

**MY STRUGGLE
FOR
FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS
INSTITUTIONALISM**

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever thought that there has to be more to believing in God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ because I have. My mother passed away in April of 2018 and my father in May of 2021. They were faith teachers and truly believed in healing, peace, protection and success through the scriptures. I looked up to them my entire life hearing and seeing commitment.

I mention this because their deaths caused me to open my heart to the scripture in a fresh way and search for answers to questions that no one could answer in a way that would quench them. Christians do not live forever in the current body and everyone dies but my parents deaths left me shipwrecked in my faith. Not that God was not real to me because He is, but that what were being taught about Him was not complete. There had to be more because I observed fear and the failure to overcome the attack of sickness.

Were my parents wrong in what they believed, yes, and no. It wasn't a lack of love for God or effort; it was a failure of information passed to us as Christian congregations. We can't learn beyond what we are willing to examine. We cannot eliminate fear and doubt of a subject unless we search the information and compare it with scripture {Bible}. If failure occurs regarding something we believe in, then we must find out why. If the why cannot be found with our current understanding then we must be open to the possibility our understanding is wrong or missing a piece of the puzzle that makes the picture clear. I believe this to be the case.

If we believe we are doing something right and yet continue to fail, we must stop and evaluate why. Faith IS NOT blind, it sees. I believe the problem lies in us not being willing to see. God did not mean us to be slaves to clergy as though only they have the answers. The Temple's Veil was torn to allow access to God for everyone. This writing is not meant to be a teaching yet it will teach. Its purpose is to be read as a conversation with a friend who sees something and wants to share with those he cares about. If you would like in-depth teaching you can go to newlife-fellowship.org for FREE comprehensive teachings. Let's begin.

Institutionalism Defined

This is much like a prisoner who has spent the majority of his life incarcerated having someone tell them when to eat, what to eat, when to sleep, exercise and even when they can and cannot have human contact. Every portion of their life regulated and controlled by the rules of someone else.

After living under these restraints for long periods of time the prisoner can become what is called Institutionalized. This means that the person loses the ability to self regulate their life and become reliant on someone else to guide them. They become programmed by their structured routine which severely diminishes their coping skills so that when the person is released into society it is very difficult for them to re-adjust to the freedom of everyday life. This causes a search for the structure to which they were accustomed often resulting in a return to prison.

I believe this is what we are experiencing in our churches. Our constant teaching of our sinfulness and having to earn or deserve God's blessing and fellowship is the very thing denying it. This type of teaching is law based and not graced based so it becomes difficult for most Christians to recognize they are trapped in a structure that is keeping them bound.

A prisoner of a message they have been taught as truth. This programming influence constructs a filter in the thinking that traps within it everything that challenges the established structure.

I believe the church, as it now exists, is trapped in the institutionalism of law based teaching and that teaching is filtering out God's grace message resulting in most churches becoming inflexible and resistant to God's mercy through grace.

Unless we the clergy, recognize that we are teaching blindness, we will continue to fall into the ditch while thinking were doing God a favor squelching the grace message.

Questions

It seems to me we are fighting about how good God is. I hear Christians saying God is good and His mercy endures forever, which is true. The problem is that the person or persons who are saying it don't really believe it. "Yes I do", you might say, BUT DO YOU? You believe the words you say but you may not believe in them. What am I saying? I'm saying you believe the words and that God is good but you do not believe that God is good to you.

How can I say that? You tell others that they can trust God in their circumstance to get them through it, but when it comes to you, you struggle that God will really help you because you see you through all your failures, sin and mistakes. "Well," you might say, "God cannot bless sin and is subject to His judgement." It makes sense that God cannot bless us while we were in sin, some say. Well, then I would like to ask some questions.

Question one:

Can we agree that to say that God is good to us, yet He is only good when we are fulfilling requirements?

I am going to answer this question with more questions. The Book of James tells us that a double-minded man is unstable in ALL his ways and cannot receive anything from God. Is it correct to say God only blesses when we are self-righteous? Don't be shocked that I used the term self-righteous because if we receive God's blessing under these conditions it has to be OUR earning through compliance that brings the blessing. In short, is it correct to say we only deserve blessing when we have earned it? If we earn something isn't it simply payment of debt on God's part to bless us? If we have earned through our obedience the blessing, we are simply, by the blessing, being given what we have earned.

