



General Topics :: What is Biblical love anyway??

What is Biblical love anyway??, on: 2005/3/11 7:28

Someone suggested, in a light hearted way, that I really dont like Benny Hinn. Thats not true at all... disagreeing with a false teachers doctrines and practices is not an issue of "not liking" someone, or being unloving. So let's look at what Biblical love really is.

Love is crucial. The Bible says that without love "I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." The Bible tells us that God is love, and those who know God will reflect His love. And what is love? Most Christians are confused about love's definition. It must be defined biblically. "Love," to human thinking, is a warm emotion or a sensual romantic thought. "Love," to most Christians today, is broadmindedness and non-judgmental acceptance of anyone who claims to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is not what the Bible says about love. Consider the following Scriptures:

"Jesus answered and said unto him, IF A MAN LOVE ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23).

"And this I pray, that your LOVE MAY ABOUND YET MORE AND MORE IN KNOWLEDGE AND IN ALL JUDGMENT; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" (Philippian s 1:9-10).

"For THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

"And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And t he Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now we command you, brethren, i n the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not afte r the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:4-6).

Biblical love is **obedience** to God and His Word. In the last passage cited above we see the love of God sandwiched between verses that emphasize obedience to God's commandments, including separation from disobedient brethren! Love is not a feeling. It is not blissful romanticism. For a woman to love her husband means she submits to and serves him according to the Bible. For a man to love his wife means he treats her in the way the Bible commands. For children to love their parents means they honor and obey their parents as the Bible commands. Emotions come and go and are exceedingly undependable; but **love is obedience to God's Word.**

Love is not an emotion. It is not broadmindedness. **It is not non-judgmentalism. It is not tolerance and non-critical acceptance.** Biblical love is cautious and strict. It is based on knowledge and judgment from God's Word. It proves all things, and it approves **only those things that are the will of God.**

Was the Lord Jesus Christ unloving when He called Peter a devil (Matt. 16:23) or when he publicly condemned the Pharisees (Matthew 23)? Was Paul unloving when he rebuked Peter publicly for his compromise (Galatians 1)? Or when he named the name of false teachers and compromisers such as Hymenaeus and Alexander ten different times in the Pastoral Epistles? Or when he forbade women to preach or to usurp authority over men (1 Timothy 2)?

Biblical love does **not** mean that I ignore things people they do that are wrong and injurious. This is true both in the physical and spiritual realms. For example, to love a murderer, in a biblical sense, does not mean that we ignore his crime. It means that we punish him for his horrible trespass against society and the image of God (Genesis 9:5-6) but before he dies we preach the gospel to him so he can be saved from eternal judgment. Likewise, to love a false teacher does **not** mean that I turn a blind eye to his error and strive to have unity with him regardless of his doctrine. **It means that I obey the Bible and mark and avoid him (Romans 16:17), that I warn of his error publicly to protect those who might be led astray by his teaching.**

Some professing Christians point their fingers at the Bible-believing conservatives and charge us with a lack of love tow

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ard men because we exercise judgment and discipline and separation. What, though, about love for God? Some professing Christians tell me that I need to love all the denominations regardless of what doctrine they teach. **I reply that I need to love God and His Truth first, and that means that I will obey the Bible, and that means I will measure, mark, and avoid those who are committed to error.** A genuine love for God requires that I care more about His Word and His will than about men and their feelings and opinions and programs.

What say you?

Krispy

Re: What is Biblical love anyway?? - posted by relewis111 (), on: 2005/3/11 9:00

At the risk of being overly emotional or even seeking sympathy I would like to share my view of biblical love. I'm not sure if this has been in another thread but I will try and check out of respect for the writer. Whether or not I ask for my heart to become changed, Almighty God must do so in order for me to become new, born again.

My experience with this has come in praying for people I formerly hated, and I don't mean just a strong dislike but the kind of hate that would like to feel their last breath as it escapes from between my hands. I was abused as a child and praying for these people has opened my heart in a way I didn't know was possible. That is the kind of love that is important to me, in fact I can't live without it and I consider it biblical love because the Word of God promises me that rest and peace and I know for a fact that it is a miracle of the Holy Spirit to receive such love.

I try not to delude myself into believing that I have any right to point out someone else's actions but that usually doesn't stop me. I try instead to redeem my time and beg and I mean plead with God to change my heart, make me new because I will surely die if He doesn't. If I am so honored and blessed to gain any insight into the mysteries and truths of God's Holy Word I must strive to give them a clean place to reside, my heart. The more I pray, the more I realize that my life as a follower of Christ is quite impossible for me to live and that only Jesus Himself will birth within me my new, clean heart, that new wineskin I so desperately need. If I could have anything in this world it would be more love to give, biblical or otherwise, whether I think it's deserved or not; in fact I don't trust myself to make that decision so I ask Christ to teach me how to love, one breath at a time.

Rich

Re: What is Biblical love anyway?? - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2005/3/11 9:07

In short, were all responsible to God for our "OWN" actions That is why I choose to keep inside most things I don't agree with, although you and I might have an abundance of will power to do this some don't, and once we say something about something or someone some folks will pick that up and are really clueless of the mission and get carried away and now "WE" are responsible for what we have place in their heart. I guess that is why Pro 18:21 Say's Death and life in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. If you feel in your own personal heart that you have some issues with Benny Hinn why not just pray for him? that offers the highest power of healing, as for as anyone's mission here or anywhere to expose him Wow! just look around it's all over the news and newspapers, so please don't take it personal that your mission is in vain because with Benny that would be impossible with all his exposure. And as I said before there are lots of Benny Hinn's out there why pick on him why not utilize your time exposing the one's that the rest of the world don't know about? I will say it again let God deal with Benny if He has to he can put him a full body cast to get his attention! I understand were your coming from but don't let it interfere with other things God may need you for. God Bless You Brother :-)

Re:, on: 2005/3/11 9:27

Quote:
-----In short, were all responsible to God for our "OWN" actions That is why I choose to keep inside most things I don't agree with, although you and I might have an abundance of will power to do this some don't, and once we say something about something or someone some folks will pick that up and are really clueless of the mission and get carried away and now "WE" are responsible for what we have place in their heart. I guess that is why Pro 18:21 Say's Death and life in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. If you feel in your own personal heart that you have some issues with Benny Hinn why not just pray for him? that offers the highest power of healing, as for as anyone's mission here or anywhere to expose him Wow! just look around it's all over the news and newspapers, so please don't take it personal that your mission is in vain because with Benny that would be impossible with all his exposure. And as I said before there are lots of Benny Hinn's out there why pick on him why not utilize your time exposing the one's that the rest of the world don't know about? I will say it again let God deal with Benny if He has to he can put him a full body cast to get his attention! I understand were your coming from but don't let it interfere with other things God may need you for.

