

Articles and Sermons :: The superiority of the Spirit over the written Word - John Chrysostom

The superiority of the Spirit over the written Word - John Chrysostom - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/15 13:39

"It were indeed meet for us not at all to require the aid of the written Word, but to exhibit a life so pure, that the grace of the Spirit should be instead of books to our souls, and that as these are inscribed with ink, even so should our hearts be with the Spirit. But, since we have utterly put away from us this grace, come, let us at any rate embrace the second best course.

"For that the former was better, God has made manifest, both by His words, and by His doings. Since unto Noah, and unto Abraham, and unto his offspring, and unto Job, and unto Moses too, He discoursed not by writings, but Himself by Himself, finding their mind pure. But after the whole people of the Hebrews had fallen into the very pit of wickedness, then and thereafter was a written word, and tables, and the admonition which is given by these.

"And this one may perceive was the case, not of the saints in the Old Testament only, but also of those in the New. For neither to the apostles did God give anything in writing, but instead of written words He promised that He would give them the grace of the Spirit: for He, says our Lord, shall bring all things to your remembrance. John 14:26 And that you may learn that this was far better, hear what He says by the Prophet: I will make a new covenant with you, putting my laws into their mind, and in their heart I will write them, and, they shall be all taught of God. And Paul too, pointing out the same superiority, said, that they had received a law not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

"But since in process of time they made shipwreck, some with regard to doctrines, others as to life and manners, there was again need that they should be put in remembrance by the written word."

- First Homily on the Gospel of Matthew

Re: The superiority of the Spirit over the written Word - John Chrysostom - posted by StirItUp (), on: 2016/12/15 15:18
Good word.

" Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"

Re: , on: 2016/12/15 15:44

Just how is the Spirit superior over the God's written word? Jesus is the Word made flesh.

John 1: 1-3, 14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were created through Him, and without Him nothing was created that was created.

14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/15 16:23

Quote:

-----Just how is the Spirit superior over the God's written word? Jesus is the Word made flesh.

Well said brother, that is worthy for us to meditate on.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/12/15 17:13

Charitably reading Chrysostom's point, he longs for that writing on our hearts of the Word of God by the Holy Spirit as the best demonstration of the written Word rather than the objectification of that writing as a 'thing'. Right minds can differ on him, there, for sure.

On a personal note, I find the revelation of God as Word to be fascinating. Before I was a Christian, I was a geek about words. Still am a "word nerd". In college, one of the authors I am fortunate to have read was Neil Postman. His book, *Technopoly*, is excellent if you are interested in the philosophy of words and the opposing philosophy of images and the impact of each on our psyche. It harkens back to the commandment forbidding graven images and the revelation of Christ and John's statements "and the Word was God" and "we beheld His glory".

For those interested in this, the first chapter of Postman's book (and he has others, one of which I have recommended here before), *Technopoly*, please read here.

(Please forgive posting a link if this violates a rule.)

http://rws511.pbworks.com/w/file/attach/68739355/Postman_thamus.pdf

Re: , on: 2016/12/15 18:59

4th century mystic John Chrysostom believed that the gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased after the New Testament era.

He also believed in purgatory and taught people to pray for the dead, writing, "Let us help and commemorate them. If Job's sons were purified by their father's sacrifice, why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them." (Homilies on First Corinthians 41:5)

"Weep for those who die in their wealth and who with all their wealth prepared no consolation for their own souls, who had the power to wash away their sins and did not will to do it. Let us weep for them, let us assist them to the extent of our ability, let us think of some assistance for them, small as it may be, yet let us somehow assist them. But how, and in what way? By praying for them and by entreating others to pray for them, by constantly giving alms to the poor on their behalf. Not in vain was it decreed by the apostles that in the awesome mysteries remembrance should be made of the departed. They knew that here there was much gain for them, much benefit. When the entire people stands with hands uplifted, a priestly assembly, and that awesome sacrificial Victim is laid out, how, when we are calling upon God, should we not succeed in their defense? But this is done for those who have departed in the faith, while even the catechumens are not reckoned as worthy of this consolation, but are deprived of every means of assistance except one. And what is that? We may give alms to the poor on their behalf." (Homilies on Philipians 3:9-10)

Furthermore, he believed that the communion bread and wine became the body and blood of Jesus when consecrated. He wrote that no one can partake of Christ or be saved outside the Church and faith thereof (which foreshadows Catholicism).

Incredibly, he railed against those who abstained from alcohol, and encouraged violence against blasphemers: "Paul is not ashamed, and does not blush, after the many and great signs which he had displayed even by a simple word; yet, in writing to Timothy, to bid him take refuge in the healing virtue of wine drinking. Not that to drink wine is shameful. God forbid! For such precepts belong to heretic. But since our discourse has now turned to the subject of blasphemy, I desire to ask one favor of you all, in return for this my address, and speaking with you; which is, that you will correct on my behalf the blasphemers of this city. And should you hear anyone in the public thoroughfare, or in the midst of the forum, blaspheming God; go up to him and rebuke him; and should it be necessary to inflict blows, spare not to do so. Smite him on the face; strike his mouth; sanctify your hand with the blow, and if any should accuse you, and drag you to the place of justice, follow them thither; and when the judge on the bench calls you to account, say boldly that the man blasphemed the King of angels! For if it be necessary to punish those who blaspheme an earthly king, much more so those who insult God." (Homilies on the Statues 1,7)

Lastly, John Chrysostom was terribly anti-Semitic, comparing, in his *Adversus Judaeos* (Against the Jews) homily, the synagogue to a pagan temple, representing it as the source of all vices and heresies. He described it as a place worse than a brothel and a drinking shop; it was a den of scoundrels, the repair of wild beasts, a temple of demons, the refuge of

brigands and debauchees, and the cavern of devils, a criminal assembly of the assassins of Christ. Chrysostom hated both the synagogue and the Jews, saying that demons dwell in the synagogue and also in the souls of the Jews, and describing them as growing fit for slaughter. The Nazis quoted him (and Martin Luther) during the Holocaust.

Again, I do not look to (wrongly) celebrated men, but to the Word of God.

Re: , on: 2016/12/15 20:55

Brother Alec

Always enjoyed your guitar playing and Robin Mark hairdo at TSC!
And yes this guy was really quite the heretic sadly.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/15 22:07

Quote:

-----4th century mystic John Chrysostom believed that the gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased after the New Testament era.

Brother Alec,

When reading Church history we have to have grace towards leaders as they were simply men who did not see in full and some circumstances around them caused them to be in error at times or imbalanced.

towards cessationism he simply writes about tongues and notices that what occurred then was not happening their midst :

Chrysostom (d.407) â€œ writing on 1 Corinthians and the gift of tongues said, "This whole place is very obscure; but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place. And why do they not happen now? Why look now, the cause too of the obscurity hath produced us again another question: namely, why did they then happen, and now do so no more?". (AD 347â€œ407)

He did teach about "purgatory" but along with many church fathers stated varied beliefs of praying for those deceased who did not know the Lord yet. Perhaps one thought why they would think more this way we do not, is that they saw the dead still alive just passed from time. The modern belief of purgatory held by the Catholic Church is not the thinking of these early men who made random comments about these things. Jesus did preach to spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:19). Could the Lord do that again?

