

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

July 24, 2020

An Offender for a Word

The Prophet Isaiah told us of a certain kind of people who would “...*make a man an offender for a word...*” Isaiah 29:21. If you spoke one word wrong, they would declare you to be a transgressor. He said they would “*watch for iniquity,*” meaning they spent their time seeking to find fault with others.

Jesus encountered these kinds of people during his earthly ministry. They had “sin tests” which Jesus himself did not pass. Consider that Jesus was declared to be a sinner because he healed the sick on the Sabbath day. His disciples were condemned because as they walked through a field on the Sabbath, they “...*began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat.*” Matthew 12:1. They were also condemned because they ate with “*unwashed hands.*” Jesus was even declared to be “*a gluttonous man, and a winebibber*” Luke 7:34 because he ate with “*publicans and sinners.*” You can make anyone out to be a sinner if you really want to, but that does not mean it is true.

After surrendering to Jesus Christ and answering the call to ministry, I began to encounter religious people who sought to prove that everyone was a sinner, and that we all sinned on a regular basis. If you were impatient, you sinned. If you had a less than perfect thought, you sinned. If you got upset, you sinned. If you misjudged a situation... well, you get the picture.

I noticed that these people seemed compelled to make sure we knew that all of us sinned all the time, and so all of us were still sinners.

I soon realized that these who “*watched for iniquity*” were not attempting to keep people from sinning, but were actually seeking to shut the mouth of anyone who spoke out against sin. “How dare anyone say (as Paul did), ‘...*the unrighteousness shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*’? We are all unrighteous!” I finally began to understand that the great comfort and “Blessed Assurance” of these was not that Christ washes us from our sin, but it was the belief that we are all sinners and sin every day. SO MY SIN MUST BE OKAY! Anyone who challenged that belief was then challenging the assurance that their sin would not be judged by God.

When you make everything a sin, then in your mind nothing is truly sinful. The result of making impatience a sin is that we accept that there is no difference between the person who may lack in patience and the person who is a liar. But there is a great difference. The Bible never says the impatient shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, but it does say, “...*all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone...!*” Revelation 21:8.

If you want to know what true sin is, all you have to do is read what the apostles warned would not enter the Kingdom of God. (“*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.*” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.) These are things that a child of God

just cannot do. We all have our “human imperfections,” but if you truly know Christ you are not any of the things mentioned above. Neither do you do the things mentioned below. (*“...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.)

A reasonable argument can be made that anything which is short of Jesus Christ is in a limited sense a sin. I actually accept that argument, if it comes with the understanding that not all sin is the same before God. Jesus confirmed this as he stood before Pilate to be judged. He told Pilate, *“Thou couldest 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. You may impute sin to one man because he is upset at you over a misunderstanding, but is his “upset-ness” which you call “sin” equivalent to the sin of someone who abused your child? Of course not! Not before man, and certainly not before God!

There are things many people call sin which are just part of being human, but being human is not the same as being sinful. The “sins” that *“shall not inherit the Kingdom of God”* are washed out of our heart and nature when we truly come to Christ. Those things came from the nature of the Serpent, and only the blood of Christ can take it away and make us free. This is why Paul wrote, *“**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.