

## **Reality: Christian Philosophy OR Christian Character?**

*(Is Reality Just Better Doctrine OR A Fuller Experience?)*

Since more and more people are complaining and writing about the pitiful condition of the current church system, we have ( for over 8 years) been trying to define the problem. After over 8 years of meeting with local pastors and ministers and discussing these things we have identified several problems but we still have found **VISIBLE NO SOLUTION**. We have attempted to make a distinction between the Church He is Building and the visible church that men are building. This has been helpful but has offered **no solution** to the pitiful condition of the visible church. The temptation is to declare the visible church Babylon, ichabod, pathetic, irrelevant and ignore it.

We are presently being warned that our expectations for the visible church are far too high and that Christ loves the church the way it is. The counsel seems to be; If we don't expect anything we will never be disappointed. Maybe we should just throw everything into neutral and be happy. While we have found very little advancement in the visible church upon which we can base any new optimism there is very little confidence that the established church system will ever fulfill the purpose of God. It is pointed out that there is an awakening in certain groups and that not all groups are dead in the water. There is still some hope among certain small groups and certain "prophets" are declaring that "happy day are her again or are rapidly on the way." Revival is coming!

It seems reasonable that if the world is to be convinced about Jesus there should be something visible that the world can see. Of course the solution to a visible manifestation of eternal reality in the visible church is to **FIRST** experience a real conversion in each new believer. This requires a valid and real inner life transformation. Jesus said it this way; "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know." The "I in them" requirement is the basic born-again reality provided for in the New Covenant! The "I" being the Living and Abiding Word of God! This IS the Sperma by which the new inner life is conceived and we are "born again." Without this "conception" and a new inner man there is no hope that any "church group" can prosper except in greater numbers attending. This birth is basic to fulfilling God's Eternal Purpose.

John 17:20 "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; **21 that they may all be one**; even as Thou, Father, *art* in Me, and I in Thee, that **they also may be in Us**; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. 22 "And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me. The "ME" is the Man, Christ Jesus.

Another essential part of the solution is this; "And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one." This is the Promise of the Father ( the Baptism in the Holy Spirit) that opens up the New Covenant experiences. "I will dwell in them and walk among them" is the New Covenant promise. Unless this provision is a valid inner life experience there cannot even be a "valid church." In other words we cannot expect a fulfillment to this prayer until we have personally experienced all the provision that God has made available

to us in the New Covenant. The “I” here is the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit! The “I” then is God and the “Me” is Jesus.

If the visible church was living in the reality of the John 17 prayer her glory would be seen and the world would believe and know something of the eternal reality. Of course if I was living in this reality, my testimony would also be different. When I see the failure in the visible church I must also see that my experience is very similar to hers and my weaknesses are the same as her weaknesses. My failure cannot be isolated from her failure because I live in the same visible dimension. While I would like to distance myself from the visible church and do something other than cooperate in its failure and deadness, I find that the burden for the visible church remains.

Another part of the process is “but for those also who believe in Me through their word;”. This process begins with what we call evangelism and this “evangelism” involves those who have first been participants in the other parts of the prayer. Their evangelism involves their personal testimony of their personal experience. Their word is not just a doctrine but must be the reality of Life. Evangelism outside of a personal New Covenant experience has been extremely shallow and ineffective. Some “evangelists” are even proud that they can convince unbelievers they are sinners by applying the Old Covenant law as proof of their sin! In the early church, the scriptures say that it was obvious to unbelievers that the believers had been with Jesus. That reality was “evangelism” as much as the words that were spoken. In fact many “evangelistic” messages are offensive to unbelievers simply because they use condemnation as a sword. Another substitute message is that “God loves you just as you are.” “Jesus has already paid the price for your forgiveness.” While the words are true they may not be “the truth” in the life of the one speaking. Like they say “Talk is cheap.”

The method by which the effectiveness of the goal “That the world may know” presents a different kind of evangelism. This evangelism is the result of the indwelling Presence of God in the one speaking. The point is this; Not only do we look for a new restoration of the reality of the Lampstand Church but we look for a different kind of evangelism that comes from that inner (holy place) dimension. This is what we are referring to as becoming His ministers within the New Covenant Priesthood Ministry. This is another one of the many distinctions relevant to the next restoration.

