

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

May 11, 2018

## Swallowing a Camel

The Bible tells us of certain kinds of people (or people who do certain things) who absolutely *“shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”* I Corinthians 6:9. The apostle Paul said *“do not be deceived!”* It does not matter what our doctrines say, or how often we are assured that there are exceptions, the word of God is adamant and clear that those who do these kind of things will not be accepted by God. Consider the witness of the following passages written by the apostle Paul.

*“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **Let no man deceive you with vain words:** for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.”* Ephesians 5:5-7.

*“**Be not deceived:** neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”* I Corinthians 6:9-10.

*“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

*Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.***" Galatians 5:19-21.

The sort of things mentioned above are neither in the heart nor life of those who are born of God. Paul tells us *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."* I Corinthians 6:11. We may have at one time been some of these things, but when we were *"born again"* these were washed out of our heart and nature by the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the grace of God that delivers and keeps us from sin. For such things to again become a part of a believer's heart and life they must first *"fall from grace"* to a place where *"Christ is become of no effect unto you..."* Galatians 5:4. When Christ becomes *"of no effect"* to a believer, sin always returns to reside in their heart.

Jesus described *"sinful deeds"* as the *"evil fruit"* that grows on a *"corrupt tree"* Matthew 7:17, but, he said *"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit..."* Matthew 7:18. If oranges grow on a tree, you know it is an orange tree. Even so, if evil fruit grows on a tree, you know it is a corrupt tree.

The *"fruit of the Spirit"* is *"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance..."* Galatians 5:22-23. These are the sort of things you find in the life of a child of God. They are *"good trees,"* therefore as Jesus said, they cannot produce *"evil fruit."*

It is important to recognize that even a *"good tree"* can sometimes be found lacking in its fruit. Just as water, sun, and nutrients cause the fruit of

a tree to abound, *“the knowledge of the truth”* and our fellowship with the Lord causes our spiritual fruit to increase. A child of God going through a “spiritual drought” may notice a lack of the fullness of spiritual fruit, but lacking in *“good fruit”* is not the same as bearing *“evil fruit.”* Someone may “lack” in the fullness of *“love,”* but lacking the fullness of love is not the same as bearing the evil fruit of *“hate.”* The apostle John assures us that the one who hates does not have *“eternal life abiding in him.”* 1 John 3:15. Another person may lack the fullness of the fruit of *“longsuffering,”* but this lack is not the same as bearing the fruit of *“wrath”* and *“envy.”*

If you view sin to be everything that comes short of the fullness of Jesus Christ then perhaps impatience, doubt, and misunderstanding could in that respect be considered as sin. But when people then go on to claim that all “sin” is the same before God, I say evidently someone forgot to tell this to Jesus. He told Pilate, *“Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath **the greater sin.**”* John 19:11. Is the person who is offended because they misunderstood something the same before God as a person who lies, steals, or commits fornication? Absolutely not! The first may possibly be a *“good tree”* that is lacking in the fullness of *“good fruit,”* but the latter is bearing *“evil fruit”* because it is a *“corrupt tree.”*

Jesus spoke of those who *“strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.”* Matthew 23:24. In doctrine they criminalize every human action, but make provision for the things God’s word says he will never accept. They are like those Isaiah spoke of

who “...make a man an offender for a word...” Isaiah 29:21. They have “sin tests” that neither Jesus nor His disciples passed. Mark 7:2, John 9:16, 24 Luke 7:31-34. How many times have I heard it presented that “impatience” is “sin” just as much as adultery? I assure you the betrayed spouse does not see it that way, and neither does God. One is due to human frailty, the other is outright sin. It is not sinful to be human, but it is a sin to be sinful!

Salvation does not take away our humanity even though Christ does take away our sin. I John 3:5. Our knowledge and understanding is limited, we are affected by circumstances, and sometimes we all get things wrong. This is a part of being human, but remember, Jesus Christ died to *save* “humans” *from their sin!* Matthew 1:21.

**“AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU: BUT YE ARE WASHED, BUT YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, AND BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD.”** I Corinthians 6:11.