

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Homosexuality in the Church Of England****Homosexuality in the Church Of England - posted by Nasher (), on: 2003/10/30 5:33**

I disagree with "homosexuals" i.e. people who willingly choose to take part in homosexual acts, taking any leadership in the church, which includes being "ordained" in the COE.

My question is, how "good" or how "un-bad" must a person be to be in leadership in the church?

Homosexuals are mentioned alongside lots of other types of sinners in 1 Corinthians 6 and these people are said not to inherit the kingdom of God:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Re: Homosexuality in the Church Of England - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/10/30 7:22

Well let's begin with the obvious scriptures in Timothy and Titus. I have compiled a list of the characteristics for both overseeing and serving grouping them into positive and negative:

Positive

blameless (irreproachable)
husband of one wife
self-controlled
sensible
a friend of strangers (or, hospitable)
skillful at teaching
patient
conducting his own house well
having children in submission with all dignity
a good testimony from those without
grave
holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience
just
Holding fast the faithful word
holy

negative

not addicted to wine
not violent
not greedy for dishonest gain
not a brawler
not covetous
not a new convert
not double-tongued
not headstrong

This has to be the place to begin, however I don't believe these qualities are listed in the same sense they would be for a job interview, "line up with your resumes for the position of Bishop"

they are general characteristics that all God's people should have operating in them. Paul asked Timothy and Titus to recognise certain men with these qualities to be recognised as elders, I believe that these would be men who were showing a lot of strength in those areas and so could be entrusted to be recognised as leaders in the assembly.

Slightly off topic, but I do believe there is a lot at fault in the usual paradigm of church leadership, the distinction between laity and clergy (call them what you will) is a false dichotomy, all God's people should be ministers (servants) some, who

are mature do watch over the flock (particularly the new converts) but if they are true leaders they will be quickly leading others into the maturity that they have.

the office of a bishop in 1 tim 3:1 should be translated as oversight ...if any man aspires to oversight. Gifts in the new testament are functions rather than "offices" or official positions.

Peace, Stuart.

Re: - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/10/30 10:15

Before I begin, know that I realize that there are more qualities necessary in a church leader than the one I'm focusing on, but that I'm just trying to bring attention to something.

In the list compiled by Nasher, the first characteristic was to be "blameless". To be blameless means that you've done nothing wrong -- that you haven't sinned.

We've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and it is only Christ's righteousness in us that makes us blameless. So first and foremost -- and though it seems obvious, I don't seem to see it as much as we should -- the church leader must be a Christian!

How could a Christian live the life of a homosexual without being convicted of this blatant sin? Do they not read the Bible? Are they more in love with their sin than with God? Yes, they are.

In being a Christian, we surrender and sacrifice all...our lives, our sin, our personal wants, wishes, desires, hopes, and dreams. We sacrifice it all and replace them with a godly life, with Christ's righteousness, and with God's wants, wishes, desires, hopes, and dreams for us.

A leader of the body of Christ must set the example for those he is leading...there is no compromise.

Re: - posted by Jason, on: 2003/10/30 11:25

In the biblical sense, "blameless" does not mean one has never sinned. Job, for example, is called "blameless."

Secondly, the word here is "anepilepton," which means "unsievable" or "unreproachable." The idea is that it must be someone who is living in such a way that no one can step in and say "oh, look what I caught him doing -- he's not so holy after all." (This brings to mind the situations with Jimmy Swaggart and Roberts Liardon -- situations which brought shame to the Church.)

The word includes the necessity of Christianity by all means (that's an implicit requirement), but the force of the word has more to do with someone who lives in such a way that no one can step up with a legitimate accusation against them. It is relatable to 1 Peter 3:16-17, which says, "Keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong."

Again, the point is "let your actions be such that any accusation is slander and brings shame to your accusers." That is the force of the word here.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/10/30 11:39

Quote:

-----In the list compiled by Nasher, the first characteristic was to be "blameless".

Actually, that was almondbranch..

But, Amen! To the following:

Quote:
-----So first and foremost -- and though it seems obvious, I don't seem to see it as much as we should -- the church leader must be a Christian!

If we cannot get past this fundamental "Must" there is no point going any further, no sense in listening to any rhetoric, opinion or debate regarding "issues".

It **should** be obvious, but sadly it is conspicuous by its very absence.

And instead of a flat and decisive blank statement (From the church). We now have to be 'tolerant' and decide what kind of language it is going to be couched in.. "How should we word this..."

Simple, call it what it is.

Sin.

Just like all the others listed, gluttony, drunkenness, etc.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/10/30 17:02

Hi AlmondBranch

your quote: "Well lets begin with the obvious scriptures in Timothy and Titus. I have compiled a list of the characteristics for both overseeing and serving grouping them into positive and negative:"

Just thought I would say how I appreciate the word 'characteristics' used here and later in your post. There is a tendency to call these things 'qualifications' or 'criteria' but I think you are right, these things are 'characteristic' of an elder; they are the descriptions of his character not his attainments. These are not standards to be achieved but what the man is 'naturally' (by new birth).

With each category the question could be asked e.g. 'is brother X hospitable?'. If the answer isn't an immediate, instinctive 'yes' it is almost certainly NOT 'characteristic'.

It is interesting that a person could have all these characteristics and still be a 'novice'. What do you think that implies? I have my own thoughts but would like to hear others'.

Re: - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/10/30 17:33

Quote:

-----It is interesting that a person could have all these characteristics and still be a 'novice'. What do you think that implies? I have my own thoughts but would like to hear others'.

Haven't thought too much about it except for the fact that a novice has not yet been tested. I don't mean tested by others in an interview or 12 week trial or whatever but tested by the trials that are promised us in this life.

A person can have all these characteristics but given a bit of perceived prominence they can quickly become proud and self motivated. I think one thing is that a novice has to learn that serving in the body is all about bringing about an increase of the experience of Christ in the one(s) you are serving not in promoting your own "ministry" spend some time doing that and perhaps the title novice will begin to apply less and less to you.

1Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/10/31 4:06

'novice' is neophyte, literally 'a newly planted one'. What might that mean? Newlyplanted where?

Re: Homosexuality in the Church Of England, on: 2003/12/5 10:45

Jesus said that if you look at a woman with lust in your heart you have already committed adultery. This puts all of us in the same standing with fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners.

We are no better than any of them. And we are expected to treat them as we would like to be treated. You are throwing

the first stone ? For what purpose? You are no more worthy than the homosexual you criticize. Do they not also experience the love of God?

I believe Jesus used the phrase "brood of vipers."

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/5 12:13

Jake's quote: I believe Jesus used the phrase "brood of vipers."

Hi Jake

It was John the Baptist and he used it of people who would not give up behaviour which was offensive to God. He exhorted them to bring forth fruit meet for repentance or in other words 'quit sinning'.

Have you ever noticed Paul's description of the church in Corinth; Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

In particular, notice the tenses of the last statements. A free translation would read In the past some of you used to behave like this, but you have now been made clean....

The authentic attitude of Christ to all sin is as follows neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more; the first clause must never be separated from the second.

Re:, on: 2003/12/5 13:00

I stand corrected on the Jesus quote.