Question two:

If we are committing sin God cannot bless us, right?

If this is true, how can we explain away that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us {Romans 5:8}? That statement seems to infer that God, through His Son paid something forward and acted in blessing before we showed any change or commitment to Him, right? Could this mean that God can move in our behalf before we correct our sin? Would it be fair in asking whether sin has a person captive or the person has power over the sin? If sin has us as captives then we are slaves to it until the day we die, right? This poses another question.

Question three:

If we are captives to sin and God can only bless us when we self-righteously conform to His commandments, how can God ever bless us?

Deuteronomy 28 explains that IF we conform to ALL His commandments then the blessings of God will come upon us. Is it possible for us to conform to All in order for Him to bless our lives? Some might say that Jesus came to die for our sins because we were in a hopeless situation of bondage to sin. Did He? If He did die for OUR sins how did that change the playing field of sin and blessing? “Well, if we confess our sins, He will forgive us our sins {I John 1:9}.” Would it be fair to say that if I keep my sins confessed that the blessings will flow from God because of Jesus having born our sins? So we are back to me through confessing my sins and keeping my confession current that keeps the blessing flowing? To me, this sounds like self-righteousness as before. If I fulfill the requirements the blessing will flow.

Question four:

What happens if I forget a sin and never confess it?

The finishing of this verse says that if I do not confess ALL sin I cannot be cleansed of unrighteousness. Therefore sin unconfessed leaves us marked as unclean, right? What if I die with unconfessed sin, do I go to Heaven? Doesn't the scripture say that unrighteousness cannot inherit the Kingdom of God? Can we conclude that Jesus' sacrifice for our sin is worthless if WE do not keep them confessed? Is it that our efforts must keep us saved and Jesus' finished work cannot transcend my inability to be perfect in my conduct?

I need to share an important fact at this point. According to the Apostle Paul's words {Galatians 2:7-9} Peter, James and John were to be sent to the Jews and Paul was to be sent to the Gentiles. This indicates that the books we read in the Bible by these authors will be written in such a way as to reach their audience. Peter, James and John's books are written to reach the Jews and Paul's books to reach the Gentiles. Could this change the way those books are interpreted? Is the Jewish perspective different than that of the Gentiles, yes?

The Books of Paul deal with a term called Grace which is to include the Gentiles. Peter, James and John communicate with an audience under the term Law. Might it be correct to say that those sent to the Jews will communicate from the aspect of the law to introduce grace and those sent to Gentiles would communicate a no covenant relationship to grace?

Question five:

What is the Gospel?

Can you explain it to another if asked? Is it forgiveness of sins, is that all? What does forgiveness of sins mean? If I do not know what it means I cannot know how far it reaches into my present physical life. Could there be more than what I see and understand? The Gospel is GOOD NEWS. Is the good news forgiveness of sins and nothing more? If we look once again at Deuteronomy 28 to see what blessings come from obedience to God's commands, I believe we can see on what levels God meant to impact our lives. The blessings listed explain what the good news is and how we are to be affected. The issue seems to be sin and how it disrupts the blessings in our lives. Could it be the Gospel was a reversal of sins domination of us through Jesus' sacrifice and we have somehow been delivered? The only way to know is to look into the scriptures and believe them.

Question six:

What is the law and does it apply to YOU?

Since Christians did not exist before Jesus, could we be different from those that came before us? {2 Corinthians 5:17} This verse infers that Christians are changed into a NEW CREATURE. The term new creature infers a species that has never existed before. Do we know who we have become? The Gospel infers what has happened is good news. The law was said to be our schoolmaster with one purpose. That purpose was to bring us to Christ and once we have Christ the law was to pass away.

The law was a list of commands given to show the standard God requires to be righteous. The standard was so stringent that men were supposed to recognize that they were incapable of satisfying it. The law was supposed to lead us to Christ {Galatians 3:24}. Jesus came to fulfill the law. Why would He do that and how would that help us? {Romans 5:12} by one man's disobedience sin entered the world. This man was Adam and by his disobedience sin was thrust upon his descendents. {Romans chapter 5} the entire chapter reveals how Adam thrust sin into the world and how Jesus came in like manner to give unto all who would BELIEVE on Him a free gift of righteousness.

Question seven:

What is Grace? How does it affect You?