Please do not misunderstand the spirit of this post, MrBillPro, I'm not responding in any way other than to better understand and your response, and why you feel the way you do. :-)

Perhaps you missed the end of my thread where I said *"It means that I obey the Bible and mark and avoid him (Romans 16:17), that I warn of his error publicly to protect those who might be led astray by his teaching.*

I don't rail against Benny Hinn's teachings only... it just so happens that he is in the spotlight right now. And yes, he's had a lot of exposure lately... but Dateline NBC is only going to deal with the financial aspects of his "ministry". Don't look to Dateline NBC to expose his doctrinal errors... they wouldn't know doctrinal error if it hit them in the face.

Thank to Dateline, a lot of Christians are asking "so just what is wrong with Benny Hinn?" ... I've gotten a number of private messages from people asking me that, and asking what WOF is all about. It needs to be made public.

Let me ask you this, MrBillPro, if the area you live in is stricken with flooding, and there is a road that is completely flooded and dangerous... would you tell anybody and warn folks not to drive down that road? Or would you "choose to keep inside" this information... and smile and wave as people drive to their watery deaths?

Do you "choose to keep inside" your views on abortion (assuming you're pro-life), or do you speak up?

Assuming you're American, or live in a democratic society... do you vote, or do you "choose to keep inside" your feelings on the future of your country?

I personally choose to warn others and not have their blood on my hands because I chose to be silent.

Silence kills.

Krispy

Re: What is Biblical love anyway?? - posted by MarkDaniel (), on: 2005/3/11 9:39

Quote:
-----What say you?

What an excellent post! Excellent study. Biblical truths and not just emotion. I was just about to research this very topic myself and the Lord had you do some of the work for me Krispy :)

I was a slave to this false touch-feely, do not judge, love of the sin of man gospel for over 10 years and only after receiving the Holy Spirit did my eyes open to the love of God as it is in the scriptures.

Love is not the love and tolerance of sin.

In John 8, Jesus said to the adulterous woman, even after He allowed her sin to be exposed publicly, told her to go and live a holy life instead..."I do not condemn you either. Go on your way and from now on sin no more."

Jesus exposed her sin, told her to repent, and live a holy life instead of sinning again, and He did not condemn her. Do we say our Lord Jesus Christ was unloving for such a politically incorrect demonstration of His love?

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Re:, on: 2005/3/11 10:11

Quote:
-----Jesus exposed her sin, told her to repent, and live a holy life instead of sinning again, and He did not condemn her. Do we say our Lord Jesus Christ was unloving for such a politically incorrect demonstration of His love?

Be cautious... some will argue that the Pharisees exposed her sin, not Jesus. But the Pharisees' motivation was not to see this woman restored... and therein lies the difference. They had no intention of forgiving her. Jesus did. And so should we.

The Bible is pretty clear about how we are to address sin in the church... and the first step is "privately". Then if the person doesn't repent, it progresses step by step into the public (meaning congregation) forum.

I am not so concerned about pointing out sin in people's lives, although some people have accused me of doing that on this site. On the contrary... I don't think I've ever commented on Benny Hinn's sin-life. I don't know the man, and I don't know what sins he may struggle with.

My concern has **always** been the gross, heretical doctrines he teaches and the way he misleads millions of people worldwide... leading many to eternal death.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Angyl, on: 2005/3/11 12:11

Quote:
-----My concern has always been the gross, heretical doctrines he teaches and the way he misleads millions of people worldwide... leading many to eternal death.

Preach on, brother. I think your definition (or should I say defense) of Biblical love as opposed to the world's version of love is spot on. There is a fantastic error in allowing the world's view of love and 'tolerance' to impair our ability to lovingly correct the brethren or sin when we see it.

"If you love me, you'll accept me." Is the world's cry today. It is the cry of homosexuals, murderers, rapists, and other miscreants, but they misspeak. What they're really saying is *"If you love me, you'll accept my sin"*

Not a chance. There's nothing in the Bible, as you've so well pointed out, that suggests we need to accept another man's sin...yep, the Bible actually preaches the opposite, that we are to judge (according to the word) sin and condemn it.

It is not meet for us to stand silently by and watch the masses march to Hell. When they get there, they will **NOT** spend eternity thanking us for 'loving them' and accepting what they did without comment.

Make it your #1 goal in life, Christian...that **NO ONE** will have cause to look up from hell and ask you *"Why didn't you tell me?"*

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Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/3/11 12:46

Quote:
-----I try not to delude myself into believing that I have any right to point out someone else's actions but that usually doesn't stop me. I try instead to redeem my time and beg and I mean plead with God to change my heart, make me new because I will surely die if He doesn't. If I am so honored and blessed to gain any insight into the mysteries and truths of God's Holy Word I must strive to give them a clean place to reside, my heart. The more I pray, the more I realize that my life as a follower of Christ is quite impossible for me to live and that only Jesus Himself will birth within me my new, clean heart, that new wineskin I so desperately need. If I could have anything in this world it would be more love to give, biblical or otherwise, whether I think it's deserved or not; in fact I don't trust myself to make that decision so I ask Christ to teach me how to love, one breath at a time.

Amen and Amen! Thank you Rich.