Towards Communion (Eucharist) it is held by many all through Church history that the Lords Supper was more than a symbol. Many evangelicals believe this, there is a mystery and holiness to the taking of the Lords Supper. It is clear to me its more than a symbol in that if we eat it unworthily we will suffer judgment, and even death!

Towards wine this is probably gnostics who say all matter and physical things were evil. It does not excuse his language or encouraging people to strike them. There probably is much more context that we do not know or have not read to this also.

Quote:
-----Lastly, John Chrysostom was terribly anti-Semitic, comparing, in his *Adversus Judaeos* (Against the Jews) homily, the synagogue to a pagan temple, representing it as the source of all vices and heresies. He described it as a place worse than a brothel and a drinking shop; it was a den of scoundrels, the repair of wild beasts, a temple of demons, the refuge of brigands and debauchees, and the cavern of devils, a criminal assembly of the assassins of Christ. Chrysostom hated both the synagogue and the Jews, saying that demons dwell in the synagogue and also in the souls of the Jews, and describing them as growing fit for slaughter. The Nazis quoted him (and Martin Luther) during the Holocaust.

I just read the entire homily he wrote against Jewish people in his city. One needs to read the "entire" sermon to understand and why he speaks against them. Believers were being converted to Judaism and also some starting to practice the festivals, similar to the Jewish roots heresies and problems in our day. Of course many words he said were not proper and this is very similar to Martin Luther.

In the end we do not reject Martin Luther. Luther held to consubstantiation which states the Lord's Supper is more than a symbol. He was also a cessationist in part. Also Luther allowed for prayer for the dead, and only later on made changes towards this:

Quote:
-----To console women whose children were not born and baptized, Martin Luther wrote in 1542: "In summary, see to it that above all else you are a true Christian and that you teach a heartfelt yearning and praying to God in true faith, be it in this or in any other trouble. Then do not be dismayed about your child or yourself. Know that your prayer is pleasing to God and that God will do everything much better than you can comprehend or desire. 'Call upon me,' he says in Psalm 50. 'In the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.' For this reason, we ought not to condemn such infants. Believers and Christians have devoted their longing and yearning and praying for them." In the same year 1542 he stated in his Preface to the Burial Hymns: "Accordingly, we have removed from our churches and completely abolished the popish abominations, such as vigils, masses for the dead, processions, purgatory, and all other hocus-pocus on behalf of the dead".

The Lutheran Reformers de-emphasized prayer for the dead, because they believed that the practice had led to many abuses and even to false doctrine, in particular the doctrine of purgatory and of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice for the departed. But they recognized that the early Church had practiced prayer for the dead, and accepted it in principle. Thus in the 1580 Book of Concord, the Lutheran Church taught:

"... we know that the ancients speak of prayer for the dead, which we do not prohibit; but we disapprove of the application *ex opere operato* of the Lord's Supper on behalf of the dead."

So we do not disown Martin Luther, why would we Chrysostom?

They were not perfect but used of God, none-the-less.

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 11:09

From a Roman Catholic page:

From 386-397 A.D. St. John Chrysostom served as a priest in the main church of Antioch. He soon became renowned for his preaching and writing skills. In 397 A.D. he succeeded St. Gregory of Nazianz as Bishop of Constantinople.

"When the word says, 'This is My Body,' be convinced of it and believe it, and look at it with the eyes of the mind. For Christ did not give us something tangible, but even in His tangible things all is intellectual. So too with Baptism: the gift is bestowed through what is a tangible thing, water; but what is accomplished is intellectually perceived: the birth and the renewal. If you were incorporeal He would have given you those incorporeal gifts naked; but since the soul is intertwined with the body, He hands over to you in tangible things that which is perceived intellectually. How many now say, 'I wish I could see His shape, His appearance, His garments, His sandals.' Only look! You see Him! You touch Him! You eat Him!"

-"Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew" 370 A.D.

"I wish to add something that is plainly awe-inspiring, but do not be astonished or upset. This Sacrifice, no matter who offers it, be it Peter or Paul, is always the same as that which Christ gave His disciples and which priests now offer: The offering of today is in no way inferior to that which Christ offered, because it is not men who sanctify the offering of today; it is the same Christ who sanctified His own. For just as the words which God spoke are the very same as those which the priest now speaks, so too the oblation is the very same."

Source: St. John Chrysostom, "Homilies on the Second Epistle to Timothy," 2,4, c. 397 A.D.

"It is not the power of man which makes what is put before us the Body and Blood of Christ, but the power of Christ Himself who was crucified for us. The priest standing there in the place of Christ says these words but their power and grace are from God. 'This is My Body,' he says, and these words transform what lies before him."

Source: St. John Chrysostom, "Homilies on the Treachery of Judas" 1,6; d. 407 A.D.:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not communion of the Blood of Christ?' Very trustworthily and awesomely does he say it. For what he is saying is this: 'What is in the cup is that which flowed from His side, and we partake of it.' He called it a cup of blessing because when we hold it in our hands that is how we praise Him in song, wondering and astonished at His indescribable Gift, blessing Him because of His having poured out this very Gift so that we might not remain in error, and not only for His having poured out It out, but also for His sharing It with all of us."

"Homilies on the First Letter to the Corinthians" ca. 392 A.D.

Re: Luther, on: 2016/12/16 13:47

Where in the scripture are we told to never disown or disregard the teaching and practices of any man...no matter how popular and famous they might be? We are to adhere to the Word of God plus the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. These things alone are the foundations of the true Church, not the teachings of the reformers.

Here is just one example of Luthers misguided and malicious thinking towards other believers...does this sound like someone who lives by the Spirit of Christ?

"That seditious articles of doctrine should be punished by the sword needed no further proof. For the rest, the Anabaptist hold tenets relating to infant baptism, original sin, and inspiration, which have no connection with the Word of God, and are indeed opposed to it. ... Secular authorities are also bound to restrain and punish avowedly false doctrine ... For think what disaster would ensue if children were not baptized? ... Besides this the Anabaptists separate themselves from the churches ... and they set up a ministry and congregation of their own, which is also contrary to the command of God. From all this it becomes clear that the secular authorities are bound ... to inflict corporal punishment on the offenders ... Also when it is a case of only upholding some spiritual tenet, such as infant baptism, original sin, and unnecessary separation, then ... we conclude that ... the stubborn sectaries must be put to death."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 13:49

There definitely is a mystery in the Blood and Body of Jesus Christ in communion when done in reverence and faith.

"this is.."

"communion with..."

