

Products of Environment

When a tree is felled, a lot can be learned by looking at its rings. If, for example, you wish to tell the age of a tree, count its rings. This is well known by nearly everyone. If we look at the rings of the tree and they seem unusually close together, then we know that the growth of the tree was unusually slow that year. Rings which see far apart can mean a period of rapid growth. Rings which are distorted can mean the start of a limb branching off. Nearly everything which happens to a tree lays down a lifetime record in its rings. An experienced arborist can tell the history of the tree and the environment in which it grew by studying the rings of a felled tree or by drilling a core sample. I have heard the comment that if a tree could talk, it would speak volumes if only we could understand the language.

Some psychologists say that we are what we are because we are the product of our upbringing and its concomitant environment. To acknowledge that this is true is to deny the exercising of the free will which we were given at creation. God told Adam and Eve to eat of any tree in the Garden of Eden save one. They were also informed of the consequences of their disobedience and upon succumbing to the temptations of the serpent God's warnings came to fruition. The resultant judgments heaped upon the naïve couple were severe and Adam and Eve were forced to start over again for the first time facing mortality and the need to work for a living[1].

How often do we, like Adam, who blamed Eve[2], look for another to blame for our own transgressions. The history of man is not one which complements his character very much. In fact, history is replete with illustrations of man's greed corruption and failings. It was only at the intercessory action of Moses that God changed His mind about destroying the children of Israel after leading them out of the land of Egypt when they turned their backs on God and rejected Him[3].

In the light of this evidence, we are forced to acknowledge the fact that all of us have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God[4], and that save for His Grace we would reap the rewards of this state of sin, that being death[5]. This means that we must accept the free gift God has offered us, not because we deserve it, but because He loves us and it is the only way to purchase our Salvation and pay the penalty for the sin in which we are entombed.

It is truly amazing grace wherein God Himself will voluntarily pay the penalty for His Children when we could not be obedient to His laws. Yet through it all, He still calls us His children and wants us to have everlasting life[6]. The thing He asks in return is that we live for Him Who died for us[7]. That should be our act of love toward Him.

[1] Genesis 1:1-3:24

[2] Genesis 3:12

[3] Exodus 32:10-14

[4] Romans 3:23

[5] Romans 3:24; 6:23; Acts 5:11; Ephesians 2:5-8;

[6] 1 John 3:1; John 3:16

[7] Romans 12:1-2