The Bankruptcy of an Incomplete Gospel

Today we can see crowds of people who say they were "born again" decades ago, and it never even crosses their minds that they must come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

This grave deception, which will cost them their life, happens because God's plan of salvation for them has been reduced to a mere form of godliness and the forgiveness of sins.

They have let Satan deceive them into thinking that the life of a "born-again" Christian is marked by falling, repenting, confessing and then falling again into the same sin or sins, and that it will go on like this until the moment of death. And this happens because we are taught that sin cannot be overcome, and that in the end the righteousness of the Lord Jesus will be credited to us. Many pray to God to overcome a particular sin or several sins (slander, anger, idle talk…), and on the second or third day they find that they have been overcome by them again. Because in their Christian life they have no victory over sin (anger, greed…), they cannot believe it is possible to live a life like that of the Lord Jesus, one that would lead them to the perfection of their character.

The Standing of the Religious Man

So they have come to the conclusion that this is the true life of the "born-again" Christian, who will finally reach heaven, not on the basis of what he lived on earth, but on the basis of the Saviour's perfect life credited to his account.

This is **the standing of the religious man,** who has preached, taught, spoken in tongues, prophesied, worked miracles and kept a holy day, but did not believe that God requires him to live **a life of complete obedience** and of transformation into the image of the Lord. But at the end of his life he will have a terrible surprise. (**Many** will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? … and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I **never** knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:22-23)

We see a major bankruptcy in crowds of Christians who believe they are "born again," yet when they lie on their deathbed, on the final stretch, they run to the only option Satan offers: the Lord's mercy for "the forgiveness of sins." We see many of them tormented by the thought that they have not lived at peace with those around them, with their brothers and sisters in the faith, and they seek them out to ask for their forgiveness.

The bankruptcy of this incomplete Gospel, which stops at the forgiveness of sins, forces them to rake through their minds in search of sins still left in their lives, so that they can ask the Lord's forgiveness for them, hoping in His grace and mercy. This happens because they neither believed nor worked to come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

But we must remind them that the **"doctrine of atonement"** offered by Satan, "a salvation that consists only of the forgiveness of sins," brings fear of punishment with it, because the Scriptures require us to overcome sin. (Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life. Revelation 3:2, 5)

Whoever has not worked to come to the stature of Christ will carry this fear until he closes his eyes for the last time. Whoever accepts this lying offer cannot have full confidence in the day of judgment.

The Necessity of Perfection

Only when we come to the stature of Christ will we have His love, which is perfect, and only this love casts out fear and will give us full confidence in that day. (Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment… There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:17-18)

If the religious organization or congregation (group) we belong to does not carry out God's plan, if it does not make disciples and enrol them in the school of Christ in order to grow them up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Lord Jesus, but limits itself to obtaining salvation through faith in the sacrifice on the cross, then that organization **is not of God;** it is not the Body of Christ.

We must flee from such an organization, which promotes the scheme by which Satan has deceived the world.

The Church is the Body of Christ, and God designed it not to call people to religious programmes, but for the growth and perfecting of the saints; that is its purpose. (And he gave some… evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints… Till we all come… unto **the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.** Ephesians 4:11-13)

The Lord Jesus warns us to search the Holy Scriptures so that we do not stray from God's truth concerning His plan, a plan that calls for the perfecting of our character. (**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.** Matthew 5:48)

So as not to let Satan deceive us, we must understand that we are called not only to be forgiven of our sins, but also to grow as disciples until we reach the perfection that befits those who are brothers of the Lord Jesus.

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