John 6:54 New International Version (NIV)

54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.

The Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox try and claim Chrysostom, but he was neither of theirs.

It is like ourselves being in a modern movement trying to claim the Waldensian leader was actually one of us, where if h

e was actually alive would disagree with possibly many things we held to.

Re: The superiority of the Spirit over the written Word - John Chrysostom - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/12/16 14:03

Brother Greg,

I was blessed by the OP. I was just listening to Tozer's "Pursuit of God" here on SI and it sounded very similar. Here are a couple examples:

Quote:
-----"The modern scientist has lost God amid the wonders of His world; we Christians are in real danger of losing God amid the wonders of His Word. We have almost forgotten that God is a Person and, as such, can be cultivated as any person can. It is inherent in personality to be able to know other personalities, but full knowledge of one personality by another cannot be achieved in one encounter. It is only after long and loving mental intercourse that the full possibilities of both can be explored.

All social intercourse between human beings is a response of personality to personality, grading upward from the most casual brush between man and man to the fullest, most intimate communion of which the human soul is capable. Religion, so far as it is genuine, is in essence the response of created personalities to the Creating Personality, God. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

And:

Quote:
-----"We have been snared in the coils of a spurious logic which insists that if we have found Him we need no more seek Him. This is set before us as the last word in orthodoxy, and it is taken for granted that no Bible-taught Christian ever believed otherwise. Thus the whole testimony of the worshipping, seeking, singing Church on that subject is crisply set aside. The experiential heart-theology of a grand army of fragrant saints is rejected in favor of a smug interpretation of Scripture which would certainly have sounded strange to an Augustine, a Rutherford or a Branierd.

"In the midst of this great chill there are some, I rejoice to acknowledge, who will not be content with shallow logic. They will admit the force of the argument, and then turn away with tears to hunt some lonely place and pray, "O God, show me thy glory." They want to taste, to touch with their hearts, to see with their inner eyes the wonder that is God."

And one more:

Quote:
-----"I have said that Abraham possessed nothing. Yet was not this poor man rich? Everything he had owned before was still his to enjoy: sheep, camels, herds, and goods of every sort. He had also his wife and his friends, and best of all he had his son Isaac safe by his side. He had everything, but he possessed nothing. There is the spiritual secret. There is the sweet theology of the heart which can be learned only in the school of renunciation. The books on systematic theology overlook this, but the wise will understand."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 14:04

Quote:
----- we conclude that ... the stubborn sectaries must be put to death."

Though there were 116 laws against other sects and anabaptists in Germany, some very strict, I would like to see original source evidence for this statement, all I can find is other Catholic websites quoting it and it seems like not a full quote.

Source: Dave Armstrong. "Pamphlet of 1536" in Martin Luther and The Protestant Inquisition (Janssen, X, 222-223; pamphlet of 1536)

Dave Armstrong runs a catholic apologetics blog.

Re: - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/12/16 14:06

Quote:
-----by awakened on 2016/12/16 10:47:28
Where in the scripture are we told to never disown or disregard the teaching and practices of any man...no matter how popular and famous they might be?

Did someone make this claim?

Re: - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/12/16 14:17

Quote:
-----by FrankLira on 2016/12/15 12:44:45
Just how is the Spirit superior over the God's written word? Jesus is the Word made flesh.

I guess I don't get the correlation...

Jesus surely isn't a book which became a man, no? He is the Logos made flesh...which, interestingly, is what the Spirit is given to us for...to make us, in a sense, the word of God made flesh. No?

The Law is God's word, too...and yet God says (through His apostle, Paul) that the "letter kills" and the "Spirit gives life". Sounds like he found the ministry of the Spirit much more glorious than that of the letter...

I believe that is what the quote in the OP was getting at. That God prefers vital, living communion through His Spirit in your hearts (the word written on the heart - the Law of Life), but due to our, let's say...infancy, He communicates to us by written word as a provisional measure. But it is a means, not an end.

Quote:
-----"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."
~ Jesus the Bread of Life; John 5:39-40

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 14:37

"So we do not disown Martin Luther, why would we Chrysostom?"

They were not perfect but used of God, none-the-less."

This is the same flawed logic to support that false teacher John Calvin and his followers who committed atrocities in the "name of God"

There is a very good reason the Church is built on Christ and the Apostles, not on the Protestant reformers.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 15:01

Quote:
-----false teacher John Calvin

Brother,

Unfortunately I would have to disagree with you, he was a man who had flaws also but knew God and was used of the Lord. The protestants were not perfect and were under pressures that were cultural and geographic. Similar to American evangelicals in our day that side with America and war.

We are glad to have messages by John Calvin on SermonIndex, alongside Anabaptists, in heaven we will realize that perhaps more of us understand less than we thought. I already admit that I see very dimly and just "in part" (1 Corinthians 13). May our eyes be on Jesus Christ Himself, not on men who are frail and even fail.

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=category&cid=272>

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 15:10

Disowning both these men's deeply flawed religious views would be most appropriate. The Nazi's used their writings with terrible effect to inflame the seething underlying hatred of the Jewish nation that is always present in many people. A terrible legacy that further greatly hampered the cause of Christ to the Jewish people. To me it's poisoned everything else that they wrote that sounded orthodox. And much of it was not even close to being biblical regardless. The reformation was a work of the Holy Spirit, not Martin Luther or any other religious "leader"

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 15:18

John 6:54 New International Version

54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.

Are you suggesting that the communion bread is somehow transformed into the literal, physical body of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Are you suggesting that the communion wine is somehow transformed into the literal, physical blood of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Re: - posted by forrests (), on: 2016/12/16 15:20

Brother, do you see the difference in what was actually said and what you claimed was said in your reply?

What was said:

Quote:
-----"So we do not disown Martin Luther, why would we Chrysostom?"

They were not perfect but used of God, none-the-less."

What you asked in response to what was said, actually twisting what was said a bit (imo):

Quote:
-----Where in the scripture are we told to never disown or disregard the teaching and practices of any man...no matter how popular and famous they might be?

The original comment (above) didn't make a claim about what scripture says, nor did it forbid or discourage one to ever "disown or disregard the teaching and practices" in any circumstance..

That is not what the brother said at all.

He was pointing out that many cherish certain truth that Luther taught that they perceive is in accordance with scripture, in spite of the fact that he held positions that those same people would argue are at odds with God's word. He was appealing for us to use this same wisdom when dealing with Chrysostom. Judge and discern what is being said and don't overreact and "throw the baby out with the bathwater", so to speak, because you find fault with some point of the man's theology/doctrine. That's all.

If we were to only ever listen to people we agree with 100% on every point, we would never learn or grow and we may be the only one we could "listen to" after awhile...such a position would reveal an ugly pride that secretly believes we know everything perfectly and we become the measure and standard of doctrine.

