

**Articles and Sermons :: Paul said.....I'm afraid**

Paul said.....I'm afraid - posted by Onesimus4God (), on: 2007/4/10 8:20

2 Cor 11:3 But I am fearful, lest that even as the serpent beguiled Eve by his cunning, so your minds may be corrupted and seduced from wholehearted and sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Other than the Lord Jesus Christ, no doubt, Adam and Eve were as much like the image of God more than all others since. One thing they lacked, and what a blessing it was for them, was a knowledge of Evil. There was no inner war, no conflict. Just communion with God, each other, and God's creation. Heaven on earth. It was pure, holy, and righteous. It was God's heart that they never suffer the knowledge of evil. But He made them with a right to choose. He set before them two simple things of unimaginable consequences...life and death, the knowledge of good and evil. Later in scripture God makes it real plain and says that He sets before us "life and death". Then we are given the same counsel He gave Adam and Eve. Make a good wise choice. Choose LIFE. How simple is that? This is simple beneficial truth, not high theology.

Eve was seduced into doubting God's integrity, His love, His perfect oversight of their ministry and life. Satan deceived her into doubting truth itself...God is truth. She made a bad choice and desired the deception more than obedience to God. The loss is immeasurable, for all mankind.

Therefore, without Christ, we are without hope. Eve chose death. Adam chose death with her, they were deceived. They lost everything. Their life was before this very simple, now it was complicated and confusing.

In Paul's hour, he too was anxious and fearful, afraid that religious demagogues, with all their outward displays, would distract and deceive the Corinthian Church from its pure devotion to Christ.

They began pure and holy, but began to listen to others rather than listen to Christ. They began to follow the desires of their hearts, rather than the desire for that blessed hope that is found only in Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

You see, Christ took upon Himself all that was necessary for our salvation. Not just some, not just part, but all, everything, entirely needed to save us. There is not one thing left undone for our benefit. Therefore, there is nothing that needs to be added.....selah. If Christ has done all, and surely He has, then nothing more is required of us who accept what He did in our place except our devotion and adoration to Him. For without Him we would be immeasurably lost and condemned.

In our day, there are many distractions. Some are our duties to our families and our responsibility to care for them. There are many other distractions, even without number, that can deceive us and rob us of our blessed hope and our pure and wholehearted devotion to Jesus Christ.

The Corinthian Church was forgetful, as Eve was forgetful. Eve's preacher was God Himself! How accurate was God in His reminding? Can you just imagine one of His messages? How powerful and anointed they must have been; how thrilling to the heart of Adam and Eve God's meeting with them must have been. It is difficult to imagine that they would have listened to another, as he defrauded them of their very life, yet we know they did. How well do we know it. Deceived, by a word that sounded good, but was not pure and truthful. It appealed to the sensual part of man, and his natural God-likeness.

Man was created just a tiny bit lower than God Himself. Not even the angels were superior to this creation, and God was so wonderfully delighted with Himself and His creation. He had fellowship with His creation day by day. Pure, holy, in truth and joy.

Satan offered a compromise, a key to elevate man's pride to the ultimate level, self righteousness instead of God righteousness. Self righteousness is evil. God's righteousness is good. Before the deception, they knew only His righteousness, the good. But the moment they believed a lie, and acted upon it, the knowledge of evil, self righteousness and pride in one's self became known to them, and their spiritual umbilicus was severed.

God came walking through the Garden in the cool of the day, desiring fellowship. Yes God knew what happened, but His question was asked just the same..."Adam, where are you". Imagine a family out camping, and the 8 year old wanders off

ff alone and get's seperated from his family. The father runs about crying out...."son, where are you"? When I read what God cried out for His son Adam, I hear the same kind of voice. "Adam, where are you?" Seperated, ****, and ashamed.

In the New Testament, man is offered a similar choice to what God offered Adam and Eve. "Believe and repent.....or perish". The object of our belief is of absolute critical importance, Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Yeshua, and what He suffered in our place as a living sacrifice. Pure, holy, acceptable unto God. Worthy of all our worship and devotion, not needing all our busyness and comotion. Simple faith, simple love, simple hope, a perfect and complete plan. Not one part of it needed anything that mortal man possesses. What Christ did at Calavary had the perfection of God upon it. All man need do was observe God in action, and enjoy the benefit of being reconnected into fellowship with God. Isn't that simple? Isn't it wonderful? Isn't it glorious? Isn't it enough? Enough for what? For our salvation.....our worship.....our devotion?

Yes, it surely is enough, more than enough. Why is it, in this hour, that it often times seems so complicated? Why are there so many volumes of books written, so many messages preached about almost everything under the sun about something so simple. All promise a greater understanding, a new insighth, something that we are lacking in our walk. Why does it seem so complex, and make me afraid, as Paul was afraid? Are you afraid for your flocks? I pray that you are.

