

Wednesday in the Word

Digging Deeper

February 10, 2021

Colossians 3:18-21

Think Right, Do Right, Be Right

Jesus changes everything. Paul is one of the radically changed people highlighted in the bible. His hatred and persecution of Christians was driven by a self righteous devotion to a religious system of works and arrogant hypocrisy. Galatians 1:13-14, Philippians 3:4-6. Without any warning he encountered Jesus Himself on the road to Damascus and was entirely wakened to his error. This account can be explored in Acts 9:1-20. He instantly released his critical, judgmental demeanor to preach the all inclusive love of Christ. Why such a change? It might be safe to say that the deeper and more deplorable your sin was, the higher and more wonderful your salvation experience is. Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Jesus reveals to us our prior blindness to personal sin and gives us a new heart that desires to know and display His goodness. A problem with much of christianity is that it is a replacement religion for so many that is devoid of the powerful relationship available to us that induces true change. As being a Jew does not necessarily instill Godly character in its adherents, being a Christian does not guarantee the changed heart and mind demanded in our faith. Romans 2:28-29.

Paul's redirection altered his every thought and action. As he was previously on a mission to persecute believers in The Messiah he was rejecting, he now embarked on a new mission to share the joy and thrill of knowing Him personally. This individual change could be a prophetic picture of the need for an entire culture to alter its course. In the Roman Empire of Paul's day, there were no recognized rights of women, children or slaves, who were all expected to obey husbands, parents and masters upon penalty of death. Christianity changed all that. Notice, Jesus made no attempt to change government, law or culture. The problems preexisting His advent continued on long after His ascension to heaven. What He did though, was to indwell individual hearts as here discussed with Paul. Romans 8:9-11. When our God creates a new spirit within us, we literally change in our soul and in response we desire and work to change the direction of society. We respond to injustice, evil and abuse in ways that affect society as a whole. Christianity and the Spirit of Christ have done more to positively affect our world than any other human influence. Consider the Godly roots of marriage, education, government, childhood safety, citizenship, criminal justice, minority voting rights, the roles of women, business ethics, the right to life, military practices, the defense of nations and the very creation of the United States of America. Yet as much as Jesus' influence on the world has produced, the world itself has battled back to unravel every success. The light of Christ in giving eternal life and the gift of love to so many seems to paradoxically induce disdain among others. The pendulum swings in God's favor for a while and then away toward societal sin. Matthew 5:9-12.

The core standard for Christ and His characteristics was developed by Him in the Garden and is here reinforced by Paul in Colossians. In Genesis chapters 1 and 2, God establishes the good earth, the animal kingdoms and the primary institution of marriage; the very foundation of security, peace and human relationship. Here are birthed the fundamentals of Godly behavior and personal interaction. As we all know, things don't last long. Chapter 3 introduces us to sin and separation. The plan of God since then has been to reestablish the tenets of right behavior as modeled in Christ and made possible only through His sacrifice and His Spirit in us. Paul has

devoted chapters 1 and 2 of Colossians to describe to us the Supremacy of Christ and the benefits of life in Him. Now in chapter 3 he moves on to encourage us to allow His character to propel us to right action. Paul is literally speaking for the Lord as he instructs us in developing lives that honor God and in representing Him among the people we encounter. 2 Corinthians 5:20. He corrects our desire for wrong behavior and demands Godliness through love, mercy, kindness and humility. He admonishes us toward forgiveness, peace, fellowship and righteousness. Finally in today's passage he lands on the foundation of all that is good. The family. In placing all the members of a Godly family in their original roles and orderly construction, he is laying the base to once again influence the world for it's best possible condition. Matthew 5:13-16. As we look around us today we see the family crumbling and our world and nation falling apart accordingly. Paul's words are as important as ever today as we see the consequences of the demise of the family. As he sought to reaffirm earth's only hope then, God's eternal Word of truth speaks ever louder now. The onus falls largely on the man of the family who ironically has failed at his duty and position. A loving, Godly man would be gladly respected by his wife and a strong encouraging father would be gladly followed by his children. This nation can once again thrive when men stand to their responsibility. A man devoted to his home will contribute most to his society and nation. 1 Corinthians: 16-13, 1 Timothy 3:2. Doing right among the nuclear family will afford us a right nation and a right relationship with God. The Man, Jesus, did His part by standing to His responsibilities and we, gentlemen ought to do as well. We owe it to you, dear ladies. Please forgive us and support us in our duty to you. Let's take Paul's words seriously and commit once again to the fulfillment of our roles in performing the intentions of God. Think right, do right, be right. Philippians 4:8.