Grace according to Webster's Dictionary means unmerited favor. Unmerited means cannot be earned, deserved or purchased. {Romans 5:17} Those who receive abundance of God's unmerited favor and the GIFT of righteousness shall reign in LIFE by one Jesus Christ, to reign as a king. It seems that God means to affect every aspect of our lives with favor. Is this the Gospel that the devil hated so much he tried to silence Paul? That is for you to decide. Paul has frustration at every hand. He was stoned,

resisted and left for dead to bring some type of good news. Could it be that Jesus fulfilled the law for us, then through His death, burial and resurrection gave us an unmerited favor that allows God to bless us whether we fulfill all the requirements or not? You will have to decide this for yourself.

Did Jesus somehow extinguish the claims of death and punishment against us through His death and suffering? Again that is for you to decide. That would certainly be good news.

There is only one way to frustrate {short circuit} unmerited favor {Galatians 2:21}. What if you, trying to earn or deserve the blessing or forgiveness, stopped it from coming to you? What if believing what Jesus did was enough to bring the blessing wouldn't that be good news? You decide.

Question eight:

What is the righteousness of God and how does it affect You?

Righteousness means to be in right relation or rightly related to. {2 Corinthians 5:17} This verse says that Jesus was MADE sin that we might be MADE righteousness in HIM. Could this actually mean that we have been created in a right relationship to God that is free of earning or deserving? Jesus was sin free so whose sin was used to make Him sin, I dare say it was ours. We say that we deserve to be punished for our sin but it seems this verse implies that our sin was punished and it was Jesus who took our punishment.

Hebrews says that Jesus' sacrifice was made ONCE AND FOR ALL. There remains no more sacrifice for sins {Hebrews 10 whole chapter}. Some say that once we receive Jesus as Savior that any sin we commit willingly cannot be forgiven, is that right? If you read all of chapter 10 you will see that author is relating a covenant in which God states that He will write in laws in our heart {being spirit led} and OUR sins and iniquities He will remember no more.

{Verse 26 of Hebrews chapter 10} if you read the whole chapter in context it seems to indicate that he who sins through not accepting Jesus as the only payment for sins cannot turn to anyone or anything else for forgiveness of sins. Jesus is the only true and righteous sacrifice once for all time, past, present and future. This would certainly be good news. You decide because it does not matter what any say, it matters what you decide.

Question nine:

What is a New Creature in Christ?

A new creature in Christ is what we are called when we receive Jesus as Savior. The scriptures tell us that we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus {Ephesians 2:10}. {Galatians 2:20} We are crucified with Christ nevertheless we live, but it is not us that lives but it is Christ that now lives within us. The life we now live is by faith in Jesus

Christ. We are made one with Jesus. {Colossians 3:3} for we are dead and our life is hidden in Christ in God.

This new creature has unique attributes. {Colossians 2:14} this new creature has its sins blotted out and nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ. This new creature is MADE righteous. If you are a new creature and are righteous meaning rightly related to God, how would that change your perceptions of how God sees you? Do you know how God sees you? Could God actually be on your side even when you sin? That would be good news wouldn't it?

Because we are sons God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts calling Abba {Daddy} father {Galatians 4:6}. Beloved, NOW are we the sons of God, when we see Him we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is {1 John 3:2}. This would certainly be good news, but that is for you to decide.

We are not two natures fighting against each other. The evil lawless nature has been put to death in Jesus Christ {Romans 6:1-7}. The old nature was put to death and that destroyed sin allowing us to be FREE from sin. Is this true, you will have to decide? What if we were credited by God as having lived and been crucified and raised in newness of life with Christ, would this be good news {Galatians 2:20}?

What if we were made like Jesus is now {1 John 4:17}? As He is now so are we? Is that what it says? You decide.

Question ten:

What about sin?

Before the law was issued, sin was in the world but was not imputed because where no law is sin cannot be placed on one's account {Romans 5:13}. Jesus came to fulfill the law. Who benefited from that, you or Jesus? We seem to think that sin short circuits our deserving, is that true or could there be something else? If the requirements by God are fulfilled by Jesus and credited to us in Jesus, how would that change your faith life {Galatians 3:24-25}?

