

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

June 25, 2019

AN IRRECONCILABLE DISPUTE

The modern church and the Apostle Paul are on opposite sides of an irreconcilable dispute. One is in agreement with scholars, theologians, and many millions of people. The other stands solely on the writings of the prophets and the gospel he received by revelation of Jesus Christ. If one is correct, then the other is stubborn, arrogant, and wrong. The question is, “What is the truth, and where in all of this, do each of us stand?”

The Apostle Paul did not believe or preach that a child of God is still a sinner. In fact his message was just the opposite. Of those who claimed that sinners would be received by God, he said *“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 5:6-7. He would list sins and warn that **anyone** who did such things would not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21, I Corinthians 6:9.

Paul was adamant about this. He continually affirmed that sin was a thing of the past for a child of God. He said, *“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.

In our modern religious philosophy, the question is asked, "How is it possible that a Christian could cease from sin?" Paul's question was exactly the opposite of this. His question was "How is it possible for a Christian to continue to sin?" He wrote, *"How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* Romans 6:2. You may hear that the neighborhood thief was killed today, but if he breaks in your house tonight, you will know that his death was a false report. To Paul, it was unthinkable and not possible that someone who was in fact *"crucified with Christ"* could continue to sin.

Many are quick to point out that Paul labeled himself the chief of sinners. What they fail to tell you is that he qualified this statement two verses earlier, saying of himself, *"Who was before (previously) a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."* 1 Timothy 1:13. Paul confessed himself to be chief of sinners because he had persecuted the church, but he also lets us know that these things ceased immediately when he came to Christ! He said, *"Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."* 1 Thessalonians 2:10.

As in every church today, Paul recognized that in each of the churches he ministered to, there were some who **"CONFESS, BUT DO NOT POSSESS."** Jesus had warned there would be *"tares"* among the *"wheat,"* but he also warned the ministers about seeking to uproot *"the tares,"* saying, *"...lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them."* Matthew 13:29. Yet you cannot let *"the tares"* take over the church. In

some parts of Paul's epistles there was as much written to "*the tares*" as there was to "*the wheat*." If you have to tell a person to "*abstain from fornication*," you are not instructing "*the wheat*."

There are certainly times a minister must tell a person to "*depart from iniquity*." I Timothy 2:19. However, it is different with Christ. **When Christ comes in, he commands iniquity to depart from the person!** Sin, iniquity, and every power of darkness must flee from the heart of any person into whom the light of Jesus Christ shines.

The Apostles did not present Jesus Christ as the "Lamb of God who covers our sin or takes our guilt and penalty." They declared him to be "*the Lamb of God which **TAKES AWAY THE SIN** of the world*." John 1:29. He is "*the Christ*" who gave himself to "*redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*." Titus 2:14.

Those who teach that the children of God are still sinners, are not in a dispute with someone like me. They are in fact disputing the apostles of Christ and the gospel they preached which "*turned the world upside down*" in their generation.