

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

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Living in the Shadows

Everywhere he went the man would proudly show people how he could stare at his shadow on the ground and can see clearly to shave his face. Yes there were drawbacks. He once sliced off a portion of his lip, and he seemed to cut himself on a regular basis. He also always had spots of uncut facial hair that he missed while shaving. But to him it was worth the risks. After all, how many people do you know who can see by the light of a shadow?

The Bible tells us the sacrifices, ordinances, holy days, and Sabbaths that Moses instituted were merely *"...a shadow of things to come"* Hebrews 10:1, Since Christ is the *"body"* that cast the shadow, the apostle Paul was bewildered why believers would be looking to religious *"shadows"* when they could turn their eyes upon Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:17. Even today some people carefully study the Law of Moses and all its ritualism believing that in it they will discover the mysteries of Christ. Others take hold of such things believing it will make them more acceptable and pleasing to God.

The fact that so many Christians are infatuated with the holy days and ritualism of the Law is a troubling sign. Paul warned the believers against becoming involved in these *"shadows."* He was speaking to such Christians when he asked, *"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are*

known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Galatians 4:9-11. They had been called to walk in the light of Christ, but they were choosing the darkness of the Law, and the results would be disastrous.

The children of Israel thought the Law made them holy, when its actual purpose was to show that they were *“exceeding sinful.”* Romans 7:13. Paul said the Law *“was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient...”* I Timothy 1:9. It made no one righteous; it only brought condemnation, saying of those who served it, *“There is none righteous, no, not one.”* Romans 3:10, 19. Yet those who become entangled with the Law become blind to its true purpose. Paul tells us that *“even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.”* II Corinthians 3:15.

It is the vanity of the mind that causes people to seek to explain Christ by looking into the Law. If you could understand the Law of Moses perfectly, still it would not give you understanding of Christ. Why? **Because Jesus Christ came to do what the Law could never do!** Let’s consider the following passages of scripture:

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:” Romans 8:3. The Law could destroy the sinner, but it could never destroy the sin that was in the sinner. This is the reason Jesus Christ died upon the cross. Paul said, *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with*

him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Romans 6:6.

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4. The sacrifices of the Law could give you a covering for sin and they could bring you forgiveness for sin, but they could never take away your sin. Christ came to do that which was impossible for the Law to do. As John the Baptist said: *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”* John 1:29.

“For the law made nothing perfect (complete), but the bringing in of a better hope did...” Hebrews 7:19. The *“weakness and profitableness”* of the Law Hebrews 7:18 was that it could cleanse the outside of a person through commandments, but it could not wash sin from their inner man. This left them *“incomplete”* and unacceptable to God. We only receive this *“completion”* when the blood of Jesus Christ purges us from a *“conscience of sins.”* Hebrews 10:1-2. A *“conscience of sins”* is sin in the heart. Some call it the sinful nature. Those who have been washed from their sin have been made *“complete”* because the Bible says, *“For by one offering he hath perfected (completed) forever them that are sanctified.”* Hebrews 10:14.

“...for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Galatians 3:21. The Law could give you a righteous *“lifestyle”* though the keeping of commandments, but it could never give you the life of Christ within. The *“lifestyle”* of a child of God does not come from a commandment. It flows forth from the *“new*

heart” and *“new spirit”* which God gave them when he washed them from their sin. Ezekiel 36:25-27.

The power of the gospel of Christ is not discovered in its similarity to the Law, but in its difference from the Law. Those who seek to know God through the Law of Moses or through any set of religious rituals or commandments condemn themselves to walk in the shadows. Only when they lift up their eyes from the shadows and through believing the truth begin to gaze solely upon the person of Jesus Christ will they be *“changed into the same image.”* II Corinthians 3:18.

“But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.” II Corinthians 3:15-16