

## *Tuesday's Touch ...#13*

*...from Pastor Ed ...April 21, 2009*

### *'Harry' in Context*

*So likewise, when you shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do ... Luke 17:10*

*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11*

*Last week's devotion, 'Harry', contrasted two extremes in an effort to focus attention on the need for true compassion for the weak and struggling Christian on the one hand, and our distaste for the smug and self-righteous professor on the other. It was essentially an addendum to the article 'Portions Great and Small' of a few weeks ago, and was, perhaps, a bit hyperbolic in order to drive home the point. I have found far too many occasions of Christians shooting their own wounded. Furthermore, there is no self-righteousness as despicable as that which is orthodox. If we truly understand sin at all, there can be no room for any measure of self-congratulation with the 'rightness' of our faith, or of our own perceived good works. All of our standing before God rests solely on the unmerited grace of God in Christ.*

*That being said let us never be comforted or encouraged regarding any wallowing in self-pity, making excuses for our on-going sin. The true Christian who is 'weak and struggling' is still keenly aware of the sinfulness of sin, owns it as his own, and continues battling and confessing it. It is for this very reason he or she desperately needs the compassion, encouragement and aid of other brothers and sisters in Christ.*

*In addition, we must never allow ourselves to confuse a genuine pursuit of*

*holiness with self-righteousness. Those who are truly passionate about obeying and glorifying God are often labelled 'self-righteous' or 'legalistic' by other Christians who are intimidated because of their own lack of passion. You who are pressing on- don't be deterred or discouraged. The path of full devotion is always a lonely and unpopular one. Settle that reality in your heart once and for all. But also remember the prerequisite need for the patience of Christ, "who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:23).*

*Mercy and truth must always dwell together in the Christian demeanor. Zeal must daily be robed in love. Love for God must always be mirrored in our love for others. And brokenness for our own sin must always precede any attempt to minister to others.*

*Gracious Lord,*

*May we find that abiding balance between the utter hatred of sin and the compassionate love of Christ; between the detestation of our own remaining corruption and the joyous rest in the finished work of Christ; between our love for others and the boldness of love that speaks the truth in Christ. Who is sufficient for these things? Only Christ in us.*

*Abiding in Grace,*

*Amen*

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