Re: - posted by MarkDaniel (), on: 2005/3/11 12:50

Quote:
-----Be cautious... some will argue that the Pharisees exposed her sin, not Jesus.

Caution heeded. I meant it to be written as Jesus allowed her sin to be exposed by the Pharisees. He did not object to the public display, but rather objected to them being the hypocrites they were.

Re: - posted by MarkDaniel (), on: 2005/3/11 12:53

Quote:
-----It is not meet for us to stand silently by and watch the masses march to Hell.

Amen.

Re:, on: 2005/3/11 13:28

Quote:
-----He did not object to the public display, but rather objected to them being the hypocrites they were.

Amen... correct you are.

Angyl... we are one in spirit, my brother.

Krispy

Re: What is Biblical love anyway?? - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2005/3/11 14:55

Laying down your life for people who do not, should not, and could not deserve it.

Re: What is biblical love anywan?, on: 2005/3/12 13:59

Mother Theresa, and so many more like her. Jesus Himself said, no greater love hath a man than this, that he(/she) lay down his life for a friend. Read all of Isaiah 58 and Matt 25:31:46 for further insight.

Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself....just like Mother Theresa did, and so many others like her.

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Re: one more thing..., on: 2005/3/12 14:02

I'm hoping to go to India in October. Anyone want to come? We will be working out of Christ for India in Visak. www.chrisforindia.org

If all goes well, then my wife and I will go back there and serve the Lord long term, God willing. Please pray for finances, as the Lord will have to fund the trip. Please pray for anointing, that are steps are not taken in vain.

Re:, on: 2005/3/14 9:53

Quote:
-----Mother Theresa, and so many more like her. Jesus Himself said, no greater love hath a man than this, that he/(she) lay down his life for a friend. Read all of Isaiah 58 and Matt 25:31:46 for further insight.

Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself....just like Mother Theresa did, and so many others like her.

It's just too bad that Mother Theresa died believing in the Catholic Church for her salvation. If she did not put her faith in Christ alone, then she was not saved. That's heart breaking considering that she did so much for so many.

But as the Word of God says:

Isaiah 64:6 *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags..."*

No matter how much good we do... if we are trusting in **anything** other than Jesus Christ for our salvation, we are lost.

Mother Theresa, sadly, put her faith in the Catholic Church and its sacraments for her salvation. I hope she realized her error and received Jesus' sacrifice for her sins before she died. Indications are that she did not. (her own writings)

Krispy

Re: Say What? - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/3/15 4:39

Quote:
-----It's just too bad that Mother Theresa died believing in the Catholic Church for her salvation. If she did not put her faith in Christ alone, then she was not saved. That's heart breaking considering that she did so much for so many.

Dear brothers, let's not embarrass ourselves! ;-)) This is our conclusion in a thread entitled "What is biblical love?" Here is a woman that embraces the very life of the cross that this entire website is dedicated too!

Mother Theresa said,

"Let there be no pride or vanity in the work. The work is God's work, the poor are God's poor. Put yourself completely under the influence of Jesus, so that he may think His thoughts in your mind, do His work through your hands, for you will be all powerful with Him who strengthens you."

Brothers, there is no way she lived the life she lived other than by abiding in Jesus Christ. To believe otherwise says something about how impoverished our evangelical gospel has become. The scriptures, such as James' description of "true religion", that express God's heart for the poor could fill a large Christian volume...not an evangelical volume mind you, but a Christian one none the less.

Quote:
-----No matter how much good we do... if we are trusting in anything other than Jesus Christ for our salvation, we are lost.

John Calvin couldn't have said it better! Yet we must distinguish mere doctrinal purity from true heart purity. I think she understood the work of the cross in a deeper and more profound way than most protestants.

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"It is not possible to engage a direct apostolate without being a soul of prayer. We must be aware of oneness with Christ, as he was aware of oneness with His father. Our activity is truly apostolic only in so far as we permit him to work in us and through us, with His power, with His desire, with His love. We must become holy, not because we want to feel holy, but because Christ must be able to live His life fully in us. We are to be all love, all faith, all purity, for the sake of the poor we serve. And once we have learned to seek God and His will, our contacts with the poor will become the means of great sanctity to ourselves and others. Love to pray---feel often during the day the need for prayer, and take trouble to pray. Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of Himself. Ask and seek and your heart will grow big enough to receive Him and keep Him as your own."

Yes, I can recite all of the errors and heresy of Roman Catholicism. (Indeed my faith is more in the reformed tradition than the Arminian tradition.) Yet I dare not believe that my faith in grace to be so pure as to condemn her life lived in grace. Sadly, her faith in Christ included some of the sacraments and idols of the Catholic church. The only difference between her idols and ours, is that ours are more plentiful and more secret. If only we had as few idols in our lives as she had in hers.

We American Evangelicals, for all our fine didactic doctrine, are still trying to understand all of the Gospel, I think. It is good to hold fast to a pure doctrine of grace; it is far better if our grace enables us to hold fast to the poor the destitute and the least of these.

"Without our suffering, our work would just be social work, very good and helpful comma, but it would not be the work of Jesus Christ comma, not part of the redemption. Jesus wanted to help by sharing our life, our loneliness, our agony, our death. Only by being one with us, has he redeemed us. We are allowed to do the same; all the desolation of the poor people, not only their material poverty, but their spiritual destitution, must be redeemed, and we must share it for only by being one with them can we redeem them, that is, by bringing God into their lives and bringing them to God."

For your consideration,

MC

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 8:25

If **anybody** is putting their faith in anything other than the saving grace of Jesus Christ... they are lost, no matter how good they are.

The Catholic Church teaches salvation thru works... the sacraments. This is what Mother Theresa believed. Her own writings at the end of her life showed this. She believed Mary is the co-redeemer, she believed salvation thru the sacraments.

If this is what she held to when she drew her last breath... then she was not saved.

