

REJOICING IN OURSELVES ALONE

Galatians 6: 1-4

When the carnal yoke is lifted off of the natural man, when he visits the congregation where brethren are led of the Spirit of grace, the gospel he hears declares he has no power to constrain himself much less work obedience in another. Now no one is looking at him or telling him to look upon others. Therefore, the issue becomes personal between him and God. The natural man finds that in himself he can not make himself submit or rejoice in the preaching of the mighty ability of God in Christ. When the focus is all Christ, he finds out what he is and he has no rejoicing in himself (his heart)--everything that made 'church', 'church', is gone (Gal 6: 13).

On the other hand, in that sinner where God is alive and working, where the Spirit of Christ dwells, the believer is given a single eye for Christ. He is given a heart to rejoice in the gospel of Christ. As much as it goes against every power of hell in his own dead flesh, as he hears how Christ bore his burden in his own body on the tree, by the Spirit of God, the believer takes the burden of his erring brother onto his own back. He does so by putting the sin of his brother behind him and speaking to his brother of the power of God in Christ and by waiting on God to make the word of grace effectual in his brother's heart. He has the law of Christ--the law of love and grace and mercy written on his heart. This power constrains him like no carnal restraint can. The believer proves his own work, that is, his heart is set on his relationship between him and his Lord and his Lord's ability and not on another. By the Spirit he knows that the work which the believer has been given is truly all God's work. His heart is settled by the persuasion of grace that Christ alone has redeemed all God's elect, is able to call them through the gospel and is able to make fallen brethren stand through the same gospel--this is the "rejoicing in himself alone." The natural man has not this Spirit and finds no rejoicing where the child of God finds all rejoicing (Rom 8: 8-16). Oh, may God give us grace to trust God to do what only he can!