Nevertheless, go and sin no more is impossible. Can anyone say that they have given up all sinful activity? And one sin is as good as another. A person born of a homosexual nature can no more easily quit being that than can a heterosexual deny his/her nature. (I do agree that some may be making a conscious choice. But there are clearly others for whom this is not a choice, as they have been of this nature for as long as they can remember.) Some of the activities listed can clearly be given up. (An alcoholic can stop drinking, but they will always be addicted to wine.) Thieves can learn honest ways. But no one can make themselves sinfree. And thus we cannot judge others and hold them in contempt, as is being done in this particular discussion.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/5 13:31

I am an elder in His church. I believe the qualifications for a leader are best summed up by 1 John 2:13, "I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning,..." Paul write to the Corinthians, "For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers..." 1 Corinthians 4:15 I am not a father, as Paul or John would see. Both men are calling all to grow in the maturity of Christ. Jesus has much work to do in me. Yet, I know a father in the church will have learned to follow the Spirit of Christ. I know that the Spirit will cause a man to die to the flesh. I know the Spirit will lead a man in the paths of righteousness. I know the fruit of the Spirit. I am beginning to know the things of the Spirit. And I know that a self professed homosexual leader in the church has climbed into the sheep pen by another way. He has not enter through the door which is Christ.

These are strong words. But a father in His church will have known Him who is from the beginning. Even the young man that John writes of, "I write to you young men, because the word of God abides in you, AND YOU HAVE OVERCOME THE WICKED ONE." 1 John 2:14.

Re: quitting homosexuality - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2003/12/5 18:32

Jake wrote;

Quote:
----- A person born of a homosexual nature can no more easily quit being that than can a heterosexual deny his/her nature. (I do agree that some may be making a conscious choice. But there are clearly others for whom this is not a choice, as they have been of this nature for as long as they can remember.

You might be convinced that people cannot give up homosexuality, that is a popular belief these days. But it is not true. It might be true if they try on their own, but it is not true if they commit their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ and allow Him to change them. This is, of course, true of any and all sin, not just homosexuality.

Here is a link to a web site with many testimonies of people who have been delivered from homosexuality through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Many of these folks once thought as you do about their sin.

(<http://www.stonewallrevisited.com/menus/pages.html>) Stone Wall Revisited

May the Lord bless you yet more,

Ron

Re: - posted by jouko (), on: 2003/12/5 19:49

If homosexuality was from birth what then do we make of these verses from Genesis ?

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen 1:27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Why is it that we have to accept anything and everything in today's society also in the church ? Because we have chosen to forget God's word as guidance and instead want to be accepted in the eyes of men and follow man-made laws, anti-discrimination being one of them, yet the same law discriminates against anybody that follows the commandments of God ?

In accordance with God's word we are to render a decision whether something is wrong or right ?

Is someone's behaviour right or wrong morally ?

Is it scriptural or unscriptural ?

Is it of God, or is it of the flesh, or is it of the devil ?

1Co 6:5 I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren,

We are to discern and not just accept anything and by doing it biblically I don't believe we are holding anybody in contempt. By the fruits we are known.

Phi 1:11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Jam 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.

I don't hate the homosexual but the practice of homosexuality.

Tit 1:16 They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and un-
to every good work reprobate.

The same longsuffering as below is also available for a sinner today.

1Ti 1:15 Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief:

1Ti 1:16 howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life.

As for making myself sinfree, what would that make the grace of God? Yes, I fail in a lot of ways but I have an intercession on my behalf in heaven. My will is to die to myself and for Him to increase in me.

Joh 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/6 3:16

Hi Jake

your quote: go and sin no more is impossible. Can anyone say that they have given up all sinful activity? And one sin is as good as another. A person born of a homosexual nature can no more easily quit being that than can a heterosexual deny his/her nature.

It is also impossible to walk on water, or to stretch forth a withered arm. What makes the impossible possible is the enabling word of Christ.

This is Charles Wesley :

'Twas most impossible of all
That here sin's reign in me should cease
Yet shall it be, I know it shall
Jesus, Look to Thy faithfulness!
If nothing is too hard for Thee,
All things are possible to me

and this, our mutual friend Robert Barclay in 1675
The Eight Proposition
Concerning Perfection

In whom this holy and pure birth is fully brought forth, the body of death and sin comes to be crucified and removed, and their hearts united and subjected unto the truth, so as not to obey any suggestion or temptation of the evil one, but to be free from actual sinning, and transgressing of the law of God, and in that respect perfect. Yet doth this perfection still admit of a growth; and there remaineth a possibility of sinning, where the mind doth not most diligently and watchfully attend unto the Lord.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/12/6 16:43

Quote:

Nevertheless, go and sin no more is impossible.

Blasphemy. You do not know the power of the cross nor the power of the resurrection. The cross causes the flesh and its lusts to die. The resurrection gives the same body life to do what it could have never done otherwise. It gives the flesh the power to live according to the Spirit of God.

Romans 8:10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. 12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

A born again Christian is no longer obligated to sin. To "go and sin no more" is a reality that the Christian can enjoy. For the same power that raised Christ from the dead is living inside us, to give us strength. Surely, if that power could overcome death, then it can overcome temptation and sin.

The Scriptures clearly teach a Christian is not required to sin. They can go the rest of their lives, no matter how short or how long, and never sin again because of the power of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 10:22

My faith is in the forgiveness of sin through grace. I also seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in daily activity. These offer me a way to negate sin in my life. But this does not mean that I will not sin again; I recognize human frailty. I count on grace and do my best to live in harmony with my fellow human beings and nature. But the way that Jesus has described sin makes it clear to me that while I cannot attain a sinfree life, striving for this is what makes the difference.

Do not deceive yourselves into thinking you are Holy because you believe in Christ.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/8 10:52

Quote:

-----My faith is in the forgiveness of sin through grace...

Many mistake God's attribute of mercy with His provision of grace. Grace is the power, the unmerited favour, that God's enables us with. First it is given to prepare the vessel. This enables us to come near to Him. This part of life with the Holy Spirit is a time of conviction and victory over the wicked one and our flesh. Once prepared by the grace of God, we are sent out to do His work.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

God's attribute of mercy is reflected in His loving nature for His creation. Many today separate the God of the books of Moses and the Prophets with the God of New Testament. Jesus is coming back a second time!

"By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified." Leviticus 10:3

Ananias and Sapphira experienced to God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/8 11:21

Hi Jake

your quote:But the way that Jesus has described sin makes it clear to me that while I cannot attain a sinfree life, striving for this is what makes the difference.

Do not deceive yourselves into thinking you are Holy because you believe in Christ.

Now you are confusing justification with sanctification. Please tell me where Jesus said that 'striving for a sinfree life.. is what makes the difference'.

your quote:These offer me a way to negate sin in my life

Please explain how sin can be 'negated'. I can see from the bible how it can be covered, forgiven, remitted, cleansed, removed, washed, and a few more, but would like to understand 'negated'.

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 11:51

Philologos,

Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child cannot enter it. (Lk 10:15)

You are intellectualizing the forgiveness of sin.

I realize that much of our differences arise from a fundamental difference in the way we view the Bible. For instance, I see Paul as a great evangelist who got a lot of stuff wrong. His job was to spread the word, and he did that. But in many places he revised what Jesus taught. Thus I always try to go to the original source in interpreting Paul.

I divide the Christian faith into what I call Christians and Paulians. In many cases the later have fallen away from the original intent of Jesus. (This is what the Spirit tells me.)

Faith has to be a simple matter because it is beyond reason. I cannot justify myself and so neither can I justify forgiveness of sin. It is simply a gift that I accept.

