

God's Riches in Christ

“Comfort For God's Sheep”

Most people involved in self-righteous, works religion have to be constantly motivated to obedience through threats of punishment or promises of rewards. Tragically, I know from personal experience that this kind of motivation will produce the desired result the preacher is seeking. When the false preacher I sat under preached those “hell-fire and brimstone messages”, telling us if we weren't diligent enough, or obedient enough, or giving enough, we were at best “back-sliders”, and at worst we were lost, you can be assured over the next few services church attendance and giving increased substantially. When attendance and giving began to wane, there would be new threats of punishment and new promises of “stars in our crowns”. The problem is that if it takes threats of punishment or promises of reward to motivate you to obedience, it is evidence you are currently in a state of lostness. Also, no true Gospel Preacher will use this method to motivate God's children

The Word of God is quite clear when it comes to the message God's servant's are to proclaim to encourage God's sheep to obedience-“*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably* (speak reconciliation and peace based on the one true hope of peace, Christ's finished work at Calvary) *to Jerusalem* (God's elect from every nation), *and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.*”(Isa.40:1,2) You don't have to make threats of punishments or promise rewards to get God's true children to pray, to give in support of the ministry, or to be faithful in the worship of the One True God-“*We **LOVE** Him, because He first loved us.*”(I Jn.4:19) This doesn't mean God's children love Him perfectly and continually-“*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate* (a lawyer who pleads the merits of His obedience unto death) *with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation* (satisfaction to law and justice) *for our sins: and not for ours* (natural descendants of Abraham justified by **Christ's righteousness alone**) *only, but also for the sins of the whole world* (Gentiles justified by that **SAME RIGHTEOUSNESS**)..”(I Jn.2:1) Paul wrote of himself-“*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.* (Rom.7:18,19) The truth of the matter is that none of God's elect can or will be satisfied with their obedience. We know we have never “loved God with all our heart, mind, soul, or strength”, and we've never “loved our neighbor as ourselves.” Therefore we are constantly forced to look away from self and rest in the **ONLY RIGHTEOUSNESS** which enables God to be both “a just God and a Saviour”, that righteousness produced by Christ's finished work of redemption at Calvary-“*Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength.*”(Isa.45:24) “*And the work of righteousness (**Christ's accomplished death at Calvary for the elect's JUSTIFICATION**) shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness* (REGENERATION AND CONVERSION Of God's elect) *quietness and assurance **FOR EVER.***”(Isa.32:17) I pray your hope is in God's Christ.

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