There certainly seems to be a visible distinction between the pitiful condition of the visible church that men are building and the severely disciplined Church that He is Building, seen in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3. Therefore, if we take the severity of the message to the Seven Lampstand Churches as the normal Christian Life and everything else as some counterfeit system (the visible church system) we may be able to discern the distinction. If we have the ability to “see” the difference between these “two” churches we may also have the ability to “see” a solution to the problem.

The personal problem this presents is that at the same time we “see” the defects in others it reveals our own defects and failures! From that we understand the we also do not measure up to the standards of the Lampstand Church and that we are still part of the many problems seen in the visible church! We discover we are contributors to the problems rather than solvers of the problems!

Is the “test” that the world is looking for a test of our Christian Philosophy or a test of our

Christian Character? Is the prayer in John 17 seeking a new and better religious philosophy or is Jesus revealing the essence and substance of the normal Christian Life? None of this prayer was possible under the Old Covenant so Jesus is praying for something entirely unique to the New Covenant. If we claim to be a “member” of the New Covenant community should we not then be participating in that New Covenant reality?

John 17:24 “Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world.

This is the summation of the prayer and defines the goal and fruit He was seeking from all this New Covenant provision. This provision requires that “GOD”-- The Father, The Living and Abiding Word of God and the Holy Spirit-- dwell in man and walk among us and because of that He can be our God and we can be His people! If this IS our actual experience then a certain glory should be present that can be seen. We are wondering if this manifestation is the new order of evangelism that will proceed from the Holy Place life and ministry.

To attempt to reduce the magnitude of the New Covenant provision down to a pathetic requirement like “accept Jesus as your personal Savior” and go to heaven someday is to introduce another humanistic philosophy that is religious but far short of the New Covenant provision. Of course there is some basis in scripture to “prove” this “accept Jesus” philosophy but it is out of the context of the Promise of the Father, the New Covenant provision and the requirements of the Kingdom of God.

Within this current church system, that appears to be established upon a humanistic philosophy, someone must be “trained and ordained” to accept the responsibility to look after the “believers.” The “believers” then are required to pay tithes to these leaders as payment for taking the religious responsibility from the believers. Like a doctor needs an office and a hospital in order to practice his craft so a pastor needs an office and a church building to practice his craft. Both are professionals.

Within this system, the believers pay their tithes and ride the gravy train of entitlements, prosperity and benefits promised to them by their superiors. We recently heard about the \$38 blessing that the person was entitled to if they would just give \$38 to the TV ministry. Of course the TV ministry also offered the \$1000 blessing. The “minister” guaranteed the \$1000 blessing by asking the Lord to cause his tongue to cleave to the roof of his mouth if this wasn't true.

Why are these ridiculous “promises” made? Because the Promise of the Father is ignored. The visible church seems to be plagued by conn artists but that alone is not the reason to seek a solution to its pitiful condition. Why? Because any place we find first Adam in the pulpit we will find strange things and carnal promises. Also Cain will always kill Able in every generation. These defects will always plague the visible church but it is clear in Revelation 2 and 3 that Jesus will NOT permit this kind of carnality to function in His Church. Careful reading of these chapters might reveal that Jesus is angry with these churches and He is NOT offering “grace and mercy” for their failures.

With just a little insight it is clear that the church cannot continue on like this and still fulfill the purpose of God. If we continue for the next ten years in the same mode as the last ten years will the result be different? Is God justified if He tests us on our Christian responsibility? Is God

justified if He tests us on our Christian Character? Is God justified if He tests each man's work with fire to see what sort it is? If it is flammable (wood, hay or straw) is God justified if everything you have built is destroyed by fire?

This humanistic philosophy that if you believe something about Jesus you are guaranteed a high place in eternity is a big lie. Thousands of sincere seekers have been duped into believing that lie and have suffered eternal loss by not surrendering to the inner working of God that leads to a transformed Life. Multitudes have believed the lie that because of God's grace it was not necessary to do the whole will of God. Because of God's unmerited favor the basic foundations are not necessary. The "being saved" philosophy has taken the place of fulfilling His Eternal Purpose, doing His will and growing up in all things into Christ. We have been predestined to fulfill His Eternal Purpose. The lie we hear is that "since we are already saved" there is nothing more that we need to do except enjoy the Lord forever. This lie is universal! Another lie is "We are already perfect in Christ." How can it get any better than this?