Quotes from Mother Theresa:

"Let us ask to be our Mother, guiding us and protecting us...she is always leading us to Jesus"

"We gather to thank God for the 40 years of the beautiful work of the United Nations for the good of the people. No color, no religion, no nationality should come between us--we are all children of God. ... When we destroy an unborn child, we destroy God" (11/11/85 Christian News).

(the Bible is very clear about who can be called the "sons of God"... those who are saved. - Krispy)

"I love all religions. ... If people become better Hindus, better Muslims, better Buddhists by our acts of love, then there is something else growing there."

"All is God--Buddists, Hindus, Christians, etc., all have access to the same God."

"At the word of a priest, that little piece of bread becomes the body of Christ, the Bread of Life."

"When the priest is there, then can we have our altar and our tabernacle and our Jesus. Only the priest put Jesus there f

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or us. ... Jesus wants to go there, but we cannot bring him unless you first give him to us. This is why I love priests so much. We could never be what we are and do the things we do without you priests who first bring Jesus to us."

"Mary ... is our patroness and our Mother, and she is always leading us to Jesus."

When asked who she tells dying people of other religions to pray to, she responded: *"We tell them to pray to their Bhagwan, to their gods."*

Perhaps the most damning quote is this:

(The following is from an interview with a Catholic nun, "Sister" Ann, who worked in Kathmandu, Nepal, with "Mother" Teresa's organization Missionaries of Charity. The interview was conducted 11/23/84 at the Pashupati Temple.)

Q: Do you believe if they die believing in Shiva or in Ram they will go to heaven?

*A: Yes, that is their faith. My own faith will lead me to God, ... **So if they have believed in their god very strongly, if they have faith, surely they will be saved.***

Q: Today it does not seem that the Catholic Church is trying to convert anymore. I know that John Paul II is saying now that those of other religions are saved. You do not believe they are lost anyway, right?

*A: **No, they are not lost.** They are saved according to their faith, you know. If they believe whatever they believe, that is their salvation.*

No one will ever deny she did true humanitarian work but she came in the name of a false gospel, she preached a false gospel, and died in that false gospel. The way of salvation is through Christ and Christ alone. No one can work their way to Heaven, for if we could, then Christ died in vain because salvation would have been available by human effort.

Believe me when I say that I take NO pleasure in making these statements about a woman who did so much for so many... but the truth is the truth... and I will not sit back and let this go on by and cause many to think that good works brings salvation. That is completely and utterly backwards from what the Bible says and teaches.

Salvation brings good works... not the other way around.

Dont like it? Dont get mad at me... it's not my gospel... it's Jesus's.

Lest anyone think that the Catholic Church is "just another denomination"... I would strongly urge that person to examine it's heretical teachings, as well as the history of the Catholic Church. The blood of thousands of true believers in Jesus Christ is on the hands of the historically murderous Catholic Church. Heck, if it was up to the Catholic Church... you would not have a Bible to read in the first place.

Krispy

Re: - posted by MarkDaniel (), on: 2005/3/15 8:47

Hey Krispy, thanks for the insight on Ma Theresa. I was not aware of her heretical beliefs concerning embracing all these false religions as being of the same God I serve.

The LORD keeps tearing me down with nuggets of knowledge like this. We have become such an idolatrous nation. We see people doing good works and prop them up as being of God's. Yet, when I read these statements of hers, I cringe and I am broken even more.

When I asked the Lord to truly open my eyes, I thought it was going to be this "awesome" experience. Mostly, it has been sobering and at many times, terrible, and has caused me great sorrow. Stupid me, huh?

MD

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Re:, on: 2005/3/15 8:54

Quote:
-----The LORD keeps tearing me down with nuggets of knowledge like this. We have become such an idolatrous nation. We see people doing good works and prop them up as being of God's. Yet, when I read these statements of hers, I cringe and I am broken even more.

I truly believe the church has been sold a bill of goods in many cases. And ignorance is bliss. Hardly anyone takes the time to check things out... and so gullibility reigns supreme.

It's sad, Mark.

And the more I investigate things for myself, the more I see how deceptive and subtle Satan is.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Paulus (), on: 2005/3/15 9:09

This is a very important issue. If we waver and begin to say "all roads lead to Christ" we will be swamped by Islam and other such faiths who make no such allowance for the Christian faith.

However let's not forget our mercy and stay sensitive to the Holy Spirit. I am always encouraged by the story of Appollos who was tutored by Priscilla and Aquilla who showed him "a more excellent way". Perhaps what is lacking in modern evangelical circles is the same willingness to give all and serve as Mother T did. Whilst I was in a state of apostasy about four years ago I visited an Aids Hostel run by her nuns in South Africa. As a "believer" I wandered from bed to bed first on a full floor of dying men, then on a floor of dying women and finally a floor of dying children. I had nothing to give them in my backslidden and hard-hearted condition. On the top floor a black sister gathered the children around her and sang "I believe we believe the Holy Spirit will come down and Africa will be saved". I knew that the Holy Spirit was speaking to me, and shortly after my return to Ireland I wept my way back through repentance to a relationship with Jesus. I have huge issues with the RC doctrines but am shamed by how little I give having received so much. Maybe we all need to display the attributes of Christ more so that the ones who serve in "ignorance" begin to take as much notice of what we do as what we say.

Paul
Ireland

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/3/15 9:11

It is what is in the heart that makes a person spiritual, not what is in the head.

In Christ,

Ron

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 9:24

Quote:
-----I have huge issues with the RC doctrines but am shamed by how little I give having received so much. Maybe we all need to display the attributes of Christ more so that the ones who serve in "ignorance" begin to take as much notice of what we do as what we say.

Very nicely put... Your post was excellent. We do need to show those who are not yet believers a "more excellent way"... but without compromise. We need to be cautious not to let our human logic supercede Biblical truth, but that has always got to be done in love.

I am not condemning Mother Theresa... that's not my place. But I can determine by her own words and beliefs where she

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stood with God. And it's heart breaking.

Krispy

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 9:25

Quote:

-----It is what is in the heart that makes a person spiritual, not what is in the head.

