Our Gospel Responsibility

James Wells

James Wells | Added: Aug 02, 2013 | Category: Theology

Because we do not hold the doctrine of legal responsibility before God, therefore it is we are charged with holding the atheistical doctrine of irresponsibility, and which charge, like all the rest of the charges brought against the people of God, is utterly false. Our law responsibility to God demanded of us perfection of obedience. Having failed in that, and, in addition to that failure, having committed positive sins against God, we thereby are made obnoxious unto eternal wrath; and there was a responsibility which Christ alone could take; Christ hath taken that responsibility, and being brought to receive him as the end of the law, there our legal responsibility ceases. We are no longer responsible, there is nothing more to be responsible for. Doth the law ask anything more? Doth justice ask anything more? Doth holiness ask anything more? Hath not Jesus magnified the law, and established it? And do we thus, through faith, make void the law? Yea, we establish the law. And as we do not hold the doctrine of legal responsibility, so there is another doctrine which we do not hold; namely, that men are responsible to God for their eternal salvation. The word of God represents the Saviour as being responsible for the salvation of men. He says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold"; them I must die for. Something more than that. Them I must redeem. Something more than that. Them I must make a way for to come ultimately into heaven. Something more than that. "Them I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Therefore we do not hold legal responsibility, and we do not hold that man is responsible for his own salvation; for how can we be responsible for that which is not committed unto us? And if my salvation be committed unto me, then I know what the result must be; for if Moses could not obtain an earthly Canaan because he rebelled by the way, how much less can we attain to the heights of eternal glory by anything we can do! We bless the Lord, therefore, that He hath laid help upon one that is mighty; that Christ hath carried out in his Humiliation our law responsibility, and that in His exaltation He carries out His new covenant responsibility. But doth it therefore follow, I say, that we hold the atheistical doctrine—for so I call it—of irresponsibility? Certainly not. The truths of the gospel, as so many talents, are committed unto us, and we profess to trade with those truths, we profess to trade with those talents, and we are responsible to God for the use we make of the truths of the gospel; we are responsible to God for the kind of profession we make of His name. If we make an unhallowed profession, a hypocritical profession, or a false profession, then we shall at the last be dealt with according to the profession we make. So that we are thus responsible to

God for the use we make of the truth which we profess, and for the profession which we make of His name. Every one of us must give an account of himself to God. It is under the feeling of this responsibility that the apostle saith here, after enumerating mercy after mercy, blessing after blessing, belonging to the people of God, showing that all these shall come upon the persons to whom he is writing, if they continued in the faith grounded and settled, and were not moved away from the hope of the gospel. So, then, those men who are pointing us out as holding the doctrine of irresponsibility, I say it is our comfort to know that they are wrong, and that they misrepresent us; and so the sin lieth not with us, who are degraded and lowered in the eyes of the public, but with those men that charge us with that which we, through mercy, stand clear of. We thus bless God for laying our legal responsibility upon One who was able to bear it; we bless our God that Jesus is the Surety of the new covenant. Am I to become joint surety with him? When two sureties are required, what is the reason of that? Why, because the persons to whom they are sureties are not satisfied with one; if they are satisfied with one, surely they will not seek a second. And shall the Lord, after finding such a Surety for the safety of the people as Jesus is, then seek to the people themselves? What, seek to the man that needs a surety himself! The man who needs the surety himself to become surety for his own salvation! Why, this doctrine is as absurd, is as unreasonable, as it is untrue and unscriptural. I trust, therefore, we know where our responsibility was; Jesus has ended it; and that we know that He stands the Surety of the covenant, and He alone; and that we know also where our responsibility now is.

James Wells

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE AND DISTRIBUTE CONTENT FROM NEW FOCUS BUT PLEASE MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE A CREDIT TO "NEW FOCUS HTTPS://GO-NEWFOCUS.CO.UK"

Source: https://go-newfocus.co.uk/articles/app/category/theology/article/our-gospel-responsibility.pdf
© New Focus 2026