Col 1:25 Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God,

Col 1:26 *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Col 1:28 And we proclaim Him, **admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete {perfect} in Christ.** 29 And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Paul obviously wasn't aware of this new gospel of the bargains concerning our "great" salvation and still had a burden for the perfection of the saints. Therefore, he was "admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete {perfect} in Christ."

It is certain that a "reformation" or revival of this fallen system will not produce the restoration of all things spoken by the prophets. The reformation that began in 1517 through Martin Luther wanted to "reform" the Catholic Church not replace it with another similar but different system. He wanted to make the old system better.

The new system that started in 1517 was just a renewed old system with different leaders. That system never weaned the believers away from total dependance upon the leaders and their "ministries." The "ministries" were called pastors instead of priests but very little other than that really changed in the system. The hierarchal system of church leadership remained.

Therefore, our opinion is that trying to rebuild the old system with new inspired leaders will be a waste of time. Establishing new programs for the old system will be fruitless. Our opinion is that this hierarchal church system has failed to fulfill the John 17 prayer and many other scriptures. This hierarchal system was started by Constantine in about 360 and was a copy of the government of his empire. Therefore, for over 1600 years this system has produced very little in fulfilling God's Eternal Purpose.

Some of us are speculating that a whole new system built upon the Priesthood ministries after the Order of Melchizedek might work. However, this is not "prophetic" but just speculation. If we

could attach the word “system” to this order of Priesthood ministry it could be called the “Lampstand System” of church! Since Jesus, Himself, is walking among the Lampstand churches and is warning, condemning, threatening and demanding change, it is clear that the “happy days are here again” messages are not acceptable. Today we still hear the “Happy days” messages by prophets and preachers alike. Even some magazines have parroted that message.

Since each one of us must stand before the judgement seat of Christ and be evaluated, it seems to be the personal responsibility of each of us to personally measure up to the standard that has been established. That Standard is predestined! That standard is defined as the man, Christ Jesus! To expect some “ordained minister” to stand in your place before the judgement seat to make excuses for your condition is total ignorance. Since Jesus Christ IS the Judge at that time, it is silly to expect Him to also be your advocate to make excuses for you. This Judge/ Advocate is still part of the “Happy Days” message! Revelation 2 and 3 reveals this philosophy is corrupt! In the Kingdom dimension, the evaluation time is separating the saints for eternity according to their growth and perfection, according to their faithfulness and worthiness.

Even if some popular Christian philosophy, derived from scripture, has replaced God’s discipline or excused personal responsibility to grow up in all things into Christ, it should be obvious it is wrong. To attempt to transfer this interpretation of judgement or our responsibility to fulfill His Purpose to some hierarchal church system appears to be ignorant! This could be disastrous to your eternal inheritance. Many of us can “see” this danger in the Catholic Church system but are ignorant of the same danger in this protestant church system. One dirt system is no better than another. The Church He is Building is not a “system” but a Kingdom Government where the King decides everything for His body. In Revelation 2 and 3 He is not bashful about making absolute demands upon the Lampstand Churches. No provision is made to negotiate or contest the demands. Why? Because He is sovereign over His church! God’s grace is not even mentioned except as a greeting but NOT as an excuse to not obey or repent or to change.

In the light of Revelation 2 and 3 we wonder why so few “ministers” are not articulating the demands of the Kingdom of God. Why are so many “ministers” entrenched in some “self-help” or “self-interest” or “self-promoting” type of messages and ignoring the real Gospel of the Kingdom. Some ministers still insist that the “happy days are here again” messages are encouragement for distressed believers. They may even expect the Eternal Weight of Glory to fall on half saved people who flock to the meetings to sing and dance.

This, “since I pay my tithe and am faithful to attend the meetings” mentality has fostered the “your responsibility is to care for me syndrome” the “ministers” have accepted responsibility to be mediators for whole congregations. This has produced a toxicity and addiction to “leadership” that has no place or function in the Kingdom of God. This addition has metabolized into a lack of personal responsibility to grow up and the result is what we see in the visible church system. This crippling disease then has spread from one generation to the next until the whole system has been infected with a “we are saved” mentality.