Yes... and unfortunately, what was in her heart did not lead her to salvation. She believed in her heart a false gospel. The truth did not set her free because she did not know the truth. Her own words prove this.

I know many "spiritual" people who do not know Christ.

Krispy

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 9:42

Ghandi was a good person too... on the same level as Mother Theresa... did he go to heaven too even if he did not accept the truth of the Bible?

Krispy

Re: - posted by MarkDaniel (), on: 2005/3/15 9:46

Thanks Krispy for your insights here. I feel like you are a rudder on a ship that's trying to keep the ship on its course towards the cross and blood of Jesus alone. Thanks for blessing me.

MD

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 10:28

Quote:
-----Thanks Krispy for your insights here. I feel like you are a rudder on a ship that's trying to keep the ship on its course towards the cross and blood of Jesus alone. Thanks for blessing me.

Thanx for your kind words... I only hope I can live up to that. I dont always.

Krispy

Re: Correction Appreciated - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/3/15 13:50

Krispy wrote,

Quote:

-----Dont like it? Dont get mad at me... it's not my gospel... it's Jesus's.

Brother, let's not let this become the tone of our conversation. (Although I love your passion!)

Besides, if we were to judge fruit alone...her life, and love, resembled Jesus' gospel far more than what is taught in our pulpits. (I'm thinking the beatitudes, the sermon on the mount...) Perhaps this is a point of weakness in our American gospel...it's doctrines have only enough power to change individuals at the epicenter of personal salvation, with little redemption left for the society around us. But we cannot judge fruit alone. Along with her doctrines towards the poor, we must

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judge her salvation doctrine.

You quoted Mother Theresa,

Quote:

-----"All is God--Buddists, Hindus, Christians, etc., all have access to the same God."

Well, if she said this then she does have a big problem. I thank you for bringing this to light, and I stand corrected on her gospel. Jesus certainly disagrees with her and Paul would have never preached such a heretical belief. Bless you Krispy

This does leave me having to figure out a glaring inconsistency in our own gospel. Indeed, that she may not have been regenerated only increases our own embarrassment.

Quote:

-----The Catholic Church teaches salvation thru works...

No doubt there are horrible perversions within the Catholic Church. Perhaps the worst is replacing the sufficient atonement of Christ with the need for an ongoing priestcraft "atonement". Repentance is reduced to mere sacramental ritual.

Brothers, in all honesty, I see a similar dynamic in us, though less theatrical and scripted. Even Ravenhill pointed out that we have "romanized" the altar. Yet when we talk about the Catholic Church we become advocates for "Solus Gratia, and Solus Fide".

I never imagined that I might one day be defending a catholic but only on the same basis I defend arminians. Here is a quote from Finney, one of our evangelical heroes, that I would classify as a works gospel as well. I use him because this sounds a lot like the gospel I hear from many people here at SI. (From Finney's systematic theologies)

Quote:

-----The substitutional atonement "assumes that the atonement was a literal payment of a debt, which we have seen does not consist with the nature of the atonement ... It is true, that the atonement, of itself, does not secure the salvation of any one" (p.217).

Quote:

-----"The doctrine of imputed righteousness, or that Christ's obedience to the law was accounted as our obedience, is founded on a most false and nonsensical assumption." After all, Christ's righteousness "could do no more than justify himself. It can never be imputed to us ... it was naturally impossible, then, for him to obey in our behalf" This "representing of the atonement as the ground of the sinner's justification has been a sad occasion of stumbling to many" (pp.320-2).

You see, it is easy to agree with each other that the gospel is salvation through grace alone. What we can't seem to agree on is what "grace" means.

You have given me something to really consider about Mother Theresa. She seemed as an angel indeed, but even if an angel were to preach another gospel then the one Paul preached, then we could faithfully anathematize.

Now that we've agreed that salvation is by faith alone in Christ, my question now is...any other angels in these parts? Please help this poor calvinist understand some seeming inconsistencies. My interest is not to catapult at each other boulders of un-lived theology....(zzzzzz). I'm interested in our own honest, "it's time to meet Jesus" confidence in the finished work of Christ.

I treasure the faithfulness and love for the gospel that you demonstrate Krispy...

MC

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 15:03

Compton, my tone was not one of anger. I apologize if my words came across this way.

Your last post is right on the money. I agree with you! Can you believe it? LOL

Most of what passes for Sunday morning services came from the Catholic Church... which means it came from Roman (pagan) culture. A really good book on this is called "Pagan Christianity" by Frank Viola. He documents where just about everything comes from... alters, pulpits, robes, etc. Very fascinating read, and something I highly recommend.

As part of the house church movement... we've abandoned most of it. Some things do work, and just because it came in after the 1st century does not make something evil. But we hold to many many traditions, thinking they are biblical... and they are not.

Krispy

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/3/15 15:23

Quote:
-----Most of what passes for Sunday morning services came from the Catholic Church... which means it came from Roman (pagan) culture. A really good book on this is called "Pagan Christianity" by Frank Viola. He documents where just about everything comes from... alters, pulpits, robes, etc. Very fascinating read, and something I highly recommend.

Are you suggesting that altars and pulpits are pagan?

Re: JUST A WORD OF CAUTION - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/3/15 16:29

It has been said that WISDOM is the right application of knowledge. As we approach the subjects in these forms and in some instances make mention of names (I'm speaking to myself here), let us not neglect the wisdom that God freely offers. The Order of the book of James starts with wisdom and moves to a crown of life promised to thoughts who Love God and then moves into some really practical stuff. Love is something we do but in the public arena it must be seasoned with wisdom. Especially in these forms where so much of what we say can be misunderstood. So let's be careful to think through what it is exactly we are trying to say and have respect for each other. My prayers are my Love expressed for you all. Bro. Daryl

Re:, on: 2005/3/15 16:32

Read the book... you'll understand what I mean.

Obviously alters were used in the temple, and in the wilderness, and all thru the OT. However, the alter is now in our hearts. There is no further sacrifice that needs to be made, save the sacrifice of ourselves... and that is done in the heart.