I listen to and read Spurgeon and am greatly blessed by him, though I strongly disagree with Calvinism and TULIP. Surely there are preachers/teachers (brothers and servants of the Lord, really) that you are blessed by and you disagree with them in some area...no?

We also need to be careful not to look far back in history and judge these men of God based on the gospel light that we are currently standing in, without taking into consideration the sometimes overwhelming general spiritual darkness of the times that some of them were living in - and they were rising above the error of their day and grasping and reclaiming precious truth. They didn't get it all at once, but they did bring us some. Each his own measure. And let us have patience, grace and understanding for them where they fell short, knowing that we stand on the shoulders of many mighty saints of God and we too can still hold on to false beliefs and be dogmatic about things we ought not - even in spite of our advantages.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 15:42

Quote:
-----Are you suggesting that the communion bread is somehow transformed into the literal, physical body of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Brother, my humble opinion is that it is a mystery and to "sin against" the Body and Blood of the Lord is serious. That is why Paul the apostle even said that some have died and are sick.

I personally take communion with reverence and the fear of the Lord, looking and proclaiming the second coming of the Son of God and the resurrection of our bodies.

1 Corinthians 11:27 New International Version (NIV)

27 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

Quote:
-----We also need to be careful not to look far back in history and judge these men of God based on the gospel light that we are currently standing in, without taking into consideration the sometimes overwhelming general spiritual darkness of the times that some of them were living in - and they were rising above the error of their day and grasping and reclaiming precious truth. They didn't get it all at once, but they did bring us some. Each his own measure. And let us have patience, grace and understanding for them where they fell short, knowing that we stand on the shoulders of many mighty saints of God and we too can still hold on to false beliefs and be dogmatic about things we ought not - even in spite of our advantages.

Very well said.

Calvins's sentiments on the Death of the famous Anabaptist leader Michael Sattler - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/12

RE : ///We are glad to have messages by John Calvin on SermonIndex, alongside Anabaptists, in heaven we will realize that perhaps more of use understand less than we thought. I already admit that I see very dimly and just "in part" (1 Corinthians 13). May our eyes be on Jesus Christ Himself, not on men who are frail and even fail.///

Here is What Calvin had to Say about the death of the famous Anabaptist leader Michael Sattler

John Calvin Treatise against the anabaptist and against the libertines translated by Benjamin Wirt Farley p.157
John Calvin wrote

// Now in order to give a favorable pretext to their doctrine, they have published along with their resolution the history of the Death of a certain Michael (footnote says Sattler)an accomplice and member of their sect.In fact ,they are in the habit of making a powerful defense out of the fact that some have been killed for holding views which would not retract,although if they had they might have escaped death and ransomed their life. Indeed,it is an effective means of authorizing a doctrine for a man to abandon his life courageously and freely in order to confirm his belief. For when we are told what the prophets,apostles,and other martyrs endured in order to maintain the truth of Gode,we are so much the more strengthened to adhere to the faith we hold,which they sealed by their blood.

I acknowledge,therefore,that we must not vilify the death of God's servants,since their courage and constancy is no small aid in supporting our weakness. But since we can be thoroughly deceived by this unless we have another criterion,we must return to the foundation without which we should be unable to make sound judgments or be certain about the matter.

Certainly a mans death, whoever he might be,is never so precious that it can or ought to prejudice Gods truth in any thing, or be so beneficial as to approve of erroneous and perverse doctrines.Therefore let us hold to this:that although a sound and solid doctrine,being founded on reason,is confirmed later by the death of its adherents and confessors by whom it is maintained,nevertheless,the death of the whole world cannot prove a lie.

Indeed what seperates the martyrs of God from the devil's deciples is that the martyrs die for a righteous cause. Therefore in the same way that it is laudable and courageous to suffer death when necessity calls for it in order to bear witness to the truth,so also it is insane obstinancy to suffer for a wicked cause.So much so that whoever suffers for it the most is all the more reprimanded. In fact, when we let ourselves be carried away by this pretext, we lose complete judgment and esteem.//

Re: Calvins's sentiments on the Death of the famous Anabaptist leader Michael S - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016

Quote:

-----Here is What Calvin had to Say about the death of the famous Anabaptist leader Michael Sattler

There always is more context as the letter you showed after the fact and the facts before the execution. here is an article answering this from a fairly good persecutive (meaning that I believe it is quite factual):

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It is hard to tell from the research that I have seen exactly how many people were executed during Calvin's time in Geneva. I would have to say that the modern day opponents of Calvin like to give the impression that executions happened every day. There is a number that is oft-repeated but rarely footnoted of 57 executions during 4 years "at the height of Calvin's power". I am unable to locate the source of this number, and a more moderate anti-Calvin source, Calvin: A Biography, by Bernard Cottret, puts the number at 38.

In considering these executions, is important to note that Calvin never held any formal power outside the Church during his time in Geneva. The government of the church in Geneva was Presbyterian - it had a pastor and a consistory, or board of ruling elders. Contrary to popular portrayal, the government of the church was not the government of the city. The government of the city was called "the Council". The consistory handled moral matters, and the maximum penalty it

could impose was excommunication. However, for many years they could not even excommunicate someone without the prior approval of the Council. The maximum penalty that the Council could impose was death, however, even the Council's decisions could be appealed to another body called "The Council of Two Hundred", so named because it consisted of two hundred citizens of Geneva. Calvin himself was not a citizen of Geneva during the upheaval in Geneva, and thus was disqualified from voting, holding public office, or even serving on the Council of Two Hundred until very late in his life, and at least four years after he achieved "the height of his power" to which so many Calvin detractors refer. Thus, it is with this understanding, the understanding that Calvin held no formal secular power, and that any power he did have was subject to the review of two different citizen's councils that we turn to the discussion of the executions in Geneva.

Of the 38 executions accounted for in Calvin: A Biography, by Bernard Cottret, Calvin himself writes about 23, and the justification given is that they spread the plague by witchcraft. This is often given as mocking proof that Calvin really must have been an ignorant tyrant — after all, we know that witchcraft isn't real, etc. But if you read the primary source, the actual letter to Myconius of Basel (March 27, 1545), you see that witchcraft, if it was a charge, was in addition to the charge of committing other malicious acts:

"A conspiracy of men and women has lately been discovered, who, for the space of three years, had spread the plague through the city by what mischievous device I know not. After fifteen women have been burnt, some men have even been punished more severely, some have committed suicide in prison, and while twenty-five are still kept prisoners, — the conspirators do not cease, notwithstanding, to smear the door-locks of the dwelling-houses with their poisonous ointment. You see in the midst of what perils we are tossed about. The Lord hath hitherto preserved our dwelling, though it has more than once been attempted. It is well that we know ourselves to be under His care."

