

YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A HIGH PRICE

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1st Corinthians 6:19 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1st Corinthians 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Man was created in the image of God was is recorded in the book of Genesis.

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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

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

But down through the ages, man has thought that he knew better than God, the lawgiver, the creator of all

things. God instituted certain principles, laws of nature, and of Himself to guide men into His ways and to instruct them in righteous living. But the bible is full of stories of men who would not listen to the Words of God, but deviated according the sins of their flesh and their sinful nature, following instead according to the prince and power of the air and temporary ruler of this world, Lucifer....Satan the devil.

Man is made of flesh, but has a spiritual component that when deviating from the Law of God, is defined as sin. What is sin? Words such as Crime. Error. Foul. Wrong. Vice come to mind. Each of these words name behavior that fail to reach an accepted standard. Any group of people joining to accomplish a goal will establish a set of rules, laws, guidelines or principles to regulate proper conduct. When such a code is abused or ignored, a penalty is usually imposed.

It is no different when you speak of our Heavenly Father. God established a code of conduct called His Law, as defined by the Ten Commandments. It defined His perfect nature and His desire that man follow His way of living. Man has rejected God's way of living down through the ages and the penalty of not following God's perfect law, is death. Romans, chapter 6,

v. 23, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In God's love for His creation, He gave us His only Son, knowing that we could not keep the Laws of God, as we

are sold under sin. To transgress one aspect of the law is to transgress the whole law, as there is no difference when it comes to sin in God's eyes. The law was our school master to lead us to repentance, knowing that we were incapable of keeping the letter of the law. It was God's plan all along to redeem His creation to all that would look to His Son for payment of the sins past, present and future. God covered them all with one perfect sacrifice, His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

BATTLE FOR MAN'S SALVATION AND GNOSTICISM

In the very beginning of the early church, a heresy developed that men knew better than God. It was called Gnosticism, or secret knowledge, Gnosis. These heretics believed in dualism, or the battle between matter and spirit, good and evil, and light and darkness as defined by the body being bad, and the spirit being good. These early infiltrators of the early church professed that it didn't matter what you did within your body, as the spirit is what mattered. They believed that Jesus was not God in the flesh, as His flesh was corrupt and could not be our redeemer, but that salvation comes from in one of two ways:

» That the only way to attain true spirituality is to deny their flesh (matter) of anything that might tempt them to sin. Those who thought this way became ascetic or afflictions of their flesh.» The opposite extreme, that the things done in the body are inconsequential because only the spirit counts. These Gnostics often fell into licentiousness.

Bible shows that Paul battled this heresy in his epistles, especially in 1st Corinthians, Galatians and Colossians. The Apostle John battled it in all his writings. 1st John chapter 3, is one of those examples: is.

3:3 "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

3:6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

3:7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

John argues against this heresy. Some in John's area of ministry seem to have believed that they could not sin in their flesh. Since their flesh, matter, was ultimately evil anyway, it could not be redeemed and was worthless. Thus, they concluded, anything done in the flesh had no bearing on one's salvation. I see that abounding even today in this cesspool we call the world. It surrounds us on every side. New Age Emergent churches are promoting a new gospel, a new way of following Jesus.

I had the displeasure of reading an article by a supposedly Christian pastor who proclaimed that we must repackage the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to reach the people of today. Say what? So we must doll up the message to make it more palatable for the young people today? What's wrong with preaching the truth of Jesus Christ and Him crucified? Is there another way to enter into God's Kingdom other than the blood and body of Jesus Christ? NO!! Does that mean rock music in the church? Does that mean creating a mall type atmosphere that rivals any shopping outlet? Does that mean we must have tattoo parlors in the church? Yes, I said tattoo parlors. I had a dear lady write and report churches in her area are promoting tattoos right in the building of these churches. Some misled people of these new "enlightened" churches think they have the right to adorn their bodies with different colored inks that show they follow a "christian" message. I categorically reject this pseudo form of Christianity, as it glorifies the flesh, not the Savior. When would you paint graffiti with a spray can on the building you worship in? Would you paint a cross on the sides of the building and adorn the sanctuary with man-made symbols that deface the structure in various colored inks? Is it any different when you tattoo a cross or a crown of thorns

across your back and say you are proclaiming Jesus? How can we reach the world that is dying, if we ourselves are identifying with them by our actions?

As a Christian, or one who professes knowing Jesus Christ, what is our duty when trying to live the Christian life? There is only One example that we are to live by and follow and that is our perfect example, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Would Jesus allow a tattoo being placed on His righteous body? Would he follow the sins of this world by doing what I see happening in today's emergent "enlightened" churches? It smacks of Gnosticism.

