

Proclaiming the Real Christ to the World

History has shown that doing a work in the name of religion is not always such a good thing. Unfortunately, religion does not always indicate good. There are religions many and gods many, and either your religion or your god can be an abomination to the one true God. The Crusades of the Middle Ages were carried out in the name of religion and the people waging those wars were a cruel, obstinate people who knew very little of the God in whose name they were torturing and killing men and women who would not acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Of course, killing your enemy is no doubt the way to convert the infidels to the Christ who, I believe, said that we should love our enemies and do them good.

This is a new era; it is the time of the New Covenant (New Testament) that Jesus ordained between God and man. God has always been love itself (John 4.8, 16), but He is also judgment and justice. God's judgment was emphasized in the Old Testament while at the same time His love was a vital part of the Mosaic Law. (Ref., Deu. 6.5, 7.9, 11.1; Jos. 23.11, and many other passages.)

In the New Testament God's love is emphasized while His judgment is still taught as a warning not to ignore His love. (Ref., Mat.11.22-24; 1 Cor. 4.5; 2 Cor. 5.10. And there are many other scriptures in the New Testament that warn of judgment even while the New Testament is largely proclaiming the love of God.)

Jesus accomplished many things in His stay on earth. One accomplishment was that He bridged the gap between God and man. He came here under the Law of Moses, which, as a righteous Jew, He strictly observed. But we must remember that Jesus was not only a man; He was God Himself and while participating in the human experience, He never lost any of His divinity; He did what the obedient Jew would do and followed the laws and customs of the day except when they would impinge on His divinity. He told John, who hesitated in baptizing Jesus because it was such an inverted situation – John, a sinful man, baptizing the Lord of creation – “Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” Jesus was

incontrovertibly fully a man and, as a man, He submitted to any reasonable traditions of the Jewish culture.. He lived under the curse of sin although He was not guilty of the least sin, inborn or committed. He labored under the strict regulations of the Law although He was the author and enactor of the Law

During Jesus' lifetime before entering upon His public ministry, He undoubtedly encountered various types of ceremonial uncleanness. He came to earth as a man and, just as the ordinary Jewish person might encounter some type of defilement involuntarily, so it was with Jesus. When that occurred He would go through the motions required by the Law for cleansing as any other man.

But actually the Son of God could not be defiled. How can Holiness incarnate lose its pristine glory? How can Righteousness personified be besmirched? The original Holiness and Righteousness would then be no Holiness and Righteousness and no amount of ritual cleansing could restore them. Jesus submitted Himself to the experiences of the ordinary Jewish man – because salvation is of the Jewish nation – in order to be close of kin to sinful man. Otherwise, according to the Law under which He lived, He could not become the Savior or Redeemer of all mankind.

This has been a keyhole glimpse (blurred though it is) of the complex and amazing person of Jesus. There is so much more we do not know, so much we do not understand, so much we cannot even guess at. Nevertheless if we are representatives of Christ, we should proclaim to the world the whole being of Christ as we know Him. He is, by any way we look at Him, a God of love and mercy, willing and even anxious to forgive us of our grossest sins. But we are required to warn all who will hear us that He can be a God of wrath when we continually turn our backs on His entreaties. If you will read the scriptural references given several paragraphs above, you will see both sides of this complex God who can be 1) loving yet judgmental when His awesome anger is aroused, and 2) gentle yet fearsome when we persistently dare to reject the awful sacrifice He made to save us.

The love and grace of God are completely outside of man's merit. The original sin that Adam committed in Eden is of itself a forever damning indictment against us. You, who are at present walking upright before God, are still only a former sinner who is now saved by grace. There is ever lurking within us a carnal nature that is waiting only for the opportunity to break out like a plague. We who are saved are not super humans. Without the ever-present grace of God, we are grossly imperfect; our natures are utterly depraved and we have added many outrageous sins to the single sin committed in the Garden of Eden.

We can't gloss over our sins because they hurt our self-image. It is a hard fact that we are sinners, ugly, dirty and repulsive. We can be nothing else in the unsparing glare of the perfect righteousness of God. And yet He saved us. Beyond that, He expects us to tell the world about this Jesus who brought salvation to us. God wants us to tell lost souls everywhere that He wants to give salvation to the entire world. Christ dared to die for us when we were sinners, ugly, dirty and repulsive. The least we can do is tell the world about our Jesus and the Good News of salvation.

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