

A Look That Kills

Jim Elliff

As believers, we must "watch over our souls" diligently. For every one who could be accused of being overly conscientious to the point of debilitation, there are hundreds who neglect self-examination altogether. The job isn't done by merely seeing what we are, however, but when we, by faith, make the needed corrections. Surely we have them to make. Look in the mirror, but don't forget what you saw!



The Spirit

And, don't forget the Spirit either. He is our help for sanctification. We accomplish the needed correctives "by faith," not by sheer grit. Paul spoke of putting to death the deeds of the body this way . . . "by faith." This simple term means that someone else is providing the power, like a mother lifts a child to reach his glass from the cabinet, or a gasoline motor pushes and turns the drill to go deep into the earth through soil and rock.

"Putting to death" demands action and determination and discipline, yet the Spirit's help is palpable.

I once carried the heavy brief case of J. Oswald Sanders, a man whose friendship I enjoyed over several of his latter years. We were walking down a long corridor to the gate for the airplane he was to take. He always had the heaviest of cases, filled with books used in writing his yearly new publication. About half way down, my venerated old friend wrapped his hand around mine and bore much of the weight I was straining under. It was an endearing act, and he knew it had meaning.

The Spirit does the same. We are not thinking clearly if we despair of change and therefore neglect to take a longer look at ourselves. We can have hope as we do since God has already promised to get us to heaven.

If he can accomplish that, he can do the lesser thing.

Do it by faith and please God not only by removing the sin, but also in the way you go about it.

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;
And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way.*

Psalm 139:23-24

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