Therefore, maybe a “scorched earth policy” is the only solution since the whole earth seems to be infected. If God did send the fire to test each man’s work and all this fallen system got burned up, would there be enough true ministries left to guide the remaining believers into the Church He is Building? It appears that this church system would be redundant IF we just transferred our “membership” to the Church He is Building. However, since the demands are so great and the

discipline so severe in the Lampstand Church it seems that only a few would be willing to participate in the Kingdom Church.

Does this “belief system”, that is establish as normal, require a personal discipline or personal growth? Does it require obedience? Does it require a transformed inner life? Well, the Kingdom of God does require these things and many more, like doing the whole will of God.

Heb 12:5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; 6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

Heb 12:7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? 8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, that we may share His holiness.

This popular but “illegitimate gospel” of the bargains and half-priced sale produces illegitimate children” who are **NOT** sons. It doesn’t say where this carnal group ends up in the eternal scheme of things but we certainly don’t want to be in that group. If this “visible church system” is part of the “illegitimate children” group we would want to escape from it. We then discover two kinds of failure. The first is that we have failed to transition to the Kingdom dimension and we have failed to inform the “visible church system” that we became part of. Of course, our desire is to abandon the failed church system. However, then we discover another problem of finding an alternative place to fellowship. This is the frustration for thousands today. IF the Church He is Building would suddenly appear, would the other visible churches that men are building empty out? Probably not because that “church” has been accepted as normal and anything other than that would be too mystical and strange. The Revelation 2 and 3 shock would shake the existing systems. Especially if God’s real appointed LEADER started making demands, giving warnings and threatening to vomit believers out of His body.

Mat 23:8 “But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and **you are all brothers.** 9 “And do not call *anyone* on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 “And do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ.

It is obvious that under the New Covenant the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Living Word of God, Christ, has assumed positions that are seldom recognized in the visible church. How do we know that? Because this realm of authority is ignored and men are appointed to these positions.

More and more we are seeing that “light” is our only weapon against this “darkness.” Even if our present “light” is very dim it is still better than no light at all. We are focusing upon identifying the darkness but have not been effective in delivering the “Light” that defeats the darkness. We are conscious of the fact that the real “LIGHT” is our manifestation of Christ in us. The John 17 reality as personal experience made visible is probably what the world is waiting to see. Another verse from scripture or another religious message will probably not convince the world about who Jesus is really is. If all the thousands of programs on TV has not convinced the world about Jesus, it is reasonably that another church service will not change the world’s viewpoint very

much.

Creation itself confirms that the physical world is subject to the spiritual world but that is the unseen world to the natural man. Romans 1 declares that creation itself is all the proof the world needs to acknowledge the Creator and be thankful. Obviously that has not convinced the great majority. However, John 17 presents a totally different approach to how the world will get the revelation about God. God will raise up a corporate people in whom He can dwell. As He walks within this group of called out ones there will be a manifestation that the world will be able to see and to know that God sent Jesus.

John 17:22 **“And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know** that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.

**And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one.** Still, the ONENESS Experience depends upon each of us receiving the Glory in the same measure it was given to Jesus. We are still ignorant of exactly what that means but it is clear that we have fallen short of this manifestation.

**“I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity”**

Coming into a “perfect Unity” in the body of Christ depends upon the manifested Presence of God in us. [I, the Living Word, in them] This evidently is essential if we will ever see the Lampstand Church which was hammered out of one piece of Gold. The Lampstand Church has Perfect unity or maybe it is “Perfected in Unity.”

There is obviously a great difference between the visible church and this Church He is building because the latter Church is in Perfect Unity. The visible church couldn't be LESS unified than what it is today. Therefore, we can conclude that either it must NOT have received the same Glory that Jesus had OR it does not have the Presence of the Indwelling God. The evidence of **“I in them, and Thou in Me”** experience is necessary for Perfected Unity.

Now we should ask if Jesus has withheld the Glory from us that was given to Him. Or we might ask if that Glory is reserved just for the church He is Building. Something of this “Glory Blessing” is evidently not manifested in the visible church. Therefore, we must ask if this level of “just believe” evangelism is ALL that God has designed for the true church.

Moving from a new Christian Philosophy to New Covenant Reality appears to be ONE essential step in the next restoration. The same old, same old has lost its reality and its hope of manifesting the eternal purpose of God or to even help us toward our predestined goals.