1st John chapter 2:

2:4 "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

Peter reinforced that argument when he wrote in 1st Peter chapter 2:

2:21 " For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

2:23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

Jesus our perfect example and the personage we must emulate. God told us in His Word that we must separate ourselves from the sins of the flesh and the ways of this world: 2nd Corinthians,

6:16 "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

THE WORLD IS DYING. I am reminded daily when I see the amount of people in our hospitals that abuse their bodies with all form of addictions. I see people ravaged by alcohol addiction and drink heavily daily. I see people who get high on whatever their drug of choice is and there are many forms of chemical abuse that are legal. I saw a young person who damaged his body with a substance called K2, which is abusing bath salts by injecting it, smoking it, or inhaling it to get high. It destroys their brain, their internal organs, and respiratory systems. I see people who are grossly obese, who find comfort in food and gluttony and are diabetic and with failing organs. Or how about 1-2 pack a day smoker who destroys their lungs, heart, and open the door for cancers to invade? If the lost and dying world is suffering this type of destruction, should we not separate ourselves from this type of behavior with it's addictions and not even look like the rest of the world? If they can't see any difference in us, why would they choose this man, called Jesus Christ? If they can't see Jesus in you, then will they listen to your message? Probably not, but they will take your entertainment in the churches, but live like the devil the rest of the week.

I talk to young people who call themselves Christians, but are living with their boyfriend or girlfriend without the sanctity of marriage. How can one profess knowing Jesus Christ, when they live opposite of what He commanded and lived? Are they confused or do they just know better? Hey, everyone is doing it, right? So it must be OK? I see children being born out of wedlock into new types of families, or being raised by same sex couples and it's OK? Again, how can you reach a world that is dying from being lost in sin, when you indulge in sin yourself, and think it's alright? God plainly condemns this kind of behavior and the abuse of our bodies and our mode of living to the detriment of our very existence. Peter wrote according to the leading of God's Holy Spirit in 1st Peter,

1:14 "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."

It is quite clear for all that are awake and see the events around us, that we ARE in the last days of this world's existence. Suddenly, without warning, your world will be turned upside down and you will either be found in Jesus Christ, or being bamboozled by the god of this world, you have followed another gospel, that is not of Jesus Christ. You will have been living your life according to what you think is best, not according to the clear commands of Jesus Christ or having His sacrifice applied to you life. I have tried to hammer home the message that this world is fast approaching the cliff of tribulation and all of us need to be getting our houses in order. If you profess Jesus Christ, as your Savior, then live like it. If you are playing a fool's game of following another gospel, or a false messiah, and abusing your bodies in ways that are in direct conflict with the clear teachings of the One who died for the entire world, Jesus Christ, then you may have a sad day approaching. When Jesus banishes you from His presence during the sheep and goat judgment at the Bema Judgment Seat of our Lord, you will have no one to blame, but yourself: Matthew chapter 25,

25:33 "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. ...

25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, (ye who practice lawlessness) into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

25:46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

WHAT MUST YOU DO IF YOU PROFESS JESUS?

Christian, look at yourself. Do you follow the clear message of the Bible? Do you continue to make mistakes? Of course you do, but not according to the rest of the world, if you profess our Lord and Savior, but you do not live as the world does. You separate yourself from anything and everything that speaks of the lust of the flesh and follow the Holy Spirit, guiding your own spirit in righteous living. A Christian will not willfully sin according to the lust of his flesh, but seeks after righteousness. The truly converted man or woman is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

2nd Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

5:18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Romans:

8:19 "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

8:22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Men are dying because they are abusing the body made in the image of God. They follow the god of this world and fall into every unclean practices that leads to death. They die prematurely and experience painful deaths. I know, because I've seen it, up close and personal.

How more should we who have been converted to follow the ways of God, abstain from anything that would look like the world? God will hold each of accountable for things done in our body, meaning he will reward, or withhold reward for each of His children who are truly converted, but never quite learned the lessons of righteous living. See the opening verses that started this sermon. He will sorely judge the haphazard Christian who abuses the body He resides in . He will also, judge those who follow a pseudo form of Christianity, but deny the power thereof as noted in the sheep and goat parable. To mouth the words of being a Christian, does not make it so. It is an inward change of the heart. You will look odd to the world, but Jesus warned each of us of that very fact: John chapter 15,

15:18 "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me."

TO ALL WHO ARE SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

To the lost and dying, that do not have the payment of their sins paid for by the blood sacrifice and broken body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, time is growing short. Jesus is right at the door waiting to gather His church unto Himself. Jesus said that the time would be as in the days of Noah. Look around you, does this world seem to be going mad? Is it not as Jesus said it would be? Truly, it is.

Luke 17:26 "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

17:27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

17:28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

17:29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all."

Do not look at others who proclaim they are Christians, as some may be deceived. You might look to others for the way they live and use it as confirmation that you do not want this free gift of grace paid for nearly 2000 years ago. You will then make that choice independent of those you hold up as the reason you have not committed your life and heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. You will be solely responsible for the banishment into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Each of us are destined to be either in glory and in the presence of God Almighty, or be banished from His presence for all eternity.

Philippians 2:9 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

2:11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Each of us have been formed in the image of God. Those who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, must realize that their body is the Temple of God and we were bought with a very high price, hence my opening scriptures concerning this very fact. Those who have not accepted the free gift of salvation, do so at their own eternal peril. I extend an open invitation to all who will listen to that still, small voice inside your heart that draws you to the God who created you. Romans chapter 10,

10:9 "because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus `as' Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:

10:10 for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

10:11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame."

Invite the Spirit of God into your heart to make Jesus Lord and Savior of your life. Become the Temple of God's Holy Spirit and flee from anything and everything that imitates anything found in this world that the rest of the world revels in to their own destruction.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's salvation in your heart and life.
If there is anything I can counsel you on, pray with you about, or just a listening ear,
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God bless you all, till we meet at Jesus feet.