

May 26, 2020 (St. Augustine of England, Bishop and Confessor)

Friday is my 57th birthday. This has me thinking about something I've not given enough serious thought to prior to this time in my life...

What will the testimony of my life be? Will it testify to me being a man that lived life "my way" and tacked Jesus Christ onto it? Or, will it say that Christ was (is) my life and I added some things on that didn't contradict my being in-Christ? Was I (am I) known as a guy who had a "religious job," or as a priest who lived in this world, yes, but was not of it?

How would this be determined? A wise priest once wrote "A holy priest makes a fervent people; a fervent priest makes a pious people, a pious priest a decent people and a decent priest a godless people." Which type of priest am I?

I know I shouldn't be too concerned about how my life will be perceived by others. With St. Paul I should be able to say "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord" (1 Corinthians 4:3, 4 NKJV).

The problem with that is, I **do know** things "against myself," and I will face God's judgment for them (2 Corinthians 5:10)! I trust God's mercy, but I don't trust myself. At times I wonder how I will fare before Him (1 Corinthians 3:11-17)? I need to be saved from presumption (Psalm 19:13). If I'm wearied by my sinfulness, how must God feel about it?

I know the way to answer my own questions. I know how to proceed from here...With a life of daily penitence, prayer, fidelity to Christ and His Word, and Ephesians 2:10 good works.

I realize these things will not "save" me! And I don't want to do them to make me "feel" religious. But faith without works is dead (St. James 2:18) and the old man needs to die daily and the new man built up strong (Ephesians 4:21-24)! These are the truest of "good works."

"Being saved" is a daily choice made to follow Jesus wherever He leads. Not just in the big things, the big decisions, the ones that others know about and see. But in the little things, the small choices made and acts done, where no one else but God and maybe the angels see (We are only as good to God in public as we are in private). It is being transformed by the renewing of my mind so I can be a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God in Christ (Romans 12:1, 2).

Salvation is transformative, not static! If I am not consistently (if not constantly) being transformed from sinfulness to sanctification (Romans 6), if I am not becoming conformed to the image of Christ (Colossian 3:1-17), then how can I make a claim of being "saved."

This is some heavy stuff, I know. But at some point in life it needs to be wrestled with it. I'm asking myself "What took you so long?"

This is my musing for today. Thank you for reading it.