Jake

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/8 12:45

Hi Jake

your quote:I divide the Christian faith into what I call Christians and Paulians. In many cases the later have fallen away from the original intent of Jesus. (This is what the Spirit tells me.)

Jake, I really don't want this to sound as censorious as it will, but you have a different spirit talking to you than the one that spoke to George Fox, Robert Barclay and so many others. They were adamant that there could be no disagreement between the testimony of the Spirit in their hearts and the testimony of the Spirit in the scriptures.

The spirit that is talking to you is intent on isolating you from the community of testimony. Have you ever noticed that the book says we have the mind of Christ rather than "I have the mind of Christ". John brings a similar truth But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. This is 'ye' rather than 'thou'. This is the community of the Spirit, otherwise known as the Church. There is no safety outside this Church.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/8 12:48

"Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave to sin. And a slave does not abide in the house FOREVER, but a son abides forever." John 8:34-35

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/12/8 12:53

Quote:

I realize that much of our differences arise from a fundamental difference in the way we view the Bible. For instance, I see Paul as a great evangelist who got a lot of stuff wrong.

Paul might have gotten something wrong... but nothing in the Scriptures he wrote of is wrong.

Quote:

I divide the Christian faith into what I call Christians and Paulians. In many cases the later have fallen away from the original intent of Jesus. (This is what the Spirit tells me.)

The Holy Spirit of God has told you no such thing, though a spirit of deception has. The Holy Spirit bears witness that the writings we have of Paul, Peter, John are all inspired, and part of the Christian faith. There is no contradiction between Paul and Christ. Your faith is not the faith of the Spirit, nor is your faith that of Christianity.

Why are you even on this message board or web site?

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 13:20

Philologos,

The Church Community you speak of supports "just war", swearing Oaths, and other things that are clearly opposed to the teachings of Jesus.

It employs coercion to enforce a strictly literalist belief system that denies scientific facts (such as evolution) and shuts out the Holy Spirit.

YOU are wrong about Fox. See below a quote I have posted before.

"The Scriptures were the prophets' words and Christ's and the Apostles' words, and what as they spoke they enjoyed and possessed and had it from the Lord. . . Then what has any to do with the Scriptures, but as they came to the Spirit that gave them forth? You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this: but what canst thou say? Are thou a child of Light and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest, is it inwardly from God?"

"This opened me so that it cut me to the heart; and then I saw clearly we were all wrong. So I sat down in my pew again, and cried bitterly. And I cried in my spirit to the Lord, 'We are all thieves, we are all thieves, we have taken the Scriptures in words and know nothing of them in ourselves'".

George Fox, founder, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Moreover, I do not feel isolated from the community of testimony, but rather more connected to it. The process of discernment through the leadings of the Holy Spirit bring me closer to the Church Jesus spoke of.

Jake

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/8 13:40

Jake,

"Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave to sin. And, a slave DOES NOT ABIDE IN THE HOUSE FOREVER, but a son abides forever." John 8:34-35

"For if you live according to the flesh YOU WILL DIE, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Romans 8:13.

"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

Jake ask the Holy Spirit for discernment. Jesus said a slave to sin will not abide in the house of God forever. But he does abide for a while. Paul says that one will die if he continues to follow his flesh. Paul is speaking to the brethren. I do not believe "Once saved always saved." This is a precept of man's doctrine.

listen to His voice.

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 13:54

Philologos,

YOU are also incorrect about Robert Barclay.

Here's what he says in his work "The Apology"

THE THIRD PROPOSITION
Concerning the Scriptures

From these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints have proceeded the Scriptures of Truth, which contain,

I. A faithful historical account of the actings of God's people in divers ages; with many singular and remarkable providences attending them.

II. A prophetic account of several things, whereof some are already past, and some yet to come.

III. A full and ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ, held forth in divers precious declarations, exhortations and sentences, which, by the moving of God's Spirit, were at several times, and upon sundry occasions, spoken and written unto some churches and their pastors.

Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all Truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/12/8 13:54

Quote:

The Church Community you speak of supports "just war", swearing Oaths, and other things that are clearly opposed to the teachings of Jesus.

I don't see how these things are "clearly" opposed to the teachings of Jesus.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/8 14:17

Jake,

Don't justify your position by what men argue or do. Look to the author and finisher of our faith! Believe every word. Do not put false gods before Him.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/8 15:23

Jake

You are being disingenuous. This kind of dishonesty is a testimony to the spirit you are listening to, but is dishonouring to the memory of Robert Barclay. Why didn't you finish the quotation?

your quote:Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all Truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners You stopped half way through a paragraph which continues...

..primary rule of faith and manners. Nevertheless, as that which giveth a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty; for as by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them, so they testify, that the Spirit is that guide by which the saints are led into all truth: therefore, according to the scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal leader. And seeing we do therefore receive and believe the scriptures, because they proceeded from the Spirit; therefore also the Spirit is more originally and principally the rule, according that received maxim in the schools. That for which a thing is such, that thing itself of more such.

The last quote simply means that God is bigger than His book, and you will get no-one quarreling with that on this forum.

Jake, the reason you don't understand Barclay is because you don't have the Spirit that inspired both him and the book which he referred to as being 'faithful and true' and as having 'excellency and certainty'. The reason, in Barclay's words, that you 'do not truly know the scriptures' is because you are without the Spirit which inspired them, and consequently they cannot bear witness to your spirit.

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 16:30

And he continues

For as we freely acknowledge that their authority doth not depend upon the approbation or canons of any church or assembly; so neither can we subject them to the fallen, corrupt and defiled reason of man, and therein as we do freely agree with the Protestants against the error of the Romanists, so on the other hand, we cannot go the length of such Protestants as make their authority to depend upon any virtue or power that is in the writings themselves; but we desire to ascribe all to that Spirit from which they proceeded.

"therefore also the Spirit is more originally and principally the rule"

If you wait upon the Spirit you will know the Truth. This is the fundamental message of Barclay. In his days, the Government established church persecuted people for not adhering to their scriptural interpretation. They charged all people a tithe, which Quakers refused. Barclay's Apology was addressed to this Government, and he had to walk a very thin line not to be thrown into prison for Blasphemy. Friends call him the Apologist for good reason.

If you have ever participated in what Friends call a "gathered Meeting" you know the Holy Spirit. This is not the same as participating in a silent Meeting for Worship. There is a clear difference. I have participated in Meetings where all of a sudden everyone gathered will get this look on their face of pure delight and wonderment. Like we are all floating on a cloud. No one or few speak because they do not want to break this experience. I have also been in a meeting where I felt moved to sing a song (very unusual) and at the last second I was told to halt and wait. Then a few minutes later the person next to me began singing the very same song that I felt moved by the Spirit to sing!! Don't tell me that I cling some demon or evil spirit. Twenty years of experience tells me otherwise.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/12/8 17:20

Quote:

If you have ever participated in what Friends call a "gathered Meeting" you know the Holy Spirit. This is not the same as participating in a silent Meeting for Worship. There is a clear difference. I have participated in Meetings where all of a sudden everyone gathered will get this look on their face of pure delight and wonderment. Like we are all floating on a cloud. No one or few speak because they do not want to break this experience. I have also been in a meeting where I felt moved to sing a song (very unusual) and at the last second I was told to halt and wait. Then a few minutes later the person next to me began singing the very same song that I felt moved by the Spirit to sing!! Don't tell me that I cling some demon or evil spirit. Twenty years of experience tells me otherwise.