If grace {unmerited favor of God} has replaced the law could it be possible that the blessings are conditional on something other than works {Galatians 3:11}? Could sin be put away in Christ for Christians and if so what would that mean to our relationship with God? {Ephesians 2:5-9} What if God Himself determined how He would deal with mankind and presented to us to Himself in Jesus? What if He said I will be merciful to their transgressions? What if God said that He would not hold your sins against you because His Son said He would suffer your punishment leaving you free of condemnation {Romans 8:2}? What if you could no longer be condemned because of what Jesus did for you?

What if Jesus' sacrifice really did silence and put to death your guilt once and for all? Would that be good news {Romans 4:1-8, Hebrews 9:27}?

Question eleven:

What are works?

Works are actions of the body and mind brought about by spiritual input from the spirit world. What if actions of the mind and body were inspired by the new creature and not an unrenewed mind? Let me explain. Actions are derived by how we have decided to live. Do we live centered on spiritual things or carnal {flesh} things, it is our choice? {Romans 10:2} After receiving Jesus as Savior we are changed on the spirit level because that is who we are. We are a spirit that has a mind and lives in a body {1 Thessalonians 4:23} a three part being.

The body is how we touch this physical world. The mind touches the mental and spiritual world; the spirit is the source of life and who we are, for God is a spirit and our Father. We are born again and changed at the spirit level, which is the most intimate.

The term flesh mentioned in the Bible refers to the old nature {dead nature} and the body and you determine that by context. We will go into depth on the mind and flesh in the later portion of the paper.

The Struggle For Truth In A Religiously Controlled System

I had mentioned prior that my parents deaths finalized a decision within me to search for answers to questions outside my non-denominational and denominational world. I had questions about confession, about the unpardonable sin, about exactly how faith worked, about God's relation and communication with me when I would rebel against Him and many more.

I began to see things in scripture that everyone in my religious circles told me was wrong and that I should not listen to teachers with different points of view because their teachings would lead into error. The first thing I thought of when I was told this was how do I know if another opinion is right or wrong if I do not study it? No one knows it All or is teaching everything correctly. We, as free moral agents, need to look at what is being taught in the spiritual market place and trust the Spirit of God within us to show how to eat the hay and leave the sticks.

It's funny, our religious system teaches us to distrust those of a different opinion even though they trust in the same Lord. We must learn to think for ourselves and determine for ourselves what the scriptures actually say. We, as the clergy, need to stop making things up when we do not know the answer to a question thinking that if we can't answer a question that people will think less of us. We are men just like them asking the questions and we need to say that we don't know or are not sure but we will do our best to find out. To say I don't know is not failure but opportunity to learn. We make stuff up because we FEAR!

We fear we may lose church members and financial support that we need. We fear that someone may know more and make us look small in the eyes of others. I have news for us, there is always someone who knows more. We compromise honesty and credibility. The very first thing we need to do is stop looking to people for support and look to the Lord for support. I would have more respect for a man or woman if they say they do not know rather than make something up.

Let me get back on track. Division should have been the first clue that the devil was involved in the separation of Christians. There is room for all of us in God's plan. We are supposed to be coming together in the UNITY of the faith, but that is not happening for the most part. We, as the clergy, are called by God and should never tell anyone to not search for the truth.

We have factions in the Body of Christ that believe in healing, tongues or baptism of the Holy Spirit or prosperity, water baptism that saves and so on. I have to ask the clergy, have we taken an honest look at scripture for ourselves to determine the truth or did we follow denominational teaching never thinking they could be wrong? Are you afraid that looking at different points of view would harm or contaminate you in some way? Eat the hay and leave the sticks. I do know one thing and that is if we, clergy, objectively looked at the scriptures with the intent to know and believe the truth we would agree on far more than we disagree.

Whatever happened to discourse? Whatever happened to the honest search for truth? Why can't we discuss our beliefs together looking at the scriptures and explaining why we believe something and receive the right or wrong of it? If we did we would hold the truth. Why won't we hear the other side of an argument basing our rebuttal on scriptures? When did debate over scripture become an argument? We are told that we must shun those that do not believe as we do because of contamination. Maybe we are right or wrong in what we believe, but if our arguments won't stand another's scrutiny why is that a bad thing? If I'm wrong I want to know it and know it by scriptural proof. I want to believe the Gospel and not my idea of it.

If I were the devil I would rather fight a force that has divided itself rather than one joined together that fights for truth whatever that truth may be. Benjamin Franklin said, "we must all hang together for most assuredly we will hang separately."

