

# COMFORTING SINNERS

*“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD. They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.”* Jeremiah 23:16-17

It is a sad day in the church when the emphasis of ministry changes from “saving sinners from their sin,” to “comforting sinners in their sin.” This is the case when the simplicity of Christ is no longer the message of the church. The apostle Paul warned against those who preach a philosophical gospel, because the only answer they have is based on “traditions of men” and “the orderly arrangements (rudiments) of the world” Colossians 2:8, and not “Jesus Christ, and Him crucified” I Corinthians 2:2.

Nothing will change for the modern church until “something changes.” Does that seem strange to hear? When Jesus came into Galilee, He preached to the Jews in that region, “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” The Greek word which was translated “repent” actually means “to think differently.” His message to devout Jews was “change your mind and believe the gospel.” The church and the individual will never see any change in the sin problem, which only increases with time, if they do not “change their mind and believe the gospel.” It is almost universal in the churches today to believe, “We are all sinners...we sin every day.” That is only true in those places where the simplicity of Christ is not preached as the only answer to the sin problem. I see an endless flow of books and religious articles written to help “believers” overcome their addictions to everything from drugs, alcohol, pornography, and gambling, to how to manage their anger and abusive behavior. Perhaps these writings have a place in the wisdom of the world, but certainly not in the church of Jesus Christ.

God has given but one answer for these “sin problems,” which is the death of His beloved Son, whose holy blood was shed for our sanctification Hebrews 13:8.

*“...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*  
I John 1:7

The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, but will never cover sin. The blood of animals, which were offered for a “covering,” could not cover sin if they were not offered in “godly sorrow.” David said, *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise”* Psalms 51:17. The prophet Isaiah said, *“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations”* Isaiah 66:3.

*“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron...”* I Timothy 4:1-2

In every place of worship where a minister is compelled to continually tell the people, “We are all sinners; we sin everyday...,” you can know that “seducing spirits” are at work to bring this “doctrine of the devil” into the thinking of the congregation. Those who submit themselves to listen to this “lie” are “having their conscience seared with a hot iron,” with the result that not even the Holy Ghost can convict them of sin. If you are a sincere believer who is also terrified by the thought of sin remaining in your heart, you are blessed, because your conscience has not yet been seared. The Spirit of God can use that “terror” II Corinthians 5:11 in your heart to bring you to godly sorrow, which also brings “repentance unto salvation not to be repented of” II Corinthians 7:10. According to Jesus, the same Spirit that convicts a sinner of sin, also convinces them of righteousness and justice John 16:8-11, if they will believe and trust in Him who “loved us and gave Himself for us” Galatians 2:20. He suffered and died on the cross to “take away our sin” I John 3:5.

*“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world...”* Romans 5:12

None of us were sinners by choice. We were born with sin polluting our heart and nature. We were not sinners because we sinned, but we sinned because we were sinners. Traditional theology teaches that “justice” demanded punishment for sin, and Jesus died to take our punishment. That is a foolish concept of a god that is not “just.” Our God is just, and “justice” demanded our redemption from sin. Adam was the offender Romans 5:18, and we, the descendants of Adam were the victims of sin who would suffer eternal damnation if there was not a “second man” I Corinthians 15:47 to undo what the first man did.

In the justice of God, He sent Christ to be that “second man,” that through His death He would “destroy the devil” Hebrews 2:14, and “reconcile us to God” Romans 5:10. God “so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son” John 3:16, and Christ so loved us that He “washed us from our sins in his own blood” Revelation 1:5. We are “saved by grace,” and thank God, we who are saved by grace are no longer sinners. We cannot save ourselves,

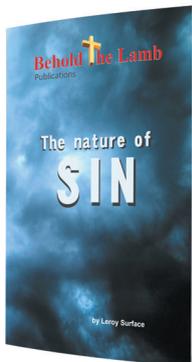
but if we know... 1. Who Christ is John 1:2; 2. That He came into the world “to make an end of sins” Daniel 9:24; 3. And He died on the cross to make those who believe and trust in Him, “free from sin” Romans 6:18, 22, thank God, we are “free indeed!” John 8:36. Let the rejoicing begin.

*“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”*  
Romans 5:19

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