Is that somehow supposed to impress us? You have some sort of mystic experience, and that is supposed to woo us?

Quote:

No one or few speak because they do not want to break this experience.

If it was truly the Spirit of God, you could not break it simply because somebody breaks wind.

Quote:

I felt moved to sing a song (very unusual) and at the last second I was told to halt and wait. Then a few minutes later the person next to me began singing the very same song that I felt moved by the Spirit to sing!!

Oh yes... that must be the Spirit of God. Of course, I've seen some very demonic manifestations not too unlike that. I have no doubt that demons are responsible for a lot of what passes as "music" out there. Carols Santa, considered by some to be one of the greatest musicians of all time, admits that various "angels" have helped him create, and inspired his music.

I've seen false prophets such as Kim Clement "free style rap prophetically" (where one gets a basic 'beat' and then begins to say whatever the 'Spirit' tells him), when Clement was doing no such thing by the Spirit of God, but by something otherworldly.

Just because something put warm fuzzies down your spine doesn't mean a thing.

Quote:

Don't tell me that I cling some demon or evil spirit. Twenty years of experience tells me otherwise.

You cling to a demon.

Re:, on: 2003/12/8 17:33

Thanks for putting all this in perspective. If someone has a disagreement with your particular point of view it MUST be caused by a demon.

You and Buffy the Vampire Slayer have a lot in common.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/8 18:14

Jake,

I believe you when you testified of the Holy Spirit working in your midst. He has worked with me in the same way. What a blessed experience to know that God is real.

Signs and wonders are God's way of giving us evidence that He exists. They are given to man to turn him towards Him. I believe Jesus died for all of us. And we come to Him and seek a new life. I believe Scripture teaches us that we come as we are. Jesus came to save us, what a beautiful expression of God's love for us. We come to Him still burdened by the carnal ways that we walk. But we also learn from Him. He seeks to take our burdens whatever they may be. Sin in whatever form strains our relationship with Him. He seeks to heal. He seeks to bring the soul near to the Creator.

With all of this I believe God in His love is saying to all of us come and let me heal you of what separates us. With all that I have said I must also say this with again the word of God.

"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me you who practice lawlessness." Matthew 7:22-23 We must walk with Jesus. That is faith. Those who continue to practice lawlessness will in effect be part of this group. To know Jesus is to walk where He walks.

Follow for He is the source of all fulfillment.

Jeff

Re: Barclay - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/8 18:39

your quote:we cannot go the length of such Protestants as make their authority to depend upon any virtue or power that is in the writings themselves

I am not one of 'such protestants'. There is no magic in the words. I do not adhere to the trinity of Father, Son and Holy Scripture. However, if you think Barclay trimmed his convictions to avoid prison you have a peculiar view of the early Quakers.

If you have read (and really considered) Barclay and Fox's journals you will know the esteem in which these men held the scriptures. They received them as the confirming testimony of their inward witness. You will also know how Fox and others used the scriptures to confute the Ranters who held what is fundamentally your position that they could 'speak scriptures as well as Paul'.

The point that Barclay is making, and making well, is not directed to those of your persuasion who have rejected the testimony of the Spirit in the scriptures but to those who had yielded to what Tozer would have called their own version of 'textualism'; confusing the word with the reality. He was speaking to professing (professors) Christians who had no personal experience of the Spirit. The divines, so called at Westminster, who began to be afraid of and guard against the testimony of the Spirit, because they perceived a dispensation beyond that which they were under beginning to dawn..

I will not quote the whole of Barclay, you have your own copy, but I find it difficult to see how you can both hold your position and quote Barclay as an authority. e.g. you must have the section which says the scripture's authority and certainty depend upon the Spirit by which they were dictated; and the reason why they were received as truth is, because they proceeded from the Spirit. What he was pleading for was genuine witness of the Spirit to man's spirit rather than book learning textualism. You will also find him bearing witness to Paul, whose witness you reject.

You cannot have it both ways. Either there is one Spirit who will bear consistent witness to Himself and His truth, in the s

riptures, in Barclay and in all his true sons, or there is more than one spirit. In the latter case 'truth' will become a matter of personal taste losing all divine objectivity.

I'm not quite sure of your purpose in your last paragraph. In the church of which I am part in the UK our 'prayer meeting' is designated as a time for 'Waiting on God'. We do not presume that we will pray, although most often we do. We make ourselves available to Him and the leading of His Spirit. We have no human leader but seek God's face together at these times. None of this is guarantee of authenticity in itself but we know ourselves to be part of His church universal and we endorse that word of the Spirit to Isaiah long ago... Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Fox and Barclay did speak according to this word because they had light in them. You do not because you have not.

Re: - posted by jouko (), on: 2003/12/9 2:17

Jeff wrote: "Signs and wonders are God's way of giving us evidence that He exists. They are given to man to turn him towards Him."

Isn't this what the Signs and Wonders movements are all about and where does that "gospel" lead ? I started from the beginning of Matthew and got to the 8;th chapter. In the 4;th Jesus is tempted for a sign.

Mat 4:3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread

Further on we see that preaching the gospel to repentance comes first.

Mat 4:23 And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.

Mat 6:33 But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

The 8;th chapter tells us of healings due to their faith in Jesus and also in it Jesus tells one man,

Mat 8:4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

And last the people of a city don't want to have anything to do with Jesus.

Mat 8:34 And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart from their borders.

Below are some examples of signs and wonders although these signs and wonders will not lead you closer to the Lord but away.

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Mar 13:22 for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, that they may lead astray, if possible, the elect.

Joh 4:48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe.

2Th 2:9 even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

Pharaoh and Egypt would be another example of signs and wonders. Then you have the wanderings of Israel for a long time with its signs and wonders after Egypt. If signs and wonders are a sign for us to turn to Him, then why did the Israelites continually turn away ?

As for signs and wonders proving that God exists the Psalms put it this way:

Psa 8:1 O Jehovah, our Lord, How excellent is thy name in all the earth, Who hast set thy glory upon the heavens!

Personally, Jesus death on the cross for my sins is the ultimate sign and wonder, despite me not being there.

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Rom 5:1 Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;

Rom 5:2 through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 5:3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness;

Rom 5:4 and steadfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope:

Rom 5:5 and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.

Rom 5:6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.

Rom 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.

Rom 5:8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.

Re: - posted by Nasher (), on: 2003/12/9 5:33

Quote:

-----But this does not mean that I will not sin again; I recognize human frailty.

Jake, it would be better not to recognize 'human frailty' but to recognize God's sufficiency:

Jude

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
25 To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen.

Re:, on: 2003/12/9 11:06

Fellow SermonIndex discussion group members:

Let me try to make my point succinctly. Just as Jesus revised the ten commandments into three essential commands, the Holy Spirit is available to us to clarify the meaning of Scriptures.

Philologos said "those of your persuasion who have rejected the testimony of the Spirit in the scriptures" This is not true. I do not reject this testimony.

I am of the "unprogrammed" branch of Friends. There are others, such as evangelical or conservative Friends who are more in line with your position on Scriptures and have "programmed" meetings, and little or no time in their services for "waiting upon the Lord." There are also "universalist" Friends who view the Scriptures as a historical document, and rely entirely on the "Light Within" for spiritual guidance. So, my position on Scriptures is pretty much middle of the road within the Religious Society of Friends.