Our willing division alone tells us we are wrong in what we are doing. We are filled with pride and the lack of God's blessing is showing in our individual lives. I am of Paul and I am of Apollos.

Some say that the gifts of Spirit and tongues have passed away. Did anyone accepting these teachings asked where the scriptures state that or did you simply accept it? The same applies to the prosperity message, the rapture, the judgement and predestination. We, as the clergy, should not be telling anyone they are wrong, we should be showing them the scriptures and allow them to make up their own minds as to what is right and wrong.

This is an observation and not a criticism. I was watching a clergy person teaching against the prosperity message and then after he was finished asked for an offering. Doesn't it seem strange that a man teaching against prosperity would then asked the congregation he is teaching to financially support him? I asked this question of myself. We are not supposed to be the blind leading the blind. Funny, we are in the ditch and don't even know it.

Have we become political puppets instead of spiritual beings made in the image of God? It is not my intention to insult or rebuke because I am as you. I want the truth so I can believe. Let me continue.

DOUBLE MINDED TEACHING

Let us look at what we are teaching our members. Are we sending a mixed message?

We teach our congregations that God loves us and we can depend on him when we are in distress. In the same sermon we will also transfer distrust of God by telling them that God stands against us when we sin and won't talk to us or hear our prayers until we repent and turn from our sin.

We do not stop there. We continue by saying that we are in bondage to sin and cannot escape it until we see God in glory. Then after we tell them we cannot escape sin we continue to tell the same people that God cuts off His blessing and protection until we stop the sin in our lives.

Here is another observation:

The Bible tells us that a double minded man is unstable in all his ways and cannot receive anything of the Lord. This means we have to be single minded. We are telling the people to trust God when in trouble and at the same time telling them it is God bringing the trouble. Then we make it even worse by convincing them that they are sinners trapped in sin with no hope of release and yet we need to stop sinning. We just told them they are hopelessly trapped in a perpetual cycle of sin that will cut them off from God's protection and blessing because of the sin from which they can never be free. Faith defined is a belief and to receive from God we have to have one picture of God to receive.

We have told the people to trust God but only after they have cleaned up their lives, oh and by the way, you really can't clean up your life because you're a sinner. Faith can never be released with this type of message. We are teaching that God is good and bad.

We teach that God doesn't heal, prosper or save us in this life unless it is His will. How do we find God's will? If you do not know just say you do not know. If you cannot know God's will, it will be impossible to receive anything from Him. We have taught our congregations that we can't know His will, locking them in a vault of doubt and unbelief.

Surely we can know God's will. Here is a simple comparison that helps me. Deuteronomy 28 lists the blessing and the curses for those that keep God's commandments. Moses wrote this to the Jews not Christians who have a better covenant based on better promises.

Paul said to count ourselves dead to the law because the law's purpose was to bring Jews and Gentiles to Christ. Once Christ comes the law passes away. What does all

this mean? Simply, by the abundance of Grace {unmerited favor} and the free gift {No need of repayment} of righteousness we {Christians} should reign in this life by one Jesus Christ.

We cannot live in both worlds, one where God is good and one where God is bad. Faith won't work in both worlds. Either God is good or God is bad.

Back to Deuteronomy 28. What God wished for the Jews has to be His will for all of us. God wanted the Jews to have the blessings of prosperity, health and spiritual life. The curses were for those who did not obey the commands which God knew the Jews could not keep, just like us. God instituted animal sacrifice to save the people from the curse. Jesus came for all and kept the law and removed the curse by the sacrifice of Himself to put away sin.

So, God has shown His will for His children. The issue is that we have been taught religion from our teachers who are continually trying to fulfill the law that God already knew we could not accomplish. We are not being taught that we have been changed by the new birth. We are not who we were and that is why the law will not fit us today. I studied for myself and determined by the scriptures that Jesus paid my price and changed me. He made me righteous {rightly related to God} through Jesus taking my punishment.

I have so many things I want to say about right standing with God. Let me say this. What did Jesus death accomplish, what did it purchase? What is the Gospel? I know that I discussed this in a small way in the question section. My purpose for this writing is to open our eyes that the devil is deceiving us to hate one another and not love one another, to not search the scriptures for ourselves so our eyes can be opened by God and live more free than ever before. Please visit newlife-fellowship.org for Free teachings.

