victory, and you will receive forgiveness, cleansing, and eternal life unmerited and free!" This is why Good Friday is 'good.' This is why Easter is truly the day death died.

He who believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.

Great Lover of sinners repentant,

Grant repentance and faith to those who contemplate the Christ of the Cross this Easter season.

Amen

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