When you read this quote, you see that these people were accused of actually trying to spread the plague, not by casting spells, but by smearing "the door-locks of the dwelling-houses with their poisonous ointment". Once again this seems innocuous, but it is possible that their "ointment" was spreading the disease if it contained blood or bodily fluid from someone infected with the disease. Even if it didn't work, the people putting the ointment on the door handles apparently thought it would. Thus, at the very least these inept bioterrorists would be guilty of what we call "conspiracy to commit murder". This is in addition to the charge of witchcraft, itself a capital crime in the Old Testament, which Calvin thought was directly applicable in Geneva.

Of the other executions, several are named to be executions for serial adultery, also a capital crime in the Old Testament. Contrary to what is commonly implied, this was not a group of all women or all poor people who were executed. Among the executed was a prominent Genevese banker who went to his death proclaiming the justice of the judgment — Geneva did not discriminate on the basis of sex or class, as it often implied. It is debatable whether or not adultery should ever be or have been a capital offense. Many people who think that it should not be one today think that it should not have been a capital offense in ancient Israel either. Thus, they reject the Old Testament law as unjust even when it was originally given. This is an error we should be careful to avoid as we debate whether or not these executions were just.

So the bulk of the executions were for conspiracy to commit murder and for adultery. In addition to these, there was one girl who was executed for striking her mother — another capital crime in the Old Testament which could be, at least in ancient Israel, justly enforced by the penalty of death in certain instances. We are not told by history whether Calvin approved of this execution, but if he did, it was because he believed that it was the proper application of Old Testament law. Of the other executions, history has only given us details of two — the beheading of Jacques Gruet and the burning of Michael Servetus. Gruet was executed for heresy and sedition. He attached an anonymous note to Calvin's pulpit threatening to kill Calvin and overthrow the government of Geneva if they did not flee the city. He was arrested, tortured for 30 days, and, upon confession, beheaded. History does not tell us whether Calvin approved of the torture; if he did he was wrong to do so. The execution, for conspiring to overthrow the government, may have been justified given the danger to the citizenry that such a conspiracy entailed. Either way, Calvin did not have the authority in Geneva to arrest, torture, or execute anyone. Those were the decisions, not of Calvin or the church Consistory, but of the Council and of the Council of 200.

This brings us to Servetus. He was arrested for heresy, tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by the Council. After escaping from prison when he was on trial for heresy in Lyons, Servetus traveled to Geneva on his way to Italy. According to Schaff's Church History, Servetus stayed at Geneva for about a month, taking few pains to conceal his identity. After attending services in Calvin's church one Sunday, Servetus was arrested on charges of heresy. Calvin believed that it was just and right for heretics to be put to death. In this regard, he was not different from Servetus who also believed that heretics, specifically the heretic John Calvin, should be put to death by the Genevese Council.

During the trial it was Calvin's job as expert witness to prove that Servetus was a heretic. Calvin's expert reason and cle

ar thinking triumphed when Servetus chose to hurl insults at Calvin rather than offer a defense. It is important to note that at this time the Council was not controlled by friends of Calvin but by his enemies, the patriots and libertines. This is probably why Servetus felt that he did not have to offer a substantive defense against charges of heresy. We have a written record of the debate because each was required to write their statements and responses for review by the churches of four other prominent protestant cities.

During the time that the other cities were reviewing the debate Lyons requested extradition, but Servetus pleaded to stay in Geneva and protested that he would accept the judgment of the Genevese Council rather than be sent back to Lyons.

He had reason to believe that the libertines on the council were on his side, given their intense hatred of Calvin. However, in the end, after receiving recommendations of guilt from the four cities, and in light of the publicity the trial had generated throughout Europe, the libertines and the patriots on the Council decided that Servetus was not worth saving. In a show of bravado intended to send a message that they could be just as "tough on crime" as John Calvin was, they sentenced Servetus to death by burning. When Servetus heard, he could not believe it. Despite Calvin's intercession on behalf of Servetus that he be put to death humanely, the Council refused and Servetus was burned on October 27, 1553.

Calvin went to his deathbed believing that the execution was just because Servetus was a blasphemer and a heretic and a murderer of souls. I stand with Calvin in believing that the state is charged to uphold the law of God, however, I differ with him as to the best way that the state can do this. I believe that Constantine proved once and for all the negative consequences inherent whenever the state enforces orthodoxy and all you get is fake believers scared to air their dissent openly. Calvin was wrong to suppose that heresy should be punished by the state and by death. Even if Calvin was right that heresy was "spiritual murder", the proper solution would have been excommunication and no more.

from: <http://reformedanswers.org/answer.asp/file/39726>

Michael Sattler not Michael Servetus - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/12/16 16:06

Greg did you bother to read what was written before you responded ?

RE ///There always is more context as the letter you showed after the fact and the facts before the execution. here is an article answering this from a fairly good persecutive (meaning that I believe it is quite factual):///

I was directly quoting Calvin and he was Speaking about Michael Sattler the Anabaptist leader not Michael Servatus the heretic.

What I posted was John Calvin's Words! They are from this book that I own :

John Calvin Treatise against the anabaptist and against the libertines translated by Benjamin Wirt Farley p.157

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 16:14

Quote:
-----I was directly quoting Calvin and he was Speaking about Michael Sattler the Anabaptist leader not Michael Servatus the heretic.

Dear brother,

Yes I apologize I did misunderstand who it was he was referring to.

Calvin was clearly not right in that martyrdom is towards the Lord and not a sect or group and people of many different denominations and groups were true martyrs towards the Lord.

I believe overall Calvin is misunderstood because of the system of religious government they were in, in the city of Geneva. I personally do not claim to know much in this regard, therefore posting an article that contains more factual information I felt would help give some back drop and help. We have had people claim that John Calvin killed many people in cold blood on this very forum and I wanted to just make people more informed.

What you are shared is important brother and helps us understand the tension there was between the anabaptists and himself.

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 16:15

"The "œreal presence" of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper is a doctrine of Roman Catholicism (and some other Christian denominations) that teaches that, instead of being symbolic rites, communion and baptism are opportunities for the real presence of God to appear. In the case of communion, they believe once the priest has blessed the wine and the bread, the wine becomes Jesus' blood and the bread becomes His flesh. They cannot explain how, but they believe this transformation (called transubstantiation) allows God to spiritually nourish the partaker to better serve Him and to be Christ to the lost world.

This concept is hard even for Roman Catholics to fully explain. They believe that Jesus instituted communion as a way of allowing believers to participate in the ongoing sacrifice of the cross. Once the bread and wine are blessed, Christ's crucifixion is presented again to those in attendance. The ceremony somehow perpetuates the ever-present crucifixion. Even when the service (or Mass) is completed, the leftover bread is kept and venerated in thanks to God for providing the transformation and the nourishment.

There are two major problems with this line of thought. First, there is no way that a ceremony can recreate Jesus' crucifixion. Several places in the New Testament claim Jesus' death was "œonce for all" (Romans 6:10; Hebrews 7:27, 9:12, 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18). There is no mention that the act of the crucifixion, which occurred within the confines of a linear timeline, is somehow free of that timeline to be as eternal as God Himself. The results of that act are certainly timeless, as it was that act that allowed even those before Jesus' time to be saved. But we have no way of participating in an act that occurred nearly two thousand years ago, except in the symbolic sense.