If God is love and that is according to the apostle John, everything He does is in love. God must either be good or bad, He cannot be both our Savior and our problem. The devil is the one who comes to steal, kill and destroy. We have to teach one or the other for God is single minded. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all and no shadow of turning. Remember Adam and Eve in the garden? God warned the couple to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because that fruit was a mixture of good and bad. If we eat of God being good and bad we will not be able to receive from Him and we will die.

God gave me a scripture when I was a teen, but I did not understand it. It was Colossians 2:8 and it reads to beware that no MAN spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of man and after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ.

I understand it now. Here is what it means. Warning Billy, do not let mankind ruin your faith by philosophy {false teachings}, vain deceit {high estimation of ones worth or value which will result in your deception}. Don't let the teachings of self

righteousness {being able to keep the law} ruin you by following the traditions of man {law} and not following Christ {grace}.

Both my parents died of cancer. They believed thoroughly in the healing stripes of Jesus. I knew they believed and as I saw them weaken and then be forced from their bodies was hard to accept. My parents who never showed fear began to show fear in their faces, actions and words. I did not understand why, but I knew they were going to die.

If my parents who I thought to be solid believers died, something went wrong and I needed to find out what. Please remember that this is my journey. I knew healing was the will God based upon His promises to Israel as well as the stripes He suffered. So why did the most influential people in my life die this way?

They died because their faith was in the wrong thing. Their faith was placed in their ability to conform to the law to qualify for healing. If they did it all right the blessing of healing would manifest. In my search I found the message they taught was a mixture of law and grace which causes death. They had filled themselves with good and evil. I love them and they followed the teachings of faith as best they understood, but the teachings had shadows of works and not grace.

Let me try to explain a little more.

Now remains faith, hope and love and the greatest of these is love. Faith works by love. Love never fails. God has not given a spirit of fear but power, love and a sound mind. Whoever fears is not made perfect in love because there is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out fear. To know the love of God, not we love God but that He loved us.

My parents did not understand that they had to make the transition from the law or their own works to grace which are Jesus' works. What kept them from this transition was a double minded teaching from institutionalized teachings from our pulpits. Teaching us to be good enough when only Jesus is good enough.

Love {God} never fails and He loved us so much He sent Jesus to die and suffer for us. To cleanse us of all sin once and for all by the sacrifice of Himself. His sacrifice satisfied the claims of justice against us. God is love. Fear opens the door for doubt and unbelief.

I had to come to the place through study that I am loved by God unconditionally and that love is essential for the working of faith. That faith leads me to trust in Jesus' actions and not my own, to rest from my works of self righteousness and accept the works of His righteousness. Paul said that the Jews had a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. Ignoring the righteousness of God being offered they went about to establish their own righteousness.

All God asks is that we trust or rest in Him whom He has sent, to rest from our works through relying on Christ's works. God is not a man that He could lie. Shall He promise it and not do it? Shall God speak a prophecy and not bring it to pass?

My parents were not able to rest in faith knowing the God who is love did not need them to qualify for healing for he had given it freely expecting no payment for the free gift. He that has believed has entered the rest of God.

My mother tried to confess her way to healing. Our confession releases our faith only when we have decided to believe what we are saying. She was trying to make healing come to pass through aggressively working her confession. She thought her effort of confession would save her instead of the healing stripes of Jesus. Instead of believing in Jesus' stripes and the work they had already accomplished and releasing that faith in her confession that would have protected her, she used the works of confession to protect herself against the cancer.

Through our churches we are setting people up to live or die. I think it is important we get the message as accurate as possible, don't you?

My father whom I miss with all my heart, saved my life on multiple occasions by showing me how to hear God and make decisions. I salute him, without him, I, too would have fallen to this deception of works over believing.

Please, I beg you of the clergy to follow Jesus Christ and the scriptures and cast off division and not be denominational robots. We are called to come together in the unity of the faith and we cannot do that divided. Do not worry about numbers, money or advancement, fellowshiping with those of the Christian faith with whom you disagree listening to their point of view and they yours. Open discourse between us will bring us a clearer understanding of God's precious Word and unity that will pull many lost out of the fire not to mention the confused into the light of the glorious Gospel.

The scriptures must be the determiner of what is correct and not a denomination or group. We must seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness then and only then can we receive the full promise left to us in Jesus Christ.

