

The Pillar of Truth

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Anyone who has built any kind of building with any sort of a pillar or corner as its mainstay knows that the pillar and mainstay must stand almost perfectly perpendicular to the ground. Modern building codes require anything perpendicular to be within about five degrees of exact perpendicular or else it must be replaced. A central pillar or mainstay that leans too far in any one direction can quickly bring the entire structure into need of repair.

It is with this picture in mind that we can see the balanced nature of truth. Paul described the people of Christ as “the assembly of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.” (1 Tim. 3:15) That is, we, the people of Christ, are to stand for and uphold God’s absolute standards of truth. Anyone with any kind of ability to discern spiritual truths can see modern “Christianity’s” many divisions, dissensions, sects, heresies and even cults and is forced to conclude that we are not doing anything resembling a good job at presenting or upholding God’s truths. In fact, one who has eyes to see is forced to conclude that this is the time of the apostasy, the great falling away from the faith done in the name of Christ and God, that occurs prior to Christ’s return (2 Ths. 2:3, Mt. 24:10) and that much of what claims to be “church” is nothing less than an expression of the great prostitute, Mystery Babylon. (Rev. 17:4-5, etc.)

One perhaps easily-seen contrast that will serve as an illustration comes into view when we recognize how gospel workers returning to America or other affluent “Christian” cultures are dissatisfied with the work being done by most “church”-ites who have remained at home. “Do something!” these workers want to scream out as they know how little it really takes to make large differences in the lives of a lot of people around the world. These workers who have experienced the power and grace of God in very powerful ways find it very difficult to understand why those who claim to belong to Christ do nothing.

There are various reasons for this inaction. Going beyond the natural human inclinations toward apathy, laziness and self-centeredness that are reinforced by having a professional “church” staff that routinely demonstrates their “superior skills” at doing the work of “ministry” (a thing actually monopolized by some professionals), some “churches” go further and even teach a form of hyper-grace that says we aren’t supposed to do anything – Christ did it *all* for us on the cross and any effort on our part (even diligence or obedience) is just a return to law and self-effort to be saved.

The truth is, however, that both of these positions are in error. Jesus still says, “Apart from Me you can do nothing.” (Jn. 15:5) It really would do no spiritual or eternal good to have the majority of “church”-ites involved in the work of Christ’s kingdom because many, perhaps most or even all of them, do not themselves belong to Christ’s kingdom or are not spiritually able or equipped to do any work that serves or benefits His kingdom. Those who are frustrated at all the “church” inaction they see need to think about what horrors and damage would be inflicted by flooding the battlefield with all these children, babies, handicapped, blind, naked, wretched, carnal, perhaps even apostate people.

To see the error of those who practice or preach the “do nothing gospel,” we need turn no further than Jesus’ teachings. Jesus said, “But he who heard [My teachings] and *did nothing* is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.” (Lk. 6:49) To do nothing or to do something apart from Christ – the result is the same. Nothing of eternal good is accomplished. And the cause is the same – there has been no real work of the Spirit of God in their lives.

The kingdom of God is that realm where Christ is truly the King who is obeyed and followed. It really is a no-brainer to understand this. A “kingdom,” in any dictionary, is that realm or place ruled by a king. The kingdom of God comes into our midst whenever we actually obey Him and do what He would have us do. So long as we follow other men or our own ideas of what is right (what the New

Testament calls “lawlessness” – Greek *anomia* [458]), we have no reason to believe that we are any functional part of the kingdom of God. Rather, we are our own god.

There is only one solution - we must retake our stand on the ground of the original, spiritual Mount Zion (Rev. 14:1, Heb. 12:22), forsake the “church” as being merely a part of the physical, carnal, wicked world that lies under the control of the wicked one (Mt. 13:38, 1 Jn. 5:19b) and press on to follow the Lamb wherever He leads us. (Rev. 14:4, Phlp. 3:14) To be able to stand again as “the pillar and mainstay of the truth” requires that we be led into all truth by the Spirit of truth. (Jn. 14:26, 16:13) To be led into all truth, we must submit to having all our favorite lies and distortions, especially our religious ones, exposed for what they are. Then we must be led out of those deceptions (the work of the devil and the demonic – Jn. 8:44) and be led into the light of truth. Then – and only then – will we be free. (Jn. 8:31-32)

The call to battle – not against people but against spiritual, demonic forces that manipulate and control people – is sounding forth. Most people today who claim to follow Christ are not well prepared for this battle though God has been quietly maturing His remnant by leading them through extensive wilderness training experiences. For this remnant, one’s own peculiar doctrines is *not* the standard by which we can receive others as our brothers in Christ. We must, as Paul said, no longer “regard anyone according to the flesh” (2 Cor. 5:16) but instead we must look for evidence that they have truly entered into the kingdom of God – this evidence being what Paul called “the fruit of the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:22-23) Anyone whom Christ has received is our brother or sister in the family of God. Period. It is then our duty to cooperate with these brothers and sisters as we all co-labor with Christ as He builds His ekklesia (Greek [1577], Christ’s chosen people called out of this world’s darkness to attend to the issues and affairs of His kingdom of light, the word poorly translated “church” in English versions of the New Testament.) Anything else will be a deviation from the perpendicular standard by which His ekklesia, His assembled people, can be the pillar and mainstay of truth. We must no longer be confused – being a ragtag conglomeration of conflicting and competing opinions is *not* being the pillar and mainstay of God’s truths. The unanimity of the faith (Eph. 4:13) comes *after* we have been careful to conduct ourselves in the unanimity of the Spirit under the bond of peace. (Eph. 4:3) Anything else is mere deception, the work of the devil and the demonic.

The standards that were acceptable at “church” are not acceptable on Mount Zion. We are called to standards of righteousness, holiness, love, self-sacrifice and goodness which demonstrate that Christ’s Spirit is truly within us. Considering Christ’s example on the cross by which He showed us what love is and how deep His love for us goes, how could we do any less? (1 Jn. 3:16) We who have this divine treasure in our earthen vessels must stand ready to show everyone around us that the surpassing greatness of the power is from God and not from ourselves! (2 Cor. 4:7) This *is* the only way in which we, as His people, can attain to His expectation that we be the pillar and mainstay of His truth.

Let he who has ears hear.

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