When God cut a covenant with Abraham, the bible tells us that God laid Abraham out in a trance like state. See, God's covenant is pure and holy. Untainted. Anything that fallen man has a hand in is not pure and holy, it is tainted by our sinful nature interfering with God's perfection and holyness. If Abraham had been given any part in this covenant process, it would not have been holy and pure.

Christ died alone on the cross for us. Therefore, He alone is worthy of our devotion and love, nothing else. Not our ministry, not the love from our flocks, not our responsibilities, not our possessions, not our comforts, not our riches, not our leisure time.....nothing is worthy of the devotion due only to the Holy One, the Lord Himself.

Yet our lives are as busy as can be, as complex as possible, hardly a minute to call our own, hardly a minute to give to God. I'm afraid, we have lost our devotion...at least for the most part. I'm fearful that it may cost some, even those who spend a life time in church, their salvation.

Here this simple truth. Tares have all the qualities of wheat, but they bare no fruit. They are trained in look alike behavior and get quite good at it, but nothing becomes of it. They are not personally spiritually connected to Christ by faith, and ascribe no personal value to devotion. They are in church right along with the believers. They pay tithes, sit on committees, organize all kinds of programs, use their talent to direct choirs, counsel, serve, everything imaginable, even preach and pastor, but where is the devotion? Where is the worship? You may see them running around like Martha taking care of all the last minute details so man will be impressed with the perfection of man, rather than sitting at the feet of Jesus, basking in His presence, with tears of joy and devotion falling on His feet. Love is so simple and satisfying. Devotion makes it last. I'm afraid, we have lost our devotion and replaced it with emotion and comotion. We've moved from faith to fear and uncertainty, because we have built on a weak and imperfect foundation. We have been taught to stand on our own abilities and talents, and we teach others to do the same rather than depending on the empowering of God.

In first Corinthians, Paul said that the cross (all Jesus did there, and before He got to it) is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those of us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Selah.

Here's the acid test. Hold a prayer meeting, a meeting with God. Don't call it meeting with God, though that is exactly what it is. Just on such and such a day, we will have a time of prayer together. Saturday morning would be good, right? Most people are off on Saturday morning. Or you could simply stay after church on Sunday, have a covered dish lunch, and then 2 hours of prayer. Simple right? At the end of your lunch, you may have most of the flock there with you. By the end of the two hours of prayer, there may be just you and God. Where is the devotion? Where did everyone get off to and to what pray tell? What could be more important than meeting with God. What could thrill the heart and satisfy like sitting before God? "Well what will we do for two hours"? Beloved, nothing is required but devotion. Devotion can be content in sitting in silence. "What? No agenda? No incense? No heavenly chiors" No, just God. JustGod. Just.....God.God. Is that appealing to you? I pray that it is. But in many cases, I'm certain that it is not.

Now I know that there are exceptions, and I pray that all of you are the exception. But where the above is true and applicable, there has been a huge deficiency in the pulpit, and there is no getting around it. Someone once said that church benches were called "pews" because that is where faith died. Pew! The message of the Bible, Jesus Christ and all that He has done for us all is simply lacking for the most part. God is not worshipped and adored because the people do not know God, the preacher may not either. See, if we spend time with God, we have something to talk about that is full of love

and light. If we do not spend time with God....well, you fill in the blanks. Many preachers in this hour fill in the blanks, but it's not with devotion. Busy? Oh yes, they must prove to the committee that they are earning their wages. But what of the wages of the flock?

Men and women are today being trained for the ministry, but they have no idea what being led by the Spirit is all about. They have skills and talents and abilities, but have no idea what a personal relationship with God is. They know plenty about God, but they do not know God. God does not know them. They have not spent time alone with God. They have nothing to offer others, except man's finest. Oh the lights are very theatrical, the music modern and in style. The message is full of homiletics, but there is no Holy Spirit in it. How can I tell? Because there is the missing element of devotion to Jesus Christ. If the Holy Spirit is present, it is unmistakable. Jesus will be the centerpiece of all. He told us that when the Holy Spirit comes, "He will testify of Me". Not Himself, and surely not Rev. XYZ. Not our programs and our crystal palace church buildings. Only the simplicity of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Therein lies the only true source of the Power of God. Our simple pure faith and devotion to Jesus, my Lord and my God.

Humbly before Him,

Lahry Sibley

Re: Paul said.....I'm afraid - posted by enid, on: 2007/4/10 8:59

This does give much food for thought.

Just God.

I hate to say this, but some Christians seem bored with God, not all, but some.

They want heaven without doing what merits going to heaven.

They want what they want, even if it goes against God's will and word.

But our devotion to God will be equal to our love for Him.

'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him, John 14v21.

Do we really love God? He truly knows.

God bless.