Pulpits... actually they came from the Greek pagans, not the Romans.

Get the book! <http://www.ptmin.org/pagan.htm>

Here are reviews of the book:

"Most contemporary Christians are massively ignorant as to how the church got to where it is today and of how much current church practice is due simply to accumulated tradition, with little or no roots in Scripture. This book provides a useful service in peeling back the layers of tradition, showing the origins of much that we today call "church." Christians who want to be biblically faithful, regardless of their particular tradition or church form, can learn and benefit from the book."

-Howard Snyder, Professor of History and Theology of Mission, Asbury Theological Seminary, author of "The Problem of Wineskins" and "The Community of the King."

Â"Anyone interested in the worship of the New Testament church and how that was altered through the centuries will find

d Frank Viola's PAGAN CHRISTIANITY very useful. Viola's position is clear and quite well documented.

-Graydon F. Snyder, Professor of New Testament, Chicago Theological Seminary, author of "Ante Pacem: Church Life Before Constantine."

"PAGAN CHRISTIANITY documents specific areas where contemporary church life violates Biblical principles. It is painful to read because it requires taking a journey beyond the comfort zone of our present paradigms. Whether you agree with all the conclusions the author draws or not, you will have no argument with his documentation. It is a scholarly work with an explosive conclusion. Particularly for those of us in the modern cell church movement, this is a valuable tool to force rethinking the meaning of the word "ecclesia." The Holy Spirit is not pleased with churchianity as we practice it, nor is the watching unchurched world."

-Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., author of "Where Do We Go From Here?" and founder of the Cell Church Movement.

"Viola has done us a great service by tracing the origin of all we Protestants practice. My one regret is that this book will be only one out of 100,000 Christian books issued in the year it was printed. Three hundred years ago—or even two hundred years ago—PAGAN CHRISTIANITY would have been one of only a few hundred books . . . and therefore, read by a large portion of Christians. You can help remedy this by telling all your friends about this book."

-Gene Edwards, author of "Tale of Three Kings," "Divine Romance," "Prisoner in the Third Cell," and "How to Meet in Homes."

"Driving out demons is easy - compared with changing habits and traditions of man that develop into idols, to give us what only God should give us: identity, security, destiny. As in a child, the original God-given conscience is clean and clear. Many new born Christians feel the same and have an automatic feel for what is right. But in the case of organized Evangelicalism in the West, they are swiftly taken into a religious system that basically believes everything that Mom and Pap says -- and happily embrace "church practices" that are not in the Bible. Many just "know" at some point something is terribly wrong with Church-as-they-know-it. PAGAN CHRISTIANITY not only substantiates these ill feelings in millions of Christians with hard facts, but it provides us with a road map for the journey ahead. Once we know where we went wrong, repentance and finding the right way forward comes much easier. Excellent job, Frank!"

-Wolfgang Simpson, author of "Houses That Change the World"

"Frank Viola's PAGAN CHRISTIANITY is a landmark, a true milestone in the overall task of bringing in a new style of responsible, interactive Christianity to replace the old, severely paganized ecclesiastical forms. Frank has done us a great favor, drawing together revealing tidbits from hundreds of sources to create a continuous picture of the formation of today's institutional church. There's nothing like it in print. It is now THE book on church history from the point of view of the underground, open church."

-James Rutz, author of "The Open Church."

"Pagan Christianity contains a wide variety of interesting and helpful historical information of which most Christians - or non-Christians - will be completely unaware. The book identifies - in part or in whole - the pagan roots of many of our current church practices, as well as indicates some borrowed from earlier Jewish or, occasionally, more recent Customs."

-Robert Banks, NT scholar, author of "Paul's Idea of Community" and "The Church Comes Home."

"In PAGAN CHRISTIANITY, Frank Viola deals with where many of our 'traditions' came from - the order of worship, the sermon, the church building, the pastor, tithing, etc. - much of it came from Greek and Roman pagan culture, not from the New Testament. This is a very radical book. I highly recommend it for the careful reading of any serious Christian who has a hint that today's church seems to have strayed from what we see in the New Testament. I pray that every searching Christian will read Frank's books - they are among the best."

-Nate Krupp, author of "God's Simple Plan for the Church"

"Frank has done a masterful job both researching and then weaving together the threads that have made modern church practices what they are - pagan substitutes for authentic church life. One nice thing about PAGAN CHRISTIANITY is that it provides the history behind a perception that many of us Christians share: The way the modern Western church do

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es things has little to do with the organic life we see in the New Testament. The difference is so great sometimes that one wonders how one could possibly have transmuted into the other."

-Hal Miller, author of "Christian Community: Biblical or Optional?"

"This book may very well become known as the single most liberating piece of Christian work penned in the last 1700 years. It will hopefully become known as the single most influential piece of Christian literature in this new century. Without doubt it will be loved by many as it will liberate multitudes and for that same reason it is sure to be hated and feared by others. Frank Viola has pulled back the covers to reveal the pagan origins of many if not all of the practices of this thing we call Christendom. In a very scholarly fashion he has traced the origins of the traditions practices and institutions of all that which makeup what we call Christianity today. In contrast he boldly illustrates the simplicity and almost tribal nature of the 1st century church the bride of Christ as she met with her groom in irresistible freedom, life and love."

-Michael Warriner, Amazon.com reviewer.

"Taking up topics like these with a title like PAGAN CHRISTIANITY would lead one to expect a lot of fire-breathing and biased finger-pointing, but not so."

Even if lots of cherished tradition and conventional wisdom get shredded by Viola's unrelenting assault with historical facts, the arguments unfold with an encouraging lack of arrogance. This book contains so much history (both anecdotal and analytical), that it is impossible to find a soft spot to attack. An objective person must address the issues raised, even if they hurt. Protestantism, Evangelicalism and Neo-Pentecostalism all get their fair share of blows, not Roman Catholicism only."

The author does not hide his personal leanings toward informal, idealistic models of Christian community, but he isn't "preachy" about it. No Denomination's faithful get demonized, even though the practices of every Denomination imaginable get blasted by Viola's copiously footnoted accounts of how they came to be (As detective Friday would say, "just the facts, Ma'am")."

