



November 29, 2009

A Disturbing Conviction

We are entering the time of year when we will hear much talk of love and peace. In the minds of many the idea of being religious carries with it an obligation to “get along” with everyone else regardless of their beliefs. This thinking also exists in the denominational world as there are some who see nothing wrong with accepting any other “faith” no matter what it is based on, so long as we can all get along. Historically we have lived in a time of relatively few armed conflicts and the present conflicts in the world are limited compared to what has happened in the past or what they could turn into. The nature of true Christianity however is to do one thing. To teach the word of God. Christ was sent into the world so that everyone who will believe in him can have salvation through obedience (**John 3.16**). Christ was not of this world, nor was the message that brought into it. Christ stated, **“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”** (**John 17.8**). The words, and therefore the doctrine that Christ taught were the words of God. Later the Holy Spirit inspired writers to record the message that we have access to today. The origin of the word is not of this world and that shows. The reasoning that is found in the scriptures is a marked departure from how we as humans reason. Attempts have been made over the years to interpret the scriptures as an extension of oral and cultural traditions wrapped in folk tales but the power, influence and survival of the scriptures points to the fact that it is the word of the Lord. God’s word incorporates and expresses things that are counter to the social conventions and values of the culture of man at any given moment in time. As Christ spoke to his disciples he warned them of the effect of the revelation of the mind of God to man and the teaching that they would do. Christ reminded the disciples that the words they spoke would be the words of God. **“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit**

of your Father which speaketh in you.” (**Matt 10.19-20**). This foretold that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit, which happened on the day of Pentecost, and they would be given the knowledge they needed to teach the word. Christ further warned them, **“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”** (**Matt 10.22**). The difference between the thinking of God and the mind of man caused conflict and was so different that the religious leadership, personally threatened by the teaching, popularity and presence of Christ, had him killed. As Christ stood before Pilate, he stated, **“My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”** (**John 18.36**). The otherworldly nature of the Church, the kingdom of Christ, is not mystical as some would teach. It is the expression of God’s love, provision and caring for all who would seek him. It is the revelation of that which was a mystery but now is spelled out in plain terms that we can read, understand and do. In the process of doing that we will change. Paul states, **“...be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”** (**Rom 12.2**). It appears that the emphasis these days is not transforming as much as conforming but calling the conformity transformation. This is of course what has happened to the word of God ever since Satan was able to convince Eve of his deception. When we find that the word has been altered, or is being avoided we need to realize that this contradicts the meaning of being a Christian and we need to move away from such teachings and practices as quickly as we can.

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