

TOPIC: HOW WE LIVE MATTERS!

SPEAKER: SP Daniel Foo

Date: 26 April 2009

SUMMARY OF MESSAGE

“Once saved always saved?” To begin, let’s allow scriptures to speak to us. Let us not be stumped by labels. Tear them apart and qualify them in the light of scriptures. 3 broad categories for us to consider later.

In previous months, we talked about grace and the love of God. However, if we neglect other areas of scriptures and focus only on these, we would not be giving warning on areas of concern. Let’s open our hearts to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to be our teacher.

2 Cor 5:9-11

So, we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, [the terror of the Lord] we try to persuade men...

Hebrews 6 tells us that judgment is eternal. These are part and parcel of the elementary teachings. We will appear at judgment to receive what is due to us, whether good or bad. Not just for rewards but also for judgment for things done, whether good or bad, i.e there will be punishment. Thus, it matters how we live. The verse talks about the terror of the Lord. He was the Lamb slain for our sins but He is coming back as Judge.

There are three fundamental positions before God:

1. We are saved by grace through faith and we have eternal life forever.

Eph 2:8,9 tells us that by grace, we are saved through faith. It is the gift of God. A gift cannot be earned. How do people perish? They perish not because they do not believe in Jesus but because of sins. We can share with people the gospel but we can never convert a person. Salvation happens with revelation taking place in the heart.

How are we saved? According to Romans 10:9-10, we have to believe in the heart. Merely saying the sinner’s prayer will not save. If it is not from the heart, the person is not born again. It is with the heart that we believe and with the mouth that we confess that we are saved. It has to be done intentionally and deliberately.

2. We are saved to do good works.

A) The good works we are to do have been pre-ordained by God and they are the evidences of our being saved. If we are nonchalant to the things of God, then we question if we are already saved. As in Eph 2:10, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. These we do according to our personality, gifting, talents, skills and experiences.

B) Works involve energy, effort, time and sacrifice. They may incur pain, persecution, criticism and suffering. Works also involve money. Some even pay to serve. There is sacrifice. However, as we serve in our gifting and strengths, we complement one another. We are utterly dependent on the grace of God.

C) Works determine our rewards or losses. According to 1 Cor 3:8, each will receive his own rewards. Just as rewards are personal, salvation is personal. In 1 Cor 3:12-15, our works are described in six different materials, i.e. gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble. The same fire that burns stubble will purify gold, silver and precious stones. If our works are made of gold, silver or precious stones, we will receive rewards. Otherwise, we will suffer loss. This loss may involve punishment in varying degrees but the person is saved. I John 2:28 speaks of shame at His coming.

D) There are 2 aspects to these good works:

i) Our Person to become like Christ. Romans 8:29 talks about us being conformed to the image of Christ. However, we are all a bit of the Spirit and flesh. Daily, we are to deny the natural life. It is a journey. Hence, we need to be patient with one another. Our journey to become like Christ is about works. How do we know? Refer to Matthew 16:24-27 which speaks of carrying the cross. The cross is the symbol of crucifixion of the old life.

Here it means turning the other cheek, going the second mile or forgiving someone who refuses to pay. It means meeting someone at an inconvenient time, sacrificing time to practice for the Blood Brothers, etc. These are works and we will be rewarded as we do so as unto the Lord.

ii) Our purpose in life is to be God's channel of blessing to others. This relates to our ministry. Matthew 5:13-16 talk about being salt and light. It relates to the roles we play at home or at work and whether we are pressing towards holiness, towards being set apart to be special.

As in 1 Peter 4:10-11, we are to minister the grace of God to others.

What other examples are there of being God's channel of blessing? See list:

- Being kind and compassionate
- Helping a friend in need
- Giving to the poor and needy
- Following up a new believer
- Giving tuition in Pop Excel
- Giving somebody a ride in your car

- Praying a prayer of blessing for a particular need
- Helping a colleague in his job
- being a lovely spouse
- Mentoring someone in BBTC
- Volunteering in BCCSC
- Serving in ministry

Our purpose and destiny in our ministry will be related to our roles and responsibilities.

3. If we, who have been enlightened, tasted the goodness and the power of God, turn against God, i.e. become apostate, we will lose our salvation.

Look up Hebrews 6:4-6.

Mark the words, "It is impossible.." They were once enlightened. They had tasted the heavenly gift of the Holy Spirit, were partakers of the Holy Spirit and had tasted the good Word of the Lord. They had claimed His promises of help, healing, grace but if they fall away, having experienced all the above, they cannot be renewed again to repentance.

In 2 Peter 2:20-22, it says 'If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.' This suggests a difference in the individual's destiny. The lake of fire is not the same for everyone just as heaven is not the same for every believer.

Hebrews 10:26-27

"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries."

Note the choice of word - "willfully". The choice to sin is intentional and deliberate. In "Driven by Eternity" by John Bevere, a story is shared of a lady who was so overtaken by an offence that she would not forgive. Thereafter, she got herself into sexual immorality and was further cluttered with bitterness that she held on till her death. It was suggested that if this was her position till her last breath, then she would have her name erased from the Book of Life.

Hebrews 10:29-31 carries a warning:

'Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be though worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.' Says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

God is the God of love but we also need to have the fear of God. The fear of the Lord is pure.

Lucifer and the angels knew what it meant to live in the light and holiness of God yet they chose to rebel. Nadad and Abihu were taught what was holy and common yet they offered strange fire. The consequences that happened to them should provide lessons regarding the fear of the Lord.

In Revelations 21:8, who are those who would be thrown into the lake of fire? They are the fearful, the unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars. These have lost their conscience of God. This is consistent with the principle in Ezekiel 18. When the righteous turn against God, all his righteous deeds will not be remembered. If the wicked turn to the Lord at the last moments, they will be saved.

In the end times, many will turn to the Lord. They will say that in His name they had cast out demons but the Lord would turn them away as they had no relationship with Him. Let's hearken to the verse below.

2 Corinthians 5:11a

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

The judgments of God are eternal. According to Heb 9:27, it is appointed for men to die once but after that to face judgment. Our every word, thought and motive will be judged. It is the same the other way round – our unseen service will be known. Everything we do, do therefore as unto the Lord. It matters how we live.

Topic: How We Live Matters!

Questions for discussion

1) Are you personally assured of your salvation? What are the reasons for your assurance?

2) For a quick self evaluation, on a scale of 1 – 10, how much of the materials would you think constitute your overall works?

The greater the number the greater the material. (You may even do up a separate list re how do you score as a parent/spouse/child/sibling/leader/member/boss/worker/colleague/others - assessing them by how you did your respective roles and whether your motivations were good or bad, doing for yourself or for God).

a) Gold	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b) Silver	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c) Precious Stones	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d) Wood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
e) Hay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f) Straw	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3) What do you think should be the motivations for doing good works?

4) How we spend our eternity depends on what we do today. How does the message help you to look at what you do with a different light? Are there some things which you would stop doing or some things which you would now do differently, meaningfully or willfully?

5) Share other things which you have gleaned from the message.