

## Convert, Evangelize, Proselytize

As I looked back on my Christian life I thought about how undeserving and unworthy I felt in God's eyes for so many years, I began to realize that something was wrong with my belief system.

The Bible tells us in Hebrews chapter 10:1-4 that the Old Covenant was faulty because those who followed its guidelines were never able to walk out from under the guilt and condemnation that it produced. Because of this, it was replaced with a new covenant that supposedly corrected the problem.

***Hebrews 9:14*** *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

According to this scripture, a follower of Jesus should not be continually plagued with feelings of failure and condemnation.

When it got right down to it, even though I claimed to be a follower of the new covenant system, I was never really set free from the guilt and condemnation that the old system was identified with. This told me something-I had never completely broken away from the law! And it was not just me! Thousands of other Christians are affected by the same thing.

People who don't know who they are are trying to convert other people and they just pass on their problems. This is why it is so important for us to really understand what we believe and why.

I have heard it said that a child's basic value system is established by the time he is six years old. Those early years are of utmost importance. I think the same thing applies to our Christian lives. The way the foundation of our faith is laid down in the very beginning will affect the way we live out our Christian lives.

What is the difference between Judaism and Christianity. Judaism exposes sin and Christianity covers sin.

Jews proselytize and Christians evangelize. Let's look at the differences because I think we will find that we have been promoting a mixture of both.

***Hebrews 10:14*** For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. **17** and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

The word perfected is confusing. In our minds it means that we have to become perfect just like Jesus was, and when we notice that we don't seem to measure up to that standard, we become motivated by guilt and we try of ourselves to correct the problem. This is where the mixture gets its foothold! Although the scripture says that God is not sin conscious, we become very sin conscious. We want what Jesus has and we are willing to whatever it takes to get it. The trouble is, we never outgrow our need for our savior and we sometimes forget that.

The word perfected in this verse actually means to be completely furnished or fulfilled. As long as we are walking hand in hand with Jesus and walking in his provision, we are perfect and fulfilled. But, if we ever try to walk in that perfection apart from our union with Him, we will miss it.

Our concept of what repentance means also contributes to the mixture that is at work. According to the English dictionary, the word repent means to be sorry; to correct one's actions or to change directions. The Greek word that it was taken from [metatonia] simply means to gather one's thoughts and change the direction of our focus.

***Luk 24:47*** And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

When we re-focus and look to Jesus for help, when we place our confidence in him, remission or relief from the ever present consciousness of sin comes. But, if we try to change our actions apart from his help, remission will never come. See how easily things can become confusing?

Are we calling attention to our sins and our need to change, or are we calling attention to the savior who loves us so much that he is willing to help us and cover our tracks?

***Psalms 32:1*** *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*

True repentance, the kind that takes care of the sin issue, comes by getting a revelation of God's goodness.

**Romans 2:4** Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

It is impossible to be confident in a god that always seems to be angry. When we get a revelation that he is for us, not against us, that he understands us and wants to help us, it changes everything because we feel like we can run to him for help.

***Hebrews 4:14-16*** *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

We have been talking about getting a revelation of God's love and how there is no way to experience the fulness of God unless our faith is rooted in his love. **Ephesians 3:17-20**

We have been talking about continuing in his love. **John 15:9**

The question is, what are we continuing? Is our evangelization rooted in the same things that have held us captive, or are we promoting the things that set us free? What kind of a Christian foundation are we laying down for others; What are we rooting them in?

**1 Corinthians 3: 10-11** *According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

We are not here to minister the letter. We are ministers of the Spirit. Do we know the difference? Are we ministering the same mixed message that held us captive?

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

Are we magnifying sin or are we magnifying the love of God that covers a multitude of sins? Do we really love people, or is it just the message that we are in love with? People can tell the difference!

**1 Peter 4:8-10** *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Good stewards of grace re-direct people's attention! They get their eyes off of sin and arouse people's awareness of the true God who desperately wants to help them.

**1 Peter 4:11** *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Are we speaking the oracles of God, or are we ministering a perverted message that has its roots elsewhere? The Scribes and Pharisees brought sin to the fore front and lay heavy burdens upon people.

**Matthew 23:4** *For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

They passed on the powerless message that magnified sin.

**Matthew 23:13** *But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*

Their proselytes heard the same damning message that held the Pharisees captive.

**Matthew 23:15** *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*

There are two ways to minister: One magnifies sin and it destroys those who hear it. The other magnifies the love of God and it leads its hearers to freedom.

What are we ministering?

**John 9:1-41** Jesus and his disciples came upon a man who was born blind. Right away the disciples asked, who sinned? Someone must have sinned or this man would not have been born blind? Jesus

never had those kind of thoughts. He simply thought about what it would take to deliver him. His objective was to do his Father's work and to bring glory to God; to make the goodness of God visible to people who desperately needed to see it!

**John 9:3-5** *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me....As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

Jesus made a clay spittle of mud and anointed the blind man's eyes and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam, and the man came out seeing. The people were amazed and brought the man before the Pharisees. Right away the Pharisees said that this healing could not have been from God because it violated the Sabbath day and that would make the healer a sinner.

They did not believe that the man had really been born blind. They asked his parents if this in fact was true. The parents knew what the Pharisees were up to. If anyone sided with Jesus they would be cast out of the synagogue. They said, ask our son, let him speak for himself.

**John 9:24-25** *Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*

What was it that got that man's attention? Was it the Pharisees who were focused on sin, or was it the compassion of Jesus?

**Luke 7:36-50** A Pharisee named Simeon asked Jesus to dinner. A woman that was a sinner came to the house and began to wash Jesus' feet with her tears. She dried his feet with her hair and anointed them with an expensive oil. The Pharisee saw the whole

thing and he thought to himself, if Jesus was really who he says he is, he certainly would not have allowed that sinful woman to touch him.

Jesus answered him: Let me tell you a story. Two people owed a creditor some money. One owed him 500 pence and the other 50. The man knew that neither had the money to pay him back therefore he forgave both of their debts. Then Jesus asked Simeon, Which one do you think loved the creditor the most?

Of course Simeon said, The one who was forgiven the greatest debt. Jesus said that is right. This woman who is a sinner entered into your house and washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You did not offer to wash my feet. You did not give me a kiss, but she kissed my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with oil.

**Luke 7:47** *Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same liveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.*

We are witnesses-living examples of the goodness of God. What is the message that we are conveying to the world?

**Act 1:8** *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Do we have what the world is looking for? Are we drawing men unto Him, or are we pushing them away?

**Romans 10:15** *how beautiful are the feet of them who preach the Gospel of peace [unity with Him]*

Are we fully preaching the gospel of Christ?

**Rom 15:19** *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; ...I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*