Bottom lines: Highly valuable perspective. I have no reason to doubt any of the ample sources cited in this adequately-researched volume. Well-written; not boring. Viola's conclusions are logical and transparent enough. Provides plenty of raw material as well as food for thought to anyone wondering how Sunday morning in Christendom ever became as predictable and lifeless as it is."

-Charles Wilhelm, Amazon reviewer from Germany

"This is an important book which demonstrates that many of the practical aspects of contemporary church life, ministry and structure have little or no biblical basis and are, in fact, inspired by a wide variety of non Christian patterns and ideas most of which are inimical to Christian life and growth. Many readers will find this book challenging in the extreme but all who are concerned with the future of the church should read it."

-Dave Norrington, author of "To Preach or Not to Preach."

"Frank Viola's PAGAN CHRISTIANITY is a book that doubtlessly will shake the modern church to its very core. In it, Viola examines each of the pillars of the modern church-order of worship, sermon, pastor, communion, building, music ministry, clothing, tithes, baptism and Christian education-and discusses where they came from. The research for this book is impressive. Each of the things in our churches can be clearly traced back to pagan services. This is astonishing. So many of the things that we think are espoused in the Bible are really not there at all. This book is more challenging because it criticizes and exposes the very foundation of the modern church. However, the only solution it gives is to totally leave everything behind and do something different."

-Emily Heeringa, book reviewer.

Krispy

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Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/3/15 17:10

Hi Krispy,

I understand what your talking about and appreciate your zeal to purify the Church. I am very familiar with the subject having been bathed in years (and semesters) of it to almost mind numbing proportions. I have written extensively about it as you may look at a few of the articles (if you wish) that are available here and in a few other places. One being (<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?viewarticle&aid1955>) Identity and Expression of Faith and another; (<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?viewarticle&aid1976>) The Church Heads West (An introduction To the Issues) Part 1 & 2.

My concern is now- as it has always been. The Messianics have a list a mile long of Hellenistic influences in the Church, but wish to replace them with what they consider 1st century Judaism/Messianism and its various expressions. I have books at home that glean all kinds of Jewish customs from the New Testament. They believe that the 'Church' will not be the 'Church' until it looks like it did in Jerusalem before Yavneh and the split with the synagogues. They can build compelling parallels to all the offices of the Church and synagogue with its various expressions. That is why they refuse to call their meeting houses Churches- they call them synagogues. That is why they call their places of study BatLanim and not library. That is why they have no crosses. I could go on for days.

So are we prepared to really go back to the New Testament? When there were stone and dirt floors and Pasach was celebrated instead of the Lord's Supper- fit with all the fixens such as Horse Radish, Lamb and such? I have been in a bonified Passover Supper laying on my side on the floor next to the brother beside me with a table a few inches from the floor. Shall we do the real authentic services?

I have heard the slurs against folk like myself that just serve God with gladness. I am no stranger to feeling out of place because I did not do all they thought I should. I have heard the accusations of paganism for having a Christmas tree and such. I just grew to ignore it all. I have a Tallit with Tzitzit in a drawer. Don't mean nothin in itself. Oh, I get it out and loan it out when folk want to preach on taking up the mantle.

I feel priveleged to have been in services that were likely the closest thing to the New Testament period we are going to get. Pentecostal Messianic Jews! Wow! I could almost smell the Jerusalem air. Yet I found, that God was no more in all that than He was when I went to Church and sang there is Power in the Blood. It was no more powerful than the House meetings I have been in where God was moving in a mighty way. Or even in my car when I'm driving down the road worshipping God and His presence is so strong. Oh, it's neat to go back and try to be what they were in 50 AD. But I can't live there. Its not me. Its not what God called me to do.

God Bless,

-Robert

Re: Agree - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/3/15 20:51

Krispy,

If we agree on a subject then how can we argue----I mean fellowship with one another? Obviously we need another subject!

Just kidding... I appreciate the dialogue! LOL

MC

Re: Hellenizaton - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/3/15 21:49

Robert,

I'm glad to learn about your studies regarding the messianic/hellenistic tension in our churches. While admitting that the church has been characterized as an "age of gentiles", with many layers of Greek and Roman influence I think that there can be unscriptural bondage in going too far to bring a "Jewish" sensibility back to our churches.

In fact it can be downright silly. I remember, in our church a few years ago, the polite smile a visiting Israeli missionary

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threw over to us musicians as we "honored" his visit with some "Jewish" music of our own. ("Looky what we can do!") To his ears it probably was the equivalent of listening to a karaoke singer at the Holiday Inn.

You seem to know something about this topic. I have been troubled by some of the writings from a few messianic teachers who infer that westernized Christianity is a subtle expression of cultural anti-semitism. I have also been confused by a few teachers on both sides of the cultural divide suggesting that in order for the two to keep their identities that we consider them as two....not one church.

For instance some messianic brothers, such as David Stern have begun to define "Gods' people" in terms of an "Olive Tree Theology"; Messianic Jews are natural branches that are separate from the grafted-on branches of "Gentiles", which are in turn different from the "Non-Messianic Jews" who are separated branches waiting to be rejoined. This thesis as the basis for an extended systematic theology seems to highlight our differences in a spirit contrary to Galatians 3:28...at least to this westerners' ears. Indeed, I can't tell if this restoration of Hebraic Christianity is rooted in love of Jewish religious culture, or in a critique of western religious culture. (And therefore a critique of my religious culture...)

This is a growing question to me...how can we keep our treasured distinctions and valid denominations while laying down our superiority over one another? I suppose we will forever be saying, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."

You wrote in one of your articles;

Quote:
-----The Jews will be won to Christ -- not when they see Jesus through the eyes of systematic theology; but when they see the glory of God in our lives that provokes them to jealousy and makes the question the very things they believe. When the glory returns the elect will see it and recognize it.

