Loving Darkness More Than Light

Every person has two offers before them: the beauty of the character of Christ and of the Kingdom of God, which requires the crucifixion of the flesh, and the beauty of the kingdom of darkness, with the pleasures of sin for a season.

When most people are shown **how the real Jesus lived**, or rather, when they are shown the beauty of the traits of His heart, they are not drawn to these "modest traits". They reject them as something contemptible and have no interest in having this modest, humbling, easily overlooked character imprinted on their own. (But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them… 1 Corinthians 2:14)

The State of Mankind

Most people stop at a form of godliness, at what the Lord did on the cross for them. The Lord Jesus calls all people to live as He lived, but people despise the traits of His heart, and no one pays them any attention. It is easier to choose the pleasures of sin for a season and to believe what is preached today, that they have been fully forgiven at the cross.

Let us not be deceived, for great will be our disappointment on the day of judgment, the day of God's wrath. (For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 1:18)

If, for example, we live in the sin of anger, if anger is still a way of life for us after decades of so-called "repentance", we should understand that we have never been filled with admiration for one of the most beautiful traits of His heart: the meekness and longsuffering of the Lord Jesus.

The Need to Be Born Again

Being born again is the beginning of the work of being perfected in patience. If we do not love this trait of the Lord's character with all our heart and all our strength, God's work of perfecting us has not begun; we have not yet been received as disciples into the school where the patience Christ had is learned.

All things must become new; the old things must pass away. (If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Likewise, if our life is still unchanged when it comes to righteousness, if we do not admire and love this beautiful trait in the character of the Lord Jesus, if we do not hunger and thirst to live in righteousness as He lived, then God's work of perfecting us has not begun.

The Word of Scripture speaks to us very clearly: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children

of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." (1 John 3:9-10)

An Example of Obedience

If we disregard the authorities that are from God, if we drive above the speed limit… without caring about the traffic laws, if we speak evil of both those in office and others… if we live in the lusts of the flesh, it means we are still in the old state, in which sin is a way of life, and we have not yet been born of God. (These… despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Jude 1:8)

The Word of Scripture is very plain on this point: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." (Romans 13:1); "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:16)

Self-Examination

It is good for each of us to examine ourselves in the light of the Word and ask what kind of new birth we have had. Are we drawn to the beauty of the traits of the Lord Jesus? Are we consciously working to be changed into the image of Christ? Can the fruit of the Spirit's work be seen in our lives?

Do we seek the Kingdom of righteousness, peace and love as a treasure? Do we find ourselves among those who have left behind the things of the world?

We urge you to be honest with yourself and check where you stand at this moment. Your eternity depends on it!

Examine yourself: Have you made a real covenant of discipleship, of complete obedience to Christ? Do you live in righteousness, and is your goal to come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ? Are you subject to the authorities ordained by God? Do you dodge paying your taxes? Do you love the things of the world?

Has God truly placed you in the Body of Christ, which is fitly joined together and compacted, where every part does its share? Are you subject to the leaders of the church? Or are you in a congregation with religious programmes, where everyone does as they please?

If you have not yet sought righteousness as a treasure, begin now. If you have understood the traits of the Lord's character, long to have them too. Begin to live in righteousness as He lived; learn patience, meekness, love… from the Lord Jesus, and you will find rest for your soul.

If you speak in tongues, ask yourself where that gift came from. From the Holy Spirit or from another spirit? Did you receive this gift to use for the growth and perfecting of others, or is it only for yourself, to reassure you that you are saved? Examine yourself very carefully, for your eternity is at stake!

The Church is the Body of Christ; it is a school made up only of disciples of Christ. In this school, everyone, from the least to the greatest, has the goal of becoming perfect like their Teacher.

God designed it for the growth and perfecting of the saints; that is its purpose. (And he gave some… pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints… till we all come… unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13)

If you are in an organisation whose aim is not real discipleship, so that we become like Christ, look for a pure congregation, where the brothers and sisters care for one another and whose goal is the growth and perfecting of the saints, so that you can grow healthily towards perfection and come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ! (Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2:22)

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