It is the unprogrammed branch that Fox founded, and in this grounding I remain. It has been fertile ground, producing m

any leaders of positive social and religious reform. Mary Dyer, Lucretia Mott, John Woolman, and many others who led and brought about positive changes in our society were of the "unprogrammed" persuasion.

Quakers have a history of breaking the bonds of rigid thinking, and our free thinking and openness to continuing revelation has annoyed and troubled many people. They have taken exception to our views on the big issues, among which were: free exercise of religion, women as pastors, co-education for women, one person one vote, transparency in business transactions, the one-price-to-all-customers business system, William Penn's proposal for a European Union, the anti-slavery underground railroad, honorable dealings with Native Americans, and the concept of human rights. These and other ideas were not popular – or even legal – when we first proposed them. Now they are integral to our political and social culture. (Albeit Native Americans have not received justice.)

Would Demon possessed people do this? A house divided cannot stand. By their fruits you shall know them.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/9 12:28

Hi Jouko,

I hear your concern in what I said. I have not had time or the exposure to what you call the Signs and Wonders movement. I have begun attending bible college through Calvary Chapel Bible College. So if one is seeking to label where I am coming from in terms of doctrine, this would be a place to start. But by no means is it an end in itself. My theology grows with the word of God which is living and sharper than a two edge sword. And as I share, the sword is cutting both ways.

As you said, it is the gospel preached that begins the relationship. This is true. Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. This gospel that He and His disciples preached is not the same gospel we preach today. Now don't get upset, please. I will clarify. Jesus sent His disciples out to preach the good news of the kingdom. Yet, He had not even begun to teach His own disciples about His sacrifice on the cross. Today, as your testimony clearly witnesses, you understand that at the cross has allowed us once again to come boldly to the throne of grace to help in our time of need. So what kind of good news did Jesus share. What was the nature of His good news?

Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while WE WERE STILL SINNERS, Christ died for us." We all understand that Jesus ransomed His life for ours. And that He did this for all of us, who are "still sinners."

Romans 5:9, MUCH MORE THEN, having now been justified by His blood, WE SHALL BE SAVED FROM WRATH THROUGH HIM.' What is Paul really saying here. Systematic theologians of the Calvinist persuasion would not hear what Paul is saying. So far Paul has established that we are justified by His blood. Now Paul uses these words, "Much more then," so what comes next is more important to us than the previous thought. "We shall be saved from the wrath THROUGH HIM." What Paul is teaching is that once we are justified, we now look to follow, to walk with Jesus. This walk will save us from the wrath of God.

Romans 5:10, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, MUCH MORE, having been reconciled, WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE." Now Paul writes again to hammer home this thought. We were enemies and Jesus restored us, opened the door for us, enabled us to come near to God. But the good news of the kingdom is this. Again I write, BUT THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM IS THIS: We shall be saved by His Life.

Andrew Murray writes, "A preaching that insists upon salvation by faith chiefly as pardon and acceptance must produce feeble Christians. The fulness of faith is indispensable to the full Christian life."

I quote Murray because many look to men for assurance and support of what they believe. But hear what the gospel is! We are saved from the wrath of God by faithfully following our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We become what we place our faith in. The Life is much more than the death. But as I was trying to counsel Jake. The death must come first.

"Behold, God works all these things, twice, in fact, three times with a man, to bring back his soul from the Pit. That HE MAY BE ENLIGHTENED with the LIGHT OF LIFE." Job 33:29-30

What is the Light of Life? "That was the true Light which gives light to EVERY MAN COMING INTO THE WORLD." John 1:9.

Further more, Paul clearly teaches that "once saved always saved" is a false doctrine. Roman 8:13, "For if you live according

rding to the flesh YOU WILL DIE; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, YOU WILL LIVE.' I was trying to point out to Jake what the word of God says. We are sinners when we are born again. Jesus through the Holy Spirit will teach us to follow Him. What Paul is teaching here is that we still have a choice do we follow Jesus or do we continue following the old man. It is our choice. You asked why did Israel fall again and again, They loved their sin more than their Savior.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/12/9 12:33

Quote:

Just as Jesus revised the ten commandments into three essential commands, the Holy Spirit is available to us to clarify the meaning of Scriptures.

Jesus did no such thing.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/9 12:58

your quote:Philologos said "those of your persuasion who have rejected the testimony of the Spirit in the scriptures" This is not true. I do not reject this testimony.

But you only accept such scriptures as you feel support your witness. This was not the position of Fox or Barclay. The scriptures are a consolidated witness. This is not Kmart where we can browse the shelves and choose as we will. All scripture is God-breathed. This is the testimony of the Spirit to the scripture, in the scripture. This was received by Fox and Barclay. According to your posts you reject Paulianity and accept Christianity. This was not the position of Fox or Barclay. They would not accept your views on scripture.

Every thread is going to founder on this hidden hazard. You accept such scripture as you can weave into your design but reject those that you judge will not fit, and even these that you accept you trim until they fit. Instead of rejecting portions of scripture which do not support your theses you would do well to consider whether it is your design that is at fault rather than Paul's.

The reason that I have persisted in drawing you back to Barclay, as the apologist for Fox, is twofold. The first is to show that whatever you call your Quakerism it is not authentic Quakerism as held by Fox and Barclay; the second is that these giants of spiritual life should not be diluted in their continuing contribution to the Church of Christ.

Many of the sermon contributors to this website are in direct family line of the Quakers. The sermons of Tozer and Reidhead are on exactly the same ground, namely that belief in the scriptures is not an alternative to faith in Christ. Tozer calls this 'textualism', Fox and Barclay were making the same protest in their generation. But Tozer and Reidhead are also in direct line of descent in their position regarding the scriptures. As with Fox and Barclay, their position (and for that matter, mine) is that the testimony of scripture is the final court of examination in matters of life and doctrine. Not the sole, but the final. My earlier quotation from Barclay will substantiate this.

Re:, on: 2003/12/9 13:19

Philologos wrote:

"This was not the position of Fox or Barclay. They would not accept your views on scripture."

Perhaps, but they would fully defend my right to assert (and follow) the spiritual insights that have been given to me and many other Friends down through the ages by following the Inner Light and attending to the leadings of others so led.

"You accept such scripture as you can weave into your design but reject those that you judge will not fit"

The Bible is not intended to be read literally. It must be interpreted. Some parts don't agree with others. For instance, as I pointed out in an earlier post, Isaiah tells us that mankind will learn peaceful ways, beating spears into plowshares, Revelations tells us that we are going to kill off nearly everyone on the planet before the second coming. I see these as a

stark contradiction.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by thy Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/9 15:14

Only within our lack of understanding does Scripture oppose itself. God's word is perfect. Our understanding is imperfect. As others warn I also warn. The Spirit within me confirms the word of God. Any other spirit that does not bring us in alignment with the word of God is antichrist.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1.

As you say you follow the Gospels, search to see how careful Jesus sought to confirm His word in the things He did. ie. "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word." Psalm 119:9

Which words are not His? Which words should we not heed? When we become a bondservant, a slave to our Lord and Savior we establish that we have no rights. Yet you assert you have rights. Your logic defies the word of God.

Jake why won't you respond to my posts?

