

## July 21

**James 2: 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.**

When another commits some grievous sin, the dilemma the believer faces is how to be gracious and show mercy without giving the impression that God approves of their sin. Self-righteousness can creep into us before we know it. Then it does not matter what we say to another, it will only come across as holier than thou. If we only show respect to those who are rich in good works, but neglect mercy to those poor in sin, then “we commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”

The believer would do well to always first go to Christ our Wisdom for understanding and grace to “restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.” Also, we do well to first “consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” (Gal 6: 1-2) Remember, we were guilty in sin. Furthermore, in ourselves, we have not kept the commandments of God to this day! It is only by God’s mercy, for the sake of Christ who fulfilled the law for us, that right this minute, God rejoices in mercy toward us rather than judgment.

Therefore, how shall we who rest in Christ be judged? We shall be judged by “the law of liberty.” It is because though we were the poorest, vilest enemies, guilty of transgression against God yet Christ showed us mercy. How? Not by condemning us in judgment but by laying down his life for us. Doing so, Christ satisfied the justice of God, making us the righteousness of God in him.

Then when Christ made known to us our sin, did Christ condemn us and leave us? No, after making our sin known to us, through the efficacy of his precious blood, Christ restored us in his great mercy and grace. By this gracious, wise working, our Savior constrains us by his great love every day to rejoice in mercy toward poor sinners like us, rather than judgment. It is good to always get acquainted with the blood so that the flailing whip of the law and that evil respect of persons might be destroyed in our hearts. How can we that see something of the value of that precious blood do anything but rejoice in mercy rather than judgment!

These same two essential components which Christ showed us are always involved in "rejoicing in mercy rather than judgment." If we simply condemn the sin we only "rejoice in judgment." God hates that condemning, Pharisaical spirit. (Is 65: 5) But to "rejoice in mercy rather than judgment" is to first use the scriptures (not our word) to show how God condemns all sin. That is what Christ first did for us through the preaching of the gospel. Then, secondly, use the scriptures to show how Christ put away sin for his people, making justice and mercy kiss in harmony for those who believe on Christ. That, too, is what Christ did for us through the preaching of the gospel.

Therefore, when we behold one poor in sin, let us lay down our life, our thoughts, our judgments, at the feet of Christ so that Christ might have the glory. The best way to show mercy to poor sinners is to invite them to hear Christ preach through his preacher. If they come, treat them just as we would that one Christ has already enriched by his grace, for only Christ can work grace in the heart.