

441 At the heart of the fight

In reaction to some significant trends going on around us these days, we used last week's Reflection, 440 "A Good Fight", to emphasise our need to "stand up, stand up for Jesus" as Bible-believing Christians, in the face of widespread falsehood and wickedness.

Even when Christian voices of protest have been heard over the years, too often the government of the day, of whatever political persuasion, has gone ahead anyway. Numerous liberal laws have been passed since the 1960s, regarding for example the death penalty, marriage and divorce, abortion, homosexuality, open-door immigration, and so on. Each one has been granted the Royal Assent, which seems to be a mere "rubber stamp" these days rather than keeping to its intended purpose as a bulwark against wrong, anti-biblical legislation. Thus the Queen's Coronation Oath has been repeatedly broken yet no-one seems to mind; but in the sight of Almighty God, an oath remains an oath

So unsurprisingly our society is now awash with the consequences of all this folly. There is general astonishment over why we now have these problems in our society, coupled with endless wordage as to what needs to be done to solve them, the answer usually being "The Government should spend more money". But the far better answer is "The Government leaders should get on their knees and open their Bibles again". Pointing out these obvious truths is part of that "good fight" in which we are involved, and which at its heart involves the unique, unequalled, unrivalled Person and Role of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are shown this uniqueness of the Lord Jesus from a Jewish, High Priestly, perspective. In Chapter 10.1, we read that the sacrificial rituals of the law were, and could only ever be, "a shadow of good things to come", rather than "the very image of the things (to come)" (KJV). The High Priest was required to enter into the Holy Place once a year, year after year, with the blood of sacrificed animals (vv. 1-4,6,8), but this blood acted as only a "type" of atonement, a picture, a pointer-forward, to the real "antitypical" atonement that was yet to come in Christ.

Then, thanks be to God, God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, entered the earthly scene (see Chapter 1). Jesus came in obedience to His Father (10.5,7,9a), and He "taketh away the first (that is the old, repetitive, typical sacrifices under the law), that he may establish the second" (that

is, His one perfect, real, final, antitypical, sacrifice, vv. 9b-10, 12-18). This duly happened of course on that dreadful day on Calvary, and herein lies the essence of our message amidst today's wayward and lost generation.

As we well know, but so many do not yet know, Jesus Christ is the unique Son of God, the Lamb of God, the Lord, the Saviour, the ultimate High Priest. In His foul suffering and death Jesus gave His sinless Self in our place, on our behalf, paying the price, settling the debt, taking the punishment, for our sins. He shed His own sinless, innocent blood before Almighty God, His perfect, holy, loving Father, uttering from the depths that dreadful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27.46, from Psalm 22.1).

Also in anguish, God His Father was forsaking His Son in those awful hours so as to achieve, between them, the full, final smashing of sin's grip and of death's grasp on fallen humanity (eg., I Corinthians 15.55-58). They did it! – as Jesus proclaimed, "It is finished!" (John 19.30). At appalling cost, the Father forsook His sin-bearing Son, so that now the Father need no longer forsake the still-sinful us. The victory over sin and death on the cross was then followed by the victory of Christ's resurrection.

Any can now respond to God's call with simple repentance, claiming Jesus' death as counting as their own death in punishment for their own sin. Sinners' debts have all been settled by Christ; the job is done, the victory is won, and forgiveness of human sinners by God the Father is in place, waiting to be claimed. Once the repentant sinner has approached the Father, claiming forgiveness in the Name, and by the Blood, of His Son Jesus Christ, then, praise God, His forgiveness freely flows and the Christ-centred blessings pour in.

No wonder then that we are bidden in Hebrews Chapter 10, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, his flesh ... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith ..." (from vv.19-22, KJV).

This is the Good News which by God's grace exposes and defeats the falsehoods and wickednesses of the day, and which offers through Christ mercy, forgiveness and peace to all involved in such wrongdoings.

Yes, truly Christ is unique, and truly the fight we are in is - “a good fight”!

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