
CONVERSATIONS WITH IGNORANCE

AN AMAZING THING about Ignorance is his fervent, religious tenacity. He stays fixed on the Way though not in the company of Christian and Hopeful. In fact, he deliberately chooses to stay aloof, rejecting their fellowship and camaraderie, and instead takes his "pleasure in walking alone."

Despite this, Christian and Hopeful wait for Ignorance to catch up and then draw him into a discussion regarding the state of his soul. The conversation is close and intense, yet Ignorance seems to have ready answers.

The question put to Ignorance is a question still at large today. From where does our confidence come that we are in a state of grace? Where does assurance find its basis? How do we know that we have passed from darkness into light, and how do we know that we know? The answer that Ignorance repeatedly gives is subjective and internal:

Chr: "What persuades you that you have left all for God and heaven?"

Ign: "My heart tells me so."

Chr: "How do you know that your heart is giving you comfort that is based upon God's Word?"

Ign: "My heart and life agree so together."

Chr: "Who told you that your heart and life agree together?"

Ign: "My heart tells me so."

Chr: "How can we trust our hearts when the Scripture informs us that the heart cannot be trusted?"

Ign: "I cannot believe my heart to be this bad."

And so goes the discussion. The hymn writer points out something different upon which to focus:

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

The "sweetest frame," of course, is *my* very holiest frame of mind. It is the most noble and lofty attitude that sits upon the throne of my heart.

We dare not place our sole trust in whatever feeling floods over the soul at that magic moment when Heaven comes down to Earth in our experience, and we are transported to a heightened level of spiritual communion. As the sole arbiter of right and wrong, truth and error, the Word of God must be brought to bear on all things. The objective, written revelation of Scripture informs me that it is only in the finished work of the Son of God that I should place my confidence and trust, and in nothing else. Solomon reminds us, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Proverbs 28:26).