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2003/12/9 23:25

While I don't agree with most of Jake's opinions, I think he has been treated unfairly throughout this post. Although I am very impressed with the strong and informed defense being offered, Jake is often being criticized unjustly and sometimes even openly mocked.

For example (of unjust criticism), back near the beginning of this thread Jake commented that Jesus said "brood of vipers". Then in reply it was commented that it was John the Baptist that said this (implying that Jake had made a mistake). To which Jake humbly accepted the correction (though he was actually correct originally). In Matt. 12:34 Jesus says to the Pharisees "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart." And in Matt. 23:33 Jesus says again to the Pharisees "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?" If I am not mistaken, John the Baptist is recorded twice as using this phrase and Jesus is also recorded twice as saying this phrase. Yet nobody came to Jake's defense. Did no other contributors to this thread realize that Jesus also said this (this would be very surprising to me)? Why was Jake not defended here?

Not that his attitude has been exemplary either, but if we are trying to be an example for what we perceive to be a weaker believer or even a non-believer, shouldn't we exemplify justice and fairness in our conduct?

Openly mocking someone is pretty out of character for this site. I am disappointed that nobody has said anything about this yet.

Also, I think Jake is kind of right about at least one thing.... that if we are committing adultery in our heart (or if you follow that line of thinking, being a drunk, addict, murderer, idolater, etc., in heart) then we better do a real gut check before pointing the finger at homosexuals. Not to defend their conduct, but just a caution to some (including myself).

And finally, who claims that signs and wonders are "a gospel" (as Juoko implied)? It is my understanding that signs and wonders confirm the gospel, not that they are "a gospel".

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/12/9 23:47

Thanks Todd,
For saying what I had noticed as well.
Was hoping that it would resolve itself.

Gentelman, no need for the barb's.

It is a lively discussion and we are all at different stages in this walk. Surely we should defend and debate vigorously. Perhaps the old adage would apply:

In essentials unity.
Non- essentials liberty.
But in all things *charity*

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/10 3:25

quote:Philologos wrote:

"This was not the position of Fox or Barclay. They would not accept your views on scripture."

Perhaps, but they would fully defend my right to assert (and follow) the spiritual insights that have been given to me and many other Friends down through the ages by following the Inner Light and attending to the leadings of others so led.

Hi Jake,

I too would fully defend your 'right' to believe whatever you will. It is when those beliefs are brought into the public domain that we have a responsibility to challenge and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/10 3:48

todd wrote:For example (of unjust criticism), back near the beginning of this thread Jake commented that Jesus said "brood of vipers". Then in reply it was commented that it was John the Baptist that said this (implying that Jake had made a mistake). To which Jake humbly accepted the correction (though he was actually correct originally).

This was my mistake, so I put my hand up. What I ought to have said was that John was the originator of the phrase. Jesus often quoted John Baptist e.g. 'Baptised in the Holy Spirit and fire' is John Baptist's phrase, later taken up by Jesus.

I have consciously tried to respect Jake's opinions while refuting the premises on which they are built. At one point we took the debate off-line but was encouraged to return to the public forum by Greg. I have a whole bundle of things in which I agree strongly with Jake.

e.g. I won't swear oaths, I am a pacifist (sometimes militantly so ;-)) Nearly all the meetings, in the church of which I am part, would be described by Jake as 'unprogrammed'. I believe passionately in an uncluttered Christianity where the sons of God are Spirit-led and not directed by forms and creeds; the church of which I am part has no doctrinal statement and no membership role. My one point of conflict with Jake has been the final (not sole) court of appeal for Christian debate; Jake believes it to be his inward witness, I believe it to be the scriptures. and because I want to preserve the usefulness of the early Quakers contribution to the Church I have tried to show that they too regarded the scriptures, not as the sole or even initial authority, but as their final authority. that whatsoever is contrary to their testimony, may justly be regarded as false

I'm sorry if my vigour has offended you. At all times, as they say in soccer, I have gone for the ball and not the man.

Re:, on: 2003/12/10 13:15

Todd,

I appreciate your kind words.

I guess my position is that the Truth is in the Scriptures, but that you need to hold it up to the Light to see and test it. This is because there are so many authors, time frames, differences in interpretations of the original languages, and groundings of the writers that it is impossible that error has not been introduced down through the ages. (Ever participate in the experiment where one person whispers a message to the next in a circle and it is thus passed on to the next until it comes back to the original person, having gone through numerous rephrasings? Very often the message that comes back is vastly altered, many times hilariously.)

If the Bible in its present form is wholly without error, then God would have to have been present in every person who translated or otherwise transcribed the Bible. They all would have to have been infallible, and knowing human nature, I have a hard time accepting this. I also know that scholars have gone back to previous versions in earlier translations and then revised or corrected parts based upon new information. So, if even tiny details or parts needed to be corrected, what does this say about the infallibility of the current version? Jesus offers a solution to this problem in that he is present i

n the NOW in the form of the Holy Spirit and is available to us to assist in clarifying and discerning the intent and meaning. Also, the Bible has many passages that were written as allegorical story, and often people misread these to be literal. (Here I refer in particular to the Creation story and Adam and Eve.)

I guess this post is a long way from the subject of Homosexuality and the Church of England, except that those of you who do not accept that homosexuals can be Christians rely on the inerrancy of the Bible as an underpinning for such beliefs.

Thank you all for your honest and reasoned opinions.

Jake

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." John 16:7-11

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2003/12/10 21:42

Philo,
you wrote:

"This was my mistake, so I put my hand up."

As I was confident you would when called on it. I was more disappointed that nobody else stepped in to defend Jake than the fact that you made a mistake.

"I have consciously tried to respect Jake's opinions while refuting the premises on which they are built."

And I think that for the most part you have done an excellent job. I am very grateful for your commitment here.

"I have a whole bundle of things in which I agree strongly with Jake."

As do I. I guess saying that I disagree with "most" of his opinions is misleading because what I meant more was that I disagree with most of what he has said about what has been the main issue with him all along- that is, the whole authority of Scripture debate. However, even here, I sympathize with his leaning towards the need for personal revelation and not just mental assent, though it seems clear he has taken this too far. And as you put it "I (also) believe passionately in an uncluttered Christianity where the sons of God are Spirit-led and not directed by forms and creeds;"

"and because I want to preserve the usefulness of the early Quakers contribution to the Church I have tried to show that they too regarded the scriptures, not as the sole or even initial authority, but as their final authority. that whatsoever is contrary to their testimony, may justly be regarded as false"

And once again you have done an excellent job of this and really opened my eyes and given me a greater appreciation for, and desire to know, more concerning the Quakers and their contributions. once again I thank you.

"I'm sorry if my vigour has offended you. At all times, as they say in soccer, I have gone for the ball and not the man."

I have not been offended either by you or your vigour. I simply felt the urge to point out obvious injustice, call it what it is, and be fair to Jake.

Jake,
you wrote:

"...it is impossible that error has not been introduced down through the ages"

Isn't God in the business of doing impossible things (i.e. creating something out of nothing for a start)?

quote:

"Ever participate in the experiment where one person whispers a message to the next in a circle and it is thus passed on

to the next until it comes back to the original person, having gone through numerous rephrasings? Very often the message that comes back is vastly altered, many times hilariously."