That is the great controversy of the belief of the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. But on a practical level, the bread does not become flesh. The wine does not become blood. And no amount of belief is going to make it so. The more urgent issue is the false belief that God's blessing and nourishment come through that bread and wine. Roman Catholicism teaches that liturgy (taken from the Greek for "œwork") is the conduit through which God provides blessing and salvation. Essentially, in addition to placing the priest between the congregants and God, they also place the bread and wine between themselves and God. They believe they are blessed because of their obedience in taking communion, and that blessing literally streams from God through the bread and wine and into their souls.

This is not what Jesus taught. He said, "œI am the bread of life" and "œIt is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:48, 63). Jesus is the bread of life, but He is also the Word (John 1:1). The bread that nourishes is the Word of God (Matthew 4:4), not a wafer somehow transformed into the flesh of Jesus. The idea that we have to go through a human ceremony to receive that spiritual nourishment is the type of belief Jesus came to abolish. His death tore the veil in the temple, giving us the ability to have a direct relationship with God (Hebrews 4:16). That veil was not replaced by the act of blessing and eating bread and wine."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 16:24

Quote:
-----The ceremony somehow perpetuates the ever-present crucifixion.

Brother.

You are right to state that our Lord's death was once for all: Jesus' death was "œonce for all" (Romans 6:10; Hebrews 7:27, 9:12, 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18)

And I do not defend the Roman Catholic position as I am not even fully aware of it and what they exactly believe beyond what you wrote.

I do believe communion is clearly more than symbolic and I am comfortable with this as were many early Church believers and writers all around and after the original Apostles.

As you alluded to, the timelessness of the Lord's death and the wounds He still has in heaven (Revelation 5:6) make it possible to "communion" and remember the Lord in this way till He comes. I do not declare to understand it at all. To me it is a mystery as prayer itself is a mystery also.

As I also shared before in the posts in this thread, there is sickness or death for someone who eats the Lord's Supper unworthily, so it is a "holy" thing and we should treat it as so. Towards "the real presence of Christ" I do not agree with Roman Catholic belief of a "re-crucifying" of the Lord, though I am very ignorant of the details of their belief. But I do believe it is more than a symbol. Surely we can believe there is a middle ground or some room on either side of extremes in this position?

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/12/16 16:47

RE : /// Yes I apologize I did misunderstand who it was he was referring to.///

I except your apology.

RE : ///I believe overall Calvin is misunderstood because of the system of religious government they were in, ..///

The issue that I have with Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Zwingly etc. Is the lack of compassion and lack of regard for anyone that they disagreed even slightly with theologically.

edit : spell

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 17:08

Greg you wrote:

"But I do believe it is more than a symbol. Surely we can believe there is a middle ground or some room on either side of extremes in this position?"

Do not believe that it is more than symbolic in the sense you are suggesting . In my opinion the catholic version of communion is utterly deviant and blasphemous to the core. The very premise of their communion is so vile that one cannot build a bridge from what the Bible teaches to what they teach.

Grew up catholic and have some understanding of what their religion teaches and practices. Many of my relatives are catholic, attend mass, take their communion and are practicing pagans to this day because they are trust in their sacraments to save them rather faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I do pray for them.

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 19:02

I'm also concerned about this topic and would like to share a few thoughts without making it more complicated.

If we believe that God's Word is "God breathed " and infallible then what can be superior? It gets very dangerous if the Bible is not the ultimate authority anymore.

The Apostles layed the foundation. The Early Church was not perfect but we can learn a lot from them. After about 200 years things started to change, then Constantine became Emperor and politics came into it. From then on we have to be very careful whose teaching we believe!

Yes God has appointed teachers and we learn from Godly men like Ravenhill, Paul Washer, Zac Poonan or from the early Baptists and many others.

Personally I have also mentioned Zinsendorf a few times. I don't know much about his theology but I can see what God did through him.

Zinzendorf was appalled at the divisions between churches and hungered to unite the different factions. Finally the Holy

Spirit moved through the room. Differences dissolved. All embraced one another in forgiveness and a spirit of love. Christ became central to their thinking.
Christ became the center ! Then, and only then could they move forward.

Godly teachers should point us to prayer, God's Word, and most of all to the Lord Himself. Unity is only in Him
And "the Lamb that was slain should get the full reward for his suffering"

Blessings

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 19:16

Dear Greg (Sermon Index moderator),

I want to thank you very much for your point-by-point reply to my post. That was very gracious of you, as was your genuine kindness in the content of what you wrote to me.

As I initially wrote, I choose not to feed on the writings of such men because of their heterodoxy from the Bible, but I do not impose that choice upon others; we all must take personal responsibility for our decisions.

As much as I love the anointing of God and the doctrine in His living Word, I especially love the character of Christ. It is so important that we assimilate that character; it is available to us, and God wishes to impart it. In John 13:35 Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Greg, I believe that you know that I have not responded to your quotes from Finney or Chrysostom in order to 'dog your steps' or to vex you, but as a cautionary warning to you and to others. Whether you or others agree with me or not is out of my hands, but I am delighted when we can dialogue, though never having met face to face, with genuine charity (agape love), and I see this in your response to me. Thank you!

Blessings in Christ Jesus,

Alec

Re: The superiority of the Spirit over the written Word - John Chrysostom - posted by dspks, on: 2016/12/16 19:18

The Word of God is, according to John Chrysostom:
"The second best course"???????

Thanks John for your OPINION... now, let us look at what the "second best course": says:

â€œI will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: FOR THOU HAST MAGNIFIED THY WORD ABOVE ALL THY NAME." Psalms 138:2, KJV.

It seems the LORD exalts HIS WORD to a VERY high realm. (NOT "a second best course")

I don't think there is a "class system" when it comes to His Spirit and His Word.

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 19:21

Thank you, Frank! I resigned from the music ministry (after 7 years) and left Times Square Church last August (after 20 years in various ministries), and presently attend another church in northern New Jersey which is closer to my home.

Kind regards in Christ Jesus,

Alec

by FrankLira on 2016/12/15 20:55:29

Brother Alec

Always enjoyed your guitar playing and Robin Mark hairdo at TSC!

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/16 19:53

Quote:

-----but I am delighted when we can dialogue, though never having met face to face, with genuine charity (agape love)

Amen brother, I enjoy all your posts on SermonIndex, it is a blessing to learn from each other and as the other brother shared, that we keep Christ central to our unity.

It is amazing how much we learn from each other and interactions that stay graceful. Thank you for displaying that for us

Re: , on: 2016/12/16 20:24

In my opinion, the saints who have posted on this thread have displayed a refreshing maturity and humility toward one another that has greatly encouraged and edified my spirit and nourished my soul.

