

Opening Reflections for Committees: August 2018

Witness and Fellowship Ministry Team

Reality

As quickly as we taste the Lord's goodness, so we turn away. You'd think after tasting the Lord's miraculous provisions, we would trust God. But that's the weakness of our sinful flesh, isn't it? The troubles of the moment often seize us and consume our thoughts, our very perspective on **reality**. Then our feelings take over and cast an even greater shadow over **reality**. Our feelings, our human experiences, the good and the bad—these all have the potential to leave us on shaky ground.

When we're happy, when we experience good things in life, that's certainly no indication that we're right with God. The opposite is true as well. When tragedy befalls, when times are tough, it's not an indication that we're on God's bad side. Feelings and experiences aren't bad in themselves. It's how we react to them that can plunge us into doubt and uncertainty with respect to the Lord.

The Lord didn't give you a pastor to drudge up your past sins. Yes, the man of God in your midst will point out your sins, but only to deliver your Savior's forgiveness to you. When your sins or your feelings convict you, hear the objective truth of the Gospel. Jesus paid for your sins on the cross, not just the little ones—the whole lot. No sin is too big for Christ's blood to wash away. No punishment or penance is left for you to fulfill. Jesus has borne it all in your place.

Reality from God's perspective says that you are a sinner living among sinners in a fallen world where there is evil and tragedy, even horrible, senseless death. But that same God-given perspective on **reality** says that you are His redeemed child.

Prayer: O Lord of life and death; Restore and quicken, soothe and bless us with Your life-giving breath. To hands that work and eyes that see Give wisdom's healing power That whole and sick and weak and strong May praise You ever more. Lord, have mercy! Christ have mercy! Lord, have mercy! In the name of Jesus. Amen.