Yeah, and that idea used to make me stumble in this area as well. Until a teacher (I think) told us to try this experiment in a new way that I would encourage you to try. Write a message on a piece of paper and pass it around the room. See how much it has changed when it gets back to you. From what I understand, the Scriptures weren't passed around strictly through word of mouth but were written records that, when copied, were done so with painstaking attention to accuracy and detail ("every jot and tiddle").

The point is, God is capable of bringing down, through the ages and places, the perfect translation for us to have. No matter what has happened to it in the past, God is capable of giving to each person what they need. Whether it's the KJV for you, or "The Message" for the little girl next door.

"Jesus offers a solution to this problem in that he is present in the NOW in the form of the Holy Spirit and is available to us to assist in clarifying and discerning the intent and meaning."

Yes I agree with this except I think we disagree on the problem. The problem is not in the accuracy of Scripture but in our ability to truly "get it."

"Also, the Bible has many passages that were written as allegorical story, and often people misread these to be literal. (Here I refer in particular to the Creation story and Adam and Eve.)"

How is this anything more than your opinion (in reference specifically to the Creation story)? You may be correct, but do you have concrete proof? If so, you should give Ray Comfort a call. I believe he has offered \$100,000 to anyone who can prove evolution. Let us know the results.

"I guess this post is a long way from the subject of Homosexuality and the Church of England, except that those of you who do not accept that homosexuals can be Christians rely on the inerrancy of the Bible as an underpinning for such beliefs."

Do some people here truly believe that homosexuals **can't** (that is they absolutely can not) be Christians? I definitely don't have solid beliefs about this topic. I would definitely like to hear more discussion about this.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/11 3:25

Thanks Todd

your quote given me a greater appreciation for, and desire to know, more concerning the Quakers and their contributions.

I would heartily recommend George Fox's Journal, as an amazing account of the 'law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' in the life of a man. Also, Robert Barclay's Apology; there is a version of this online and I have put a link to it in the Books section. Also William Penn, No Cross No Crown.

The language is archaic but some versions will give you a glossary (the online Apology does) and it is worth persevering. Occasionally you will come across oddities like 'hat honour' (in Penn) which will explain why Quakers would not remove their hats for kings and insisted on the use of 'thee'. It all makes very logical reading. Whether I would have been prepared to go to jail on my refusal to remove my hat is another matter.

The Quakers' views on freedom from sin lived on in early Methodism and the Salvation Army. Their abandonment of baptism and communion lived on in the Salvation Army. Their rejection of 'original sin' lived on in Finney and Reidhead. Their suffering for their convictions was prodigious. Whenever I think of their early years the words of Hebrews come to mind of whom the world was not worthy

As I commented in a much earlier thread we pray for revival, they lived it

Re: - posted by jouko (), on: 2003/12/11 3:37

Hello Todd. Maybe I should have said signs and wonders are another gospel according to...

2Co 11:4 For if, indeed, the one coming proclaims another Jesus, whom we have not proclaimed, or if you receive another spirit, which you did not receive, or another gospel, which you never accepted, you might well endure these .

..if the signs and wonders become the primary factor in the gospel preached and not repentance from my sinful ways.

You make some really good points in the rest of your letter. I've never ever thought of writing something on a piece of paper and then passing it on and so on!! Brilliant stuff to use in a Sunday school class or youth group to really make a point about the Word of God.

Kent Hovind I believe has a \$250000 offer the same way Ray has, nobody has claimed it yet.

As for homosexuals being Christians, I agree with the first post by Nasher and the verse he quoted.

1Co 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor abusers, nor homosexuals,

1Co 6:10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Re: - posted by 5nva (), on: 2003/12/11 9:11

Well I watched this post grow and grow but got completely off track from the original issue. I think everyone realizes this now.

I would like to add my comments concerning a homosexual being a Christian. Scripture is very clear.

1 Cor. 6:9-10 clearly shows us that a homosexual can't be a Christian. When we are saved we are set free from our sin. This is not to say we will not be tempted with some of the same old sins. There is a way of escape though.

No one who is born of God practices sin. If a person is still a homosexual then they are practicing sin.

To look at a person and lust is also sin and if it is the practice of your life then perhaps something needs to be examined in your heart. But to see an attractive person and know they are attractive does not mean you are lusting after them. We will struggle and sometimes fall but we cannot make peace with sin and make it our practice.

In Christ,

Mike

Re:, on: 2003/12/11 11:13

Just for the record, I am not a homosexual. But I do have F(f)riends who are and whom I hold in high regard because of their dedication to public service and their charity to those in need. These are attributes I find lacking in many heterosexual professed Christians. When I ask myself if their sexual orientation hinders in any way their ability to love others as themselves, I find the answer is clearly no.

Re: Missing Conclusion? - posted by nobody, on: 2003/12/11 12:27

I know some great people who are sodomites. Therefore.....WHAT?

If I buy the fact that being a good guy has anything to do with the truth I will become a Mormon and forsake my Christianity because more professing Mormons are moral people than professing Christians. I'll just trade the truth for a lie and be damned to hell.

The fact is that sodomites have always been recipients of God's wrath. Any who don't repent will be damned to hell eternally. Repentance requires giving up that sin and striving for holiness.

Scripture may have a few small passages which are very difficult to interpret or to prove were actually in the original text, but all of these passages added up together could not make or break any belief or doctrine. The chance that Scripture is so errant that even things which are said over and over again (don't think that sodomites are only ignoring one verse) are the exact opposite of the original is inconceivable. The fact that some who have reprobate minds and burn with ungodly lusts will ignore Scripture or try to twist it to allow their sin isn't surprising at all.

Imagine the foolishness of the sodomites in California who invited Dr. John MacArthur to debate them from the scriptures on this issue. He laid down scriptural evidence that was unrefutable. They responded with the typical "David and Jonathan" lame-brained argument that goes something like this: "David and Jonathan kissed each other and loved each other so that justifies the sodomite." Ridiculous. That sermon of MacArthur's that discusses this issue is on this site- check it out (everyone should also hear his sermon on Perfecting the Saints, which is unrelated except for the obvious general relation).

I love sodomites in the way John the Baptist would have - Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand!

Re:, on: 2003/12/11 14:15

Nobody,

The homosexual would counter that God made them that way. Would God create a soul for the purpose of going to hell? That would not be a God of love.

Jake

Re: - posted by 5nva (), on: 2003/12/11 14:33

Jake:

Please stop making God into something He is not. God didn't make someone a homosexual. It does not matter what the homosexual person says. God's word is true and every man a liar.

You seem to trust what man says over what God says. How sad this is.

God has not created you and I or anyone else to go to hell. He desires that all men come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

Romans 1:24-28 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie..

Clearly scripture tells us that it is us that turn away from God and His word and go after our own desires and lusts. We are all by nature children of wrath but God has provided a way to be reconciled to God and free from that nature.

Praise Jesus Christ for His salvation.

We need to look at John 3:16 as a salvation and love verse but also as a judgement verse. Whoever shall believe in Him shall not 'perish'..

I do not understand how any true Christian, born again of the Holy Spirit, can say and believe that a homosexual can be a Christian.

I believe, and I say this with love, that you need to repent of your false beliefs and statements and ask God to show you the truth.

Sincerely,

Mike

Re:, on: 2003/12/11 14:42

RE: "Damned to Hell" I've seen these threatening words in numerous posts on this web site and find them provocative. People respond poorly to threats and usually put up defenses and stone walls when threatened. So, threatening sinners with hell is unhelpful and puts the person using these words in the seat of judgment.