I love you all my brothers and sisters, we are all one in Christ and in this I rejoice. God is now opening the eyes of the blind and we will see clearly together.

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DO WE SIN AFTER BEING MADE A RIGHTEOUS NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST?

I saved this item for last.

The answer is of course we do, but allow me to elaborate on my answer.

First of all, we still see the Law of Moses even though we are no longer required to keep it. How do I know we are no longer required to keep the law? The book of Romans quotes King David as saying that blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute or lay sin to their charge. Let me stack some Bible quotes.

1. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world.
2. Jesus TOOK our sins upon Himself.
3. God MADE us the righteousness of God IN Christ.
4. John the Baptist said of Jesus, behold him that takes away the sin of the world.
5. He who knew NO sin became sin for us that we MIGHT be the righteousness of God in Him.
6. Jesus bore the iniquity of us ALL.
7. We became a new creature after receiving Jesus. A new species.
8. Old things pass away and all things become new.
9. Beloved now are we the sons of God.
10. We died and our lives are now hidden in Christ in God.
11. We are crucified with Christ yet we live, but the life we NOW live in the body we live by FAITH, NOT WORKS.
12. The scriptures say we died with Jesus so we should live with Him in NEWNESS of life.
13. Hebrews 9, the Old Testament sacrifices could not be stopped because they could not make the worshipper perfect. Jesus was sacrificed ONCE for all time because He was able to make the worshippers perfect by His sinless blood.
14. The law {qualifying through conduct} could not make anyone perfect.
15. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.
16. Once Christ has come we are no longer under the schoolmaster.
17. There is NOW no condemnation, no adverse sentence to those who are IN Christ Jesus.

I could go on and on, but I think you're getting the message.

It seems obvious that Jesus bore our sins. He bore the sin principle away from us. God said He would remove our sin from us as far as the East is from the West. Hebrews tells us that a new covenant will be made with us. A covenant in which God

will be merciful to our transgressions and remember our sins and iniquities no more. Mercy means giving to one what they do not deserve and keeping from them what they do deserve.

In Hebrews chapter 9 and 10 tells us that how much more will the Blood of Jesus who without spot purged your conscience from dead works {Sin} to serve the living God. That blood was shed for the errors of the people.

Knowing what sin is and we seeing ourselves committing it is the struggle of accepting our new state in Christ. Virtually the entire religious establishment is stuck between the old covenant of works to qualify for the favor of God and the new covenant of restoration to God's favor by no other means other than Jesus {Grace, unmerited favor}. Being saved no longer depends on our works, but depends on Jesus' works. All we do is receive this is the struggle.

Let me briefly describe the change of a Christian and simultaneously explain how to break away from religious institutionalism.

God cannot do something in one's life because He wants to. I can prove that by reminding us that God is not willing that any should perish but all come to repentance {a change of mind} and be saved. We know by just looking around that God is not getting His way. We release Him in our lives through believing in His Word.

Once a person becomes saved or born again, a new creature, he has to make a transition from deserving or being good enough to receiving by believing in the new creature provided wholly by Jesus. We stop working to change to learning to change. We find what the new creature is then accepting it. After we accept it we begin the journey of transformation by the renewing of our mind that we are now this new creature while putting what we learn into action. Let me define these actions.

We force our mind to think a different way. In the old covenant God's thoughts were not our thoughts but in the new covenant we have the mind of Christ and are to let {allow} that mind be in us. We then begin to recognize our wrong thinking and resist the condemnation, feelings of insufficiency and guilt by relying on the Gospel as described in the New Testament. We no longer take our examples of approval from the old covenant.

We look at, think about who we are as a new creature and our thoughts begin to change. We begin to confess not to believe but believing what we are saying is true. We confess we are different, a reborn new creature of God's workmanship constructed in righteous and grace. That we are loved unconditionally by God who will never change how He feels about us.

Our confidence in God working out His promises in our lives begins to grow and overwhelm the doubts. We learn to let our confession release our faith instead of using our confession to defend ourselves. We renew our minds and allow ourselves to think

like God. Once we begin thinking like God we will begin speaking like God. When we begin speaking like God in a release of faith and not just hoping something will happen we will see the manifestation of having what we say coming to pass.

