

April 16, 2009

Dear Friends of the Foundation:

I came across this in my reading this morning:

The faithful heart does not make for itself just any old kind of God, by chance, but it looks upon Him who is the one true God. It does not attribute to Him whatever it pleases but is satisfied to have Him as He reveals Himself, always being carefully on guard not to go beyond His will by presumptuous insolence. When the faithful heart knows Him according to His will, because it understands that He governs all things by His providence it counts on Him as its Teacher and Protector, and therefore entrusts itself into His care since it recognizes Him as the Author of all good. If it is under pressure of some need, immediately it hurries to Him for relief and, having called upon His name, awaits help from Him. Since it is persuaded of His goodness and good will, the faithful heart rests with sureness in His mercy and does not fear that it will not always, by His mercy, have appropriate remedy for all troubles. Because it recognizes Him as Lord and Father, the heart considers that He deserves to have it consecrate itself to His commandment, revere His majesty, work to advance His glory, and follow His will. Since it sees that He is a just Judge who will some day rudely punish all transgressors, the heart always sets His throne before its eyes, so as to be restrained from everything which may cause His wrath. Nevertheless the heart is not so frightened in thinking about God's judgment that it wants to escape from it, even if it had some way to do so. On the contrary, it accepts Him no less gladly as Chastiser of the wicked than as Remunerator of the good, since it knows that it pertains to God's glory to punish the wicked no less than to award the recompense of eternal life to the faithful. Moreover the heart is not held back from sinning only by fear of His punishment, but because it loves and reveres Him as its Father, and fears Him as its Savior; even if there were no hell it would hate to offend Him. So you see what pure and true religion is: faith joined with sincere fear of God, so that under the word "fear" are comprehended both the love of His righteousness which He ordained by His law, and the reverence which is offered to His majesty, gladly and from the whole heart.

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1541 French Edition, translated by Elsie Anne McKee (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), p. 29.

So let us seek the true knowledge of God in his own revelation; so let us believe and obey; so let us revere, and rejoice in, God.

Grace and Peace,

Jim

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