Re:, on: 2003/12/11 15:10

Mike,

There are numerous examples of homosexual behavior in animals. They don't make conscious choices and so, God made them the way they are.

Personally, homosexuality gives me the creeps and I find it repugnant. But I cannot discount the testimony of people who are in every other manner exemplary Christians.

Jake

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2003/12/11 16:27

Quote:
-----There are numerous examples of homosexual behavior in animals. They don't make conscious choices and so, God made them the way they are.

This is not a sound argument. People see Rover mounting Spot and think it's homosexual behavior. The problem is that Rover will mount the table leg or even your house guest's leg just as quickly. He is simply acting on an impulse.

This animal argument of yours fails to distinguish between desire and behavior. An animal has an impulse to do something and it acts upon it. There is no higher nature that allows it to judge morally, more acceptable impulses from those that are less acceptable. We can't say the same for man.

Here's a question for you. Even if it could be proven that homosexual behavior was natural in man, is he therefore not accountable?

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by Malachi (), on: 2003/12/11 16:51

Homosexual orientation seems to me to be a result of either the fallenness of humanity or the tempting of the devil (or both), depending on your theology.

It is evident from research that humanity cannot be simply split into men and women, at least not now, the line between gets fuzzy in places. (another result of fallenness?)

The problem comes with the practice of inappropriate sexual acts - to which I believe the correct course of action under God's rule is abstinence. This is true for sodomy as it would be for a heterosexual relationship outside of marriage.

Thus sodomy is a sin. Fortunately it is one which I do not feel the need to pursue. However this has not prevented me from on occasion breaking speed limits - endangering the lives of others, coveting my neighbour's ass(ets), or committing many other sins. This is why we have confession at most church services - recognising our shortcomings as humans.

Since I became a Christian, many years ago, I have tried to stop myself from doing things which are unrighteous - but I am a man with unclean lips, and I dwell among a people with unclean lips.

How can anyone measure the size of a sin? Only God will judge and I hope he will have mercy on sinners or we are all f or the fires of hell.

The bigger problem for the C of E is homosexual clergy and church leaders. I think that when Paul wrote to Timothy that church leaders should be respectable people - not prone to sinful acts and drunkenness, this indicates that homosexuals , adulterers and philanderers are to be excluded from office. This is hard to do without seeming to be anti-gay.

Don't rail against the sinner for you are only shouting in your own face. Pray for them that they and we might turn away fr om sin, wherever we encounter it.

I hope to see the churches full of sinners, as the righteous have no need of the gospel.

Re:, on: 2003/12/11 17:22

Philologos wrote:

"I would heartily recommend George' Fox's Journal, as amazing account of the 'law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' in the life of a man. Also, Robert Barclay's Apology; there is a version of this online and I have put a link to it in the Books s ection. Also William Penn, No Cross No Crown."

Yes, George Fox's Journal is quite amazing. For those interested I would also recommend John Woolman's Journal, an account of his work on the Abolition of Slavery. Valiant Friend, The Life of Lucretia Mott is also an excellent accounting of a woman minister working to end slavery. At her death in 1880 she was called "the most venerated woman in Americ a." Lastly, members of this forum will enjoy the writings of Rufus Jones, a very "weighty" Friend and scholar.

Jake

Re: - posted by nobody, on: 2003/12/13 18:40

TO JAKE:

If you don't like the idea of hell being preached you must think Jesus was nuts. I think reintroducing hell to our culture wo uld be a wonderful and awesome thing. Fear of hell may not be the only reason for seeking God, but it is a huge part of t he Gospel and can be quite effective (not in the church growth movement sense). Preaching hell is just the wake-up call that so many people need. You are right - many reject and hate it, but what are people being saved from other than God' s wrath? If they aren't confronted with their real destination why should they alter their course?

Now for the sodomites. They may be right that they experience a strong pull in that direction from birth. We all have this t owards sin due to our original sin problem. Everyone is pulled towards different sins to different degrees. Although God has permitted this situation to exist in his permissive will it is not his fault and if not repented of it leads to hell. This appli es to all of us. I would never claim that this sin is in a category of its own or different in any real way from other evil. The sodomite gets the same deal as the rest of us. Repent and be saved or do what feels good and be condemned. I don't th ink of them differently from those who love to rape, steal, or lie and have no intention of quitting. I wish they'd stop for the sake of themselves and others.

Re:, on: 2003/12/15 9:56

Nobody wrote:

"I don't think of them differently from those who love to rape, steal, or lie and have no intention of quitting."

There is a qualitative difference in the sin of homosexuality in that raping, stealing and lying do not involve willing particip ants. In doing these things you violate another person. In the case of two consenting adults there is no unwanted violati on.

Re: - posted by 5nva (), on: 2003/12/15 10:15

Jake:

1 Cor. 6:18 - Flee immorality. Every sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the one who practices immorality sins against his own body.

1 Cor. 7:2-3 - But because of immorality, let each 'man' have his own 'wife', and let each 'woman' have her own 'husband'. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife and likewise also the 'wife to her 'husband.

1 Cor. 6:9 - Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals...

v.11 - such 'WERE' some of you, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.

James 1:21 - Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

Mike

Re: - posted by nobody, on: 2003/12/16 11:02

Your reply has the appearance of wisdom, but you forgot something important. When I offend against federal law I am prosecuted regardless of whether someone was injured. The government sees my act as rebellion against its authority regardless of who I hurt.

God makes himself the chief party that is offended at any sin. When I murder someone God is still the party chiefly offended, not the person or his family. Likewise, if I commit sin with the consent of all the people on earth, God is still equally offended. Popularity of the sin doesn't change His mind a bit, and neither does the fact that it hurts no one (which I strongly disagree with, but am playing your side a little here).

Let me say that when I have sounded harsh against this sin on this thread I have had in mind the sin and people who try to justify it. They need to be rebuked, cast out, and awakened before they wind up damned and damning others with their teaching. I have not had in mind the lost who do not try to justify this sin. They have my compassion and love, and I would never speak harshly about this issue to them until they claimed to have come to Christ without repenting.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/12/16 11:07

John the Baptist trumpeted against the sins of His day. Did he offend people? YES. And in a few months or years of ministry he was killed. Is not his example a worthy one to follow?

Re:, on: 2003/12/16 12:57

Perhaps, except that from what I understand John the Baptist did not accept Jesus as the Christ.

Jake

Re: - posted by nobody, on: 2003/12/16 14:17

Your understanding of John is quite lacking in my estimation.

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is He of whom I said, "After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me." 31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." 34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God

d."

Just because he sent some people later to ask Jesus to confirm He was the Christ does not mean that he rejected Him, but rather that he was simply confused about his imprisonment and wanted to be sure he could die in peace having fulfilled his work from God. He may have expected deliverance from the hand of Herod and it was very early in Christ's ministry, so possibly some doubts had set in. I am sure that after Christ's word of encouragement John had no fear for his fate or that his work was incomplete.

It seems impossible that John was in rejection against or complete disbelief of Christ at this point while at the same moment Christ is pronouncing that no prophet was ever greater than John.

On the subject of rebuking and casting out those who claim to be Christians but won't repent:

9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.

12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? 13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

Re:, on: 2003/12/16 14:32

Actually, I hold John the Baptist in high esteem. I got the notion that he rejected Jesus from another post on this site. I guess I need to follow my own leadings.

Jake