What this will bring about is the cessation of manifested sin action in our lives. Through the belief in the new creature and transforming our mind to it, we become the new creature in every way. The very thing we are telling the Christian to do from our pulpits, which is to stop sinning, is accomplished through Christ in the new creature. Jesus has truly destroyed sin in the flesh.

Some say that the body has to be changed before this happens. I thought that as well until I took a closer look at the change that actually takes place in the twinkling of an eye. The transformation of the body is a removal of corruption or decay. The body ages and dies, the change removes that so the body never ages or dies again. We are not transformed by the body being changed but by the renewing of our minds.

In Genesis God creates Adam's body and it was lifeless. The body did not live until God breathed into it the breath of life and man became a living soul. Adam did not struggle with sin in his body until he accepted the knowledge of good and evil from the tree God warned them not to eat of.

The double minded thoughts of the tree killed Adam spiritually and polluted his mind against God by thoughts of the devil. God has spent all this time to bring about spiritual rebirth through Jesus Christ. Once that was done through His sacrifice, next is the transforming of the mind to single minded knowledge of God and His relation to us. Once this is done and we begin believing we are sons of God in Christ, the body falls in line and we act like God extinguishing sin in the flesh.

If we really want to stop the sinning on which the religious establishment places so much emphasis, let us make the change from law to grace and accept and embrace the new creature. **WHAT A PLANNER AND WHAT A PLAN.**

Let us stop fighting, come together and start believing. It is not about Paul or Apollos, but about God who gives the increase.

I love you all!!!!!!

THOUGHTS OF UTOPIA

I keep finding myself wanting to elaborate, and you will have to decide for yourself what I believe God through Jesus accomplished on this side of heaven. Three scripture quotes come to mind.

As Jesus is, so are we in this world. {1 John 4:17}

Those that receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in this life by one Jesus Christ. {Romans 5:17}

As Christ is raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even we also should walk in newness of life. {Romans 6:4-7}

These scriptures do not infer but plainly state that those who receive Jesus as Savior walk in a new life from the one existing before it. What could this new life be?

Is it held until heaven? Easily, the answer is no because these scriptures state as Jesus is, present tense, so are we in this world. The scriptures further state that we receive this new life through God's unmerited favor and being rightly related to God. We are raised from a spiritually dead position to one that is spiritually alive to God.

How does this new life benefit us? The scripture reads that we should reign in this life by {by, means through} Christ.

What if God's plan did not just save us from sin and the benefits realized when we get to heaven, but now? What if Jesus' one sacrifice for all time indeed cleansed us of all sin past, present and future? What if our sins were truly not held against as King David said? What if God fully restored us to Himself by changing us into a new creature that is counted as sin free species and at the same time being made righteous with no other qualifications?

What if the scriptures are true that say that we are now seated in Christ? What if healing, peace, security, blessing and financial success were real gifts from God and available to us by not being good enough but by believing in Jesus? What if all punishment for sins had already been paid for by Jesus and we believed that? What if God gave us a place of safety and security from the devil {Christ} from which we successfully repelled every one of his attacks? Would that not be a utopia?

What if Jesus gave us a total deliverance package {Gospel} that we had been blinded to it all these centuries because we were deceived about what the Gospel really was? What if living by God's unmerited and undeserved favor was true and we could rest from our works as God did from His? Hebrews states that he who believes in Jesus and what He has done enters a place of rest.

Could the church for the most part {all denominations and factions} be locked into a works oriented lifestyle that keeps them frustrated under perpetual condemnation?

For we walk by faith and not by sight. The just shall live by faith. We live by faith and not by works. God said to live by looking at the unseen because the seen is subject to change and the unseen creates the things that are seen. For the last two thousand years we have lived under the {IF}! If we obey all His commandments the blessings will come but if we fail in one area the curse will come upon us in all areas. Does the scripture that states Jesus has redeemed {purchased} us from the curse of the law having become a curse for us mean ANYTHING?

I believe our clergy, of which I am one, never meant to deceive the people with any teaching. They simply taught us what they had been taught was the truth. And that so-called truth containing demonic blinders has been passed down from generation to generation.

We have become so well trained by institutional religion in the teaching that we must earn and be deserving of God's love for Him to act on our behalf, that we cannot see much less receive God's unmerited favor. We do not know how to be free.

I think we are stumbling in a world filled with the bright light of God's mercy, blinded by the pitch-black glasses of the law.

Whom the Son sets free is free indeed.