Thank each of you SO MUCH!

It "smells" of Heaven to me and I am rejoicing on a cold and snowy night in Minnesota!

Though many lengthy threads have gotten locked on this forum, threads like this give me great hope in God.

I love you all and look forward to hugging you in person some day!

Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Caleb

Re: execution - posted by savannah, on: 2016/12/16 21:11

Would any of these men who believed TULIP execute heretics?

Jonathan Edwards

Paul Washer

John Bunyan

George Mueller

Arthur W. Pink: 1886-1952 (Bible teacher and theologian)

Augustus Toplady: 1740-1778 (author of "Rock Of Ages" and other hymns)

Benjamin Keach: 1640-1704 (1689 Baptist Confession)

B.H. Carroll: 1843-1914 (founder south Western Theological Seminary)

Charles Spurgeon: 1834-1892 (famous Baptist preacher)

Francis Schaeffer: 1912-1984 (author of "How Shall We Then Live" video series)

George Whitefield: 1714-1770 (evangelist & preacher)

J.C. Ryle: 1816-1900 (writer, pastor, evangelical preacher)

J.P. Boyce: 1827-1888 (founder Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

John Foxe: 1516-1587 (author of Foxe's Book Of Martyrs)
John Gill: 1697-1771 (renowned theologian and Bible commentator)
John Knox: 1513-1572 (founder of Presbyterianism)
John Newton: 1725-1807 (wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace")
John Owen: 1616-1683 (theologian and author)
Martyn Lloyd-Jones: 1834-1892 (pastor and theologian)
Martin Luther: 1483-1546 (Protestant Reformer)
Matthew Henry: 1662-1712 (famous Bible commentator)
Roger Willilams: 1603-1683 (founded the first Baptist church in America)
William Carey: 1761-1834 (missionary)
William Wilberforce: 1759-1833 (slavery abolitionist)
D.A. Carson
D. James Kennedy
James Montgomery Boice
James White
John F. MacArthur
John Piper
Loraine Boettner
R.C. Sproul
Voddie Baucham

The Doctrine of Grace which all these men believe do not lead to the execution of heretics. If you do not believe TULIP, what makes you differ from another who may do such things.

John Knox: 1513-1572 (founder of Presbyterianism) - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/12/16 23:06

John Knox's writings against the Anabaptists

Already in 1557, Calvin's faithful student the great Scottish Reformer Knox had written some letters to his brethren and 'lords professing the truth' in Scotland. One such letter was recently republished under the title: A Warning Against the Anabaptists.³⁴⁸ There,³⁴⁹ Knox condemned those who "have separated themselves from the society and communion of their brethren in sects damnable and most pernicious."

Those sectarian Anabaptists, conceded Knox, really do "have a zeal.... But alas, it is not according to knowledge.... This sort of men fall from the society of Christ's little flock, with contempt of His sacraments and holy ordinances by us truly maintained." Indeed, "they require a greater purity than ever was found in any congregation since the beginning."

Knox then immediately went on to insist that the Anabaptists "shall not escape judgment and condemnation." This is so, declared Knox, "because they do despise Christ Jesus and His holy ordinances."

Indeed, the Anabaptists were not at all like the apostolic-age Christians who had been ejected from Judaism's "synagogue of Satan." Mark 13:9-13 and Revelation 2:9 & 3:9. Nor were the Anabaptists like the Protestants who had just been removed from the Romish Neo-Babylon. Revelation 17:5 and 18:4; compare Second Thessalonians 2:3-17f. Rather were the Anabaptists exactly analogous to the post-ascensional Gnostics, who opposed Christianity and who castigated its infant baptism. Colossians 2:9-23 (q.v.).

Just a few paragraphs after penning his above-cited words, Knox wrote that even though "the Papists are busy to espy our offences, faults and infirmities..., they are not the enemies most to be feared. For...of the other sort of whom before we have somewhat spoken, the craft and malice of the devil fighting against Christ is more covert and therefore more to be feared."

Think of it -- the Anabaptists more to be feared than the Romanists! For the Anabaptists, insisted Knox, were "privy blasphemers of Christ Jesus; supplanters of His dignity; and manifest enemies to the free justification which comes by faith in His blood."

In 1560, Knox himself wrote a considerable treatise with the title: An Answer to a Great Number of Blasphemous Cavillations Written by an Anabaptist and Adversary. There, he told the Anabaptists that "with the Pelagians and Papists, you have become teachers of free will and defenders of your own justice.... Your poison is more pestilent than that of the Papistry was in the beginning."³⁵⁰

To Knox, the "poison" of the Anabaptists was "more pestilent" --yes more pestilent! -- than that of "the Papistry." Again, just think of it -- Anabaptism more poisonous and more 'pestilent' than the Papacy!

Indeed, Knox added elsewhere: "We damn the error of the Anabaptists who deny baptism to appertain to children."³⁵¹ He damns the Anabaptists' error!

In his 1560 Scots Confession, Knox and his associates added: "We hold that baptism applies as much to the children of the faithful as to those who are of age and discretion. And so we condemn the error of the Anabaptists, who deny that children should be baptized."³⁵² Again in their First Book of Discipline, the Knoxians insisted: "Anabaptists, Arians, or other such -- enemies of the Christian religion."³⁵³

http://www.reformed.org/sacramentology/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/sacramentology/lee/anab_007.html

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/17 5:03

Brother Frank,

Although the OP can be a bit shocking to the system and can be perceived to say the the scriptures preserved for us are not as important as having the Spirit Himself I think there is food for thought and lessons to be learned.

Remember the Pharisees? They had the complete scriptures until the appearing of the savior Jesus Christ but could not find Him or see Him there. Even we today, having the complete canon of scriptures written down and available to us, could fail to find the Living Word there...were it not for the Holy Spirit. In that sense, the Spirit is "superior" to the written words, because without Him they would never be able to save us or give us life.

Paul says that the Spirit has revealed to them the things freely given us by God. Jesus said: When He (the Spirit) is come, He will guide you into all truth and bring to your remembrance all that Jesus had taught.

The newly born church in Acts continued in the apostles teaching (revealed by the Holy Spirit) and Paul said the churches were a letter written not with ink but with the Spirit.

Thank God for the whole scripture, which is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and for training in godliness...but without the Spirit it would all be dead words.

Blessings,

Re: the Spirit and the Word - posted by savannah, on: 2016/12/17 8:27

The problem is not with the Holy Scriptures nor with the Holy Law of God. For if man were to live by every Word of God, as Jesus did, we'd be perfect men. Jesus fulfilled the Law as a perfect man, and died for us who were helplessly and hopelessly in Adam, making us alive in Him.

The Holy Scriptures are perfect as is the Holy Law of God. But being born in Adam, we are unable to be as Jesus, who was not born in Adam. His Father being God Himself. As one creed says of Him, that He is very God of very God. As it is well known that the seed determines the nature and being.

