



Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

One of my most favorite songs is the hymn “Rock of Ages.” It was written as a poem by Augustus Montague Toplady and eventually published as a hymn in 1776. Augustus was saved at the age of sixteen, ordained as an Anglican priest at the age of twenty-two, and died of tuberculosis at the age of thirty-eight (1740-1778). Some claim that Augustus wrote “Rock of Ages” while seeking shelter in the cleft of large rocks during a severe storm. Others say that he wrote this hymn in opposition to the Arminian teaching of John Wesley. Still others would contend that this hymn was inspired by a song or sermon that Augustus heard. Whatever the inspiration, the hymn “Rock of Ages” is renowned for its profound Gospel-centered doctrinal clarity, its poetic lyrics, and its encouragement to Christians.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy law's commands;
could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone; thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress; helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath, when mine eyes shall close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown, see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.

This hymn is replete with biblical doctrine. Perhaps most notably is the doctrine of the substitutionary death of Christ – that Christ died in our place and for our sins. Jesus did not die for His own sins, because He is sinless (2Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 1Jn.3:5). Jesus died on the cross for the sins of all who would ever believe (Matt.1:21; Jn.10:15). At one time, and for all time, Jesus bore all the penalty for all the sins of all true believers (Heb.7:27; 9:12; 10:10). Apart from Christ there is no salvation (Jn.3:16-18, 36; 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Jesus is not just the only one who did die for our sins, but the only one who could have died for our sins. For we all are unrighteous sinners (Rom.3:10-12, 23), justly condemned by God. As the hymn declares, we all need to be saved from the “wrath” of God and made “pure” by God. This comes by God’s grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We cannot earn God’s saving grace – not by our “labors” or by our “tears.” Apart from the cross of Christ, we bring “nothing” to our salvation for we are “naked” and “helpless” and “foul” – “wash me, Savior, or I die!”

Our only hope for salvation is to hide ourselves in Christ – the Rock of Ages. “*For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God*” (2Cor.5:21; see Is.53:4-6; Gal.3:13; 1Pet.2:24). As a Christian, “You stand before God as if you were Christ, because Christ stood before God as if He were you” (C.H. Spurgeon).

Together in and for Christ,
Pastor David
(7/27/26)

Scripture Readings for the Week (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #30):

Leviticus 19-21; 2 Kings 16-20; Psalm 87-89; Proverbs 13; Ezekiel 37-42; Luke 23-24; 1Thessalonians 1-3

Recommended Reading:

“The Truth of the Cross” by R.C. Sproul