Amen. Let it be so in my life brother.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/3/16 7:44

Quote:
-----I have also been confused by a few teachers on both sides of the cultural divide suggesting that in order for the two to keep their identities that we consider them as two....not one church.

Hi Compton,

Yes they do desire to maintain a distinction between the Jews and non-Jews within the Church. Actually, they almost shun the word 'Church' and consider themselves almost a continuation of first century Judaism as it comes to fruition in Messiah. The best models I have seen to describe what they believe is that of a circle within a circle. Imagine a circle and then a small circle inside it darkened in. That is how many Messianics see their roles in the Church. Part of the body, but distinct within it with a special call and purpose in the Earth. They believe they should maintain their identity as Jews and worship Messiah within that framework.

Yet, again, there is a desire to return to 1st Century things. That is why I went to the Jewish Roots Institute in the first place. I wanted to see 'authentic' Christianity. But what I have found is that Rabbinism is the leaven in their camp just like Hellenism is the leaven in ours. They may quote from Mishna and such and I just can't go for that. I believe the whole Oral Law is a farce. That would get me thrown out of the place I'm sure, but I feel that strongly.

When I hear folks talking about 'getting back to the Book of Acts' I am quite sure that they whist not what they are really saying. And that, because they are reading the book of Acts through a Western modern lens and we have no clue what their life was really like. We can hardly reconstruct the lives of the settlers in America with any real sense of justice. For example; there have been documentaries made about "Homesteading" and it has been found that many people could not survive the winter if they were thrust back into a mid 18th century context in unsettled lands with the tools and means that they had. So to, what was life really like for them?

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I have seen the Amish and know of the Hutterites and have found that they also wanted to "come out from among them" so to speak. They are locked in an era in which there were horses and wagons and such. Yet, I also know that in some cases the family may go to church several times a day and have home made wine in the cellar. People had to strait flee the compound to find Jesus. Guess where they found Him?

As far as the whole anti-semitic thing. There has been a long history of anti-semitism. Today folk in the Church say things that they have no idea are really slurs. "I'm a Jew in a Gentile chassis." or "I can save money in a way that would make a Jew proud." These things are not helpful at all. They see our crosses as a "sword dipped in 2000 years of Jewish blood." I could go on. I have seen people get irate at the notion that the Church does not love the Jews. I saw a girl get up and walk out over it never to return. I saw the instructor look them off as they left. He would say, "You do not love the Jews, you love the idea of the Jews."

Sorry so long...

God Bless,

-Robert

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/3/16 8:26

Quote:
-----Indeed, I can't tell if this restoration of Hebraic Christianity is rooted in love of Jewish religious culture, or in a critique of western religious culture. (And therefore a critique of my religious culture...)

This is a good point to look at as we ask the question; "what is a church?" The saddest thing about what I have observed from back when I studied Jewish Roots and again now with the whole "out-of-church" movement is that there is a strange mixture of secular marketing strategy that is leavened in with it all. That strategy, I'm sure, is as old as 'buying and selling' itself. And that, there is the notorious discounting of the former to make way for the latter. Simply point out all the weaknesses of the Old so we can 'sell' the New. Yet we are not talking about selling cars here. This is the Kingdom of God.

I have mentioned this before but suffice me to mention it again. There are people all over the spectrum in terms of their way of identifying themselves and their expression of faith. Some like modern music and others like the old Wesley hymns. Some pray loud and other pray soft. Some get excited others are solemn. Yet, what we tend to do is identify ourselves by what we are not as opposed to what we are.

The most disturbing thing is that inanimate objects are being blamed for much of the problems. "Tear down the church buildings!" OK, so then where will we worship if there are more than 150 that want to assemble? Well, what we will do is we will build a big metal building or rent a school gymnasium and just not call it a church. Yes, that's it. Do you see the folly of these things?

I was in a small town in SD a while back and was 'privileged' to preach behind a pulpit that was once preached behind by Billy Sunday. I'm sure ministering in England there are opportunities to minister where many dear saints have ministered. Yet, is it anything? In no wise. Is it the more or the less? In no wise. What is it? It is a neat thought to know it- but it is of no other value. The pulpit is nothing- it is the Word of the Lord that goes forth from it. Whether it be a music stand or a wooden box- there usually needs to be some kind of stand to hold the Bible or notes. I have heard that the history of the pulpit began when folk refused to be 'seen' as they ministered so pulpits were designed to 'cover' the man as he delivered God's word.

As for altars and such- would to God that we could get back to good old fashioned altars where folk pray through. I am concerned that altars are being taken out of the Churches- not added. There is a whole generation of young people right

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now that don't know the new birth experience and it is my feeling that some good old fashioned praying through at the altar may get them there. This could happen anywhere I know. yet, there are many that need help getting to a setting where God can deal with them. I have many teens that cannot drive and need to ride the van to service. They come and pray at our altars and God moves in a mighty way.

What shall we do?

Get a wreckong ball? or shall we seek God until we have a move of God and keep it. Shall we pray until a fire is lit and keep stoking it? When we have no fire in our homes will we tear down our houses also? I trow not. If we have no fire in our altars shall we tear them down? If we have no fire in our pulpits shall we blame the pulpit? I think it's high time to quit running from place to place and find a good old fashined altar of repentance and revival and take responsibility for what has happened ourselves instead of blaming everything else.

Just my thoughts...

God Bless,

-Robert

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/3/16 18:22

Quote:
-----What shall we do? Get a wrecking ball? or shall we seek God until we have a move of God and keep it. Shall we pray until a fire is lit and keep stoking it? When we have no fire in our homes will we tear down our houses also? I trow not. If we have no fire in our altars shall we tear them down? If we have no fire in our pulpits shall we blame the pulpit? I think it's high time to quit running from place to place and find a good old fashined altar of repentance and revival and take responsibility for what has happened ourselves instead of blaming everything else.

Just my thoughts...

Good thoughts. How ironic...the dissappointed "prophet" who leaves a worldly church shares responsibility for that church remaining worldly.

Thanks for your response Robert.

MC