He is a Life giving Spirit. And we know that if any man does not have the Spirit of Christ he is not His.

Yet, the Spirit is not without the Word, and the Word is not without the Spirit. It is the Word and the Spirit.

Similarly, the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man. New life in the flesh cannot be without the

one or the other. So it is that new life in the Spirit cannot be without the one (Spirit) or the other (Word).

There must be a birthing from above. And it is by grace through faith. And faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. And without faith it is impossible to please God.

Because there's only been One Perfect Man. There never can and never will be another. Yet, in Him I am accepted as perfect, by His grace and through faith in Him which has been given to me.

Oh alleluia...praise the Lamb who was slain! I am perfected forevermore and loved by the Father as Jesus is loved.

Wow! No wonder John Newton could sing, Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

I join him and sing the same daily. Oh what a blessed salvation, oh what a blessed redemption!

Soli Deo Gloria - My beloved is mine and I am His!

Re: , on: 2016/12/17 10:44

John 5:39-40 ..You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Jesus is clearly stating that there is no life in the Scriptures. It does not matter whether it is in the Old or the New Testament, there is no life in the Scriptures. If there was life in the words themselves and the knowledge of these words then the Pharisees would be men full of life. Yet what did Jesus say about these men? They were full of dead men's bones, whitewashed tombs. They knew the word but they did not know God.

Words are vehicles for communicating. The word itself is a symbol of what is real. You may read about the truth or even hear about the truth and they may be precursors to life, but they are not life itself. Life comes to those who willingly come to Jesus and meet Him personally. And so the word without Jesus is empty and meaningless to the readers.

It is in the person of Jesus that we are saved, and then He illuminates the word. The word of God must never be worshiped, how silly to worship the description rather than what is described. All of the word of God is useful to point us towards God, but it is only in His presence that anything is achieved. A man could read the sermon on the mount and rightly conclude that this was a masterpiece of teaching. Yet, outside of God's presence, outside of His Spirit, all those who try and live by these commands will fail miserably or have some success and become self-righteous.

The Bible is a treasure from God, but it is Jesus Himself, of whom the whole Bible testifies, who is the Word. Jesus is the same yesterday today and forever. Heaven and earth will pass away but the Word, Jesus, is eternal.

I was saved knowing virtually nothing of Scripture. Men were saved in the first three hundred years of the church by the declaration of Truth, Jesus being the truth, by the Holy Spirit of the living God. After I was saved I devoured the Scriptures and as I read it I saw my own story in it. All the promises, the new heart, the love, the joy, my Jesus, it testified to it in all of the word. The Spirit had laid it all on my heart and every page was a confirmation and it was exciting. I had no intellectual battles. My spirit witnessed with the word of God. I read many parts that I did not understand but there was no resisting in my spirit, just a sense that somewhere down the line, if it pleased my Lord, I would understand.

So to have life we must come to Jesus. The word "come" does not mean one time just as the word "abide" is a continuous action verb better stated "keep abiding." So we ought to keep coming to Jesus. Not keep getting saved, but keep seeking Him out. He is a treasure to be sought after, just as the deer pants for the water brooks, then so my soul continually pants after Him.

He is my light and I detest the darkness. He is perfect light and I live in shades of gray at best. How could it be otherwise for in my flesh there is no good thing. Until it is raised in incorruption I can only know Him in measure. That is an agony and a despair that can be hard to live with. The only thing that makes it bearable is the measure I receive from Him daily, His blessings are new every morning and His steadfast love never ceases and His grace is sufficient to keep me wanting more.

And every so often I am enraptured and filled to capacity, a continual baptism of the Holy Spirit if you like. And I am strengthened and encouraged and changed in the fire of His manifest presence. Gratefulness and thankfulness keeps me in

this place. I have found eternal life in the person and the manifest presence of Jesus and the Scriptures testify to that and in this there is unityâ€¢â€¢â€¢â€¢â€¢â€¢â€¢â€¢ bro Frank

Re: , on: 2016/12/17 10:57

StirltUp/William

Thank you for your kind response. A good friend of mine said that the meanest, most ornery people he ever met were fundamentalist southern baptists. Indeed the Spirit and the Word are in perfect agreement BUT neither ever supplant each other as this writer suggests. The Spirit always bears witness and testifies to the truth of the Word.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2016/12/17 12:33

There are some good posts on here, in particular Apollos and William's last post. Thank you for articulating the truth so well.

A few years ago I would probably have been one that was quick to criticise the OP and defend the position of scripture that seemed to be being made less. However I don't think that is what was meant by the article, even though the title suggests it.

I would say that the scriptures are indeed the 'Word of God' and are all truth. However the problem is how we understand the written word. Textulism is a great problem in the church, in all streams of it. Textulism takes particular texts from scripture and makes them an authority on their own to impart life or something from God. Textulism takes scriptures like 'if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart Jesus is Lord you will be saved' as a method to get saved independent of really coming to Jesus Christ himself for life..

Re: , on: 2016/12/17 14:04

Is anyone familiar with storying? That is telling the story of Jesus orally to those people who do not have a written tradition. But have a tradition of storytelling.

-bro blaine-

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/17 14:45

Amen Frank.

Thank God the written words preached or read with faith in the power of the Holy Spirit reveal to us the living Word, Jesus Christ!

I thought of Paul's words as well: " Therefore we know no one after the flesh from now on. Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more"

We know the living Word by revelation of the Holy Spirit within, through faith.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/17 14:52

Thanks for the kind words Dave.

Textualism as explained by you can be a real obstacle to true faith, which denotes a living relationship with the living Christ.

I think the scripture Frank (Apollus) quoted speaks to that:John 5:39-40 ..You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

May all our teaching and preaching always aim at portraying and ministering the living Word, Jesus Christ the Lord. May our prayers also be alive and filled with the power of true intimacy with our Heavenly Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2016/12/17 15:58

Amen to this thread! Good words brother Frank and others!

Here is just a few thoughts I have on the subject:

2 Corinthians 3:6 (KJV) 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

It is the Spirit that gives life in the Word. Jesus said my words are Spirit and they are life.

The words of scripture without the Spirit can be used as a dead letter that kills instead of giving life to the one that hears it.

Psalm 138:2 (KJV) 2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

The Word comes before all things and all things by it exist. Thy Word is thy Truth. The name or names of God comes from thy Word. Nothing is greater than the Word of God for by the Word all things are made.

Now the true Word is Spirit because God is Spirit. It is very important that the Word be proclaimed or spoken by the Spirit of an anointed messenger in order to promote the life of God instead of it being a dead letter.

Now the Word exists from God who is Spirit and life. So we say that the written Word was from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. That means that the written Word can only truly be interpreted by the Holy Spirit from which it came. In that respect would the Spirit be superior to the written Word because without the Spirit we would not be able to interpret the true Word.

Blessings to all!