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These are brief sermons to be taken for what they are worth.

John 8:6-8,20 But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground... I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Volume 1, Sermon 2

Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *sin* no more.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

Here is the situation:

In John 7, Jesus had returned to Galilee. Not long afterward the Jews' feast of tabernacles drew near. Three times a year families usually journeyed together to Judea and Jerusalem for such holy festivities, as God instructed in the Mosaic Law. Therefore, Jesus' brothers sought him out so that the family could journey together. Yet, Jesus said to them (thus, to the whole family) to go on without him. For God's Plan of the Ages was now going to separate the New from the Old. That is, Jesus was now going to separate himself from his earthly family and from the Mosaic Law. Indeed, the New was beginning even as the Old was near wearing out.

All that Jesus shall be doing from this point on cannot be accomplished (i.e. making New Wine) in the old wineskin of the law. Doing it in the old wineskin of the law would burst the law (i.e. destroy it) and spill out the New onto the ground. Jesus had no intention or interest in destroying the righteous Mosaic Law.

Thus, at this point in time, then, that the separation of the Old and the New begins.

'Separation' is the apostle John's theme in chapters 7 and 8. 'Separation' is the main concept which he wants us to focus upon, and John begins by telling us (as far as 'separation' was concerned) that Jesus here is initiating it with his family and he would continue it from now on.

In chapter 7, then, Jesus arrives secretly in Jerusalem during the festival. Soon after, in the large room called the treasury, he begins teaching the people. At this time Jesus

begins to make a very clear distinction between himself and the Jewish leaders; and he knows that they are considering the need to kill him. Read chapter 7 to see how the (separating) arguments were building both between individuals and among some of the Jews. Some of the people gathered there had begun already to believe he was the Messiah (i.e. the *action of faith* working in them). At the close of that day '**every man went to his own house**'. And Jesus went unto the mount of olives (8:1). (I like to call such '**believing**' to be "faithing" which, though the word is not in our dictionary, actually was what was happening.)

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**John 8:2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.**

After spending the night with his Father, Jesus arrived early to continue what he had begun the day before.

**8:3-6 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst [of the people and in front of Jesus], They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him [i.e. testing him as regarding the law], that they might have to accuse him [by means of the law].**

During the night (while Jesus was with his Father) the scribes and Pharisees had been meeting together and making their plans for the next day's argumentation.

**But [instead of responding] Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.**

The floor in the entire temple was stone, but a thin layer of dirt lay on the stone. Beneath the stone floor was the very foundation of the temple. Therefore, upon the temple's very foundation Jesus was perhaps writing symbolically the *beginning* of the New Covenant in the dirt (and this covenant, among many other things, would *judge differently* from the Mosaic Law). Jesus stooped and wrote only after he had been challenged regarding the judgment of this woman.

The making of New Wine had begun.

**8:7,8 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.**

Perhaps – perhaps Jesus was writing heavenly words... as he and the Father

had been communicating and were continuing in their communicating at that moment about the situation of these Jewish leaders and about judgment of the woman.

Whatever was happening with Jesus, he responded within the normal Jewish-law, but within his new *Messiah-judgeship that worked according to the New Law of (i.e. pertaining to) Christ Jesus*. That is, Jesus had separated himself from the Mosaic Law and passed over to the New Covenant, which his Father at the moment was ushering in.

**8:9 And they which heard it** [i.e. the scribes and Pharisees of the law that had charged the woman], **being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst** [of the people].

At this moment, then, the New Law in Christ operated from heaven by *God's Spirit* individually in each of these man. During the night each had agreed in loyalty to God and to the Mosaic law to defend it; and so they wanted to know if Jesus would honor Moses' commandment in the law, or would he stand accused by the law before all the crowd.

Ah but now, each man became convicted by his loving God. Each man obeyed that conviction. This was not a matter of *shame* on their part, but a matter of conviction within a good heart that *they were not worthy to judge that which God at this moment was reserving unto Himself*.

I know that we think of these men as “bad”, but they were actually good men with good hearts toward God and toward His law. God's Spirit spoke to each separately, redirecting his good heart from the requirement of the law toward what God wanted now... which was for him to step back and to allow God to handle the situation. I repeat: Each man responded well to his God, for the law was never to supersede God Himself.

**8:10-11 When Jesus had lifted up himself** [back into the sitting position for teaching], **and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**

We see here the new Christ-law: though Jesus is Judge in the New Covenant, he was little interested within his judgments to be condemning, but rather to be setting free.

This word '**sin**' in the Greek means '*to miss the mark*' or '*to err*'. '**Err**' from what? '**Err**' from the Mosaic law; in that, the woman had yet to know of the new Christ-law. Under the Law of Christ Paul wrote similarly to the churches imploring Christians not to '**err**'. Among Christians Paul dealt with the same '**err**' as the woman under the Mosaic law. Yes, the lesser law gave way to the greater law; nevertheless, God is ever the same and so are His values.

Below we shall see the word 'sin' as translated from a *different* Greek word.

**8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them [i.e. of the crowd], saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**

The Mosaic law was not of darkness; rather it was of *righteousness*. Yet, through their lack of faith towards *the righteousness in the law*, by their own working of the law in human ability instead of walking in the law by faith, a great many of God's people had fallen into darkness; indeed the nation had fallen into darkness. In other words, they had come to consider their law as their *light*, and so they were busy working in *their own light* of the law. But *light was in the law* only as they walked in the law in faith, as pleasing unto God.

(We Christians too often consider our doctrines *as light* and we are faithful to them. But righteous doctrines and righteous law in themselves is *not light*. Only Jesus is *the Light* ... Not doctrines about Jesus.)

Therefore, by the time of Jesus, the leaders of the people had been greatly stumbling in trying with a heavy hand to use the law as *a stick to keep God's people morally in line*. Therefore, the Son was sent in due season according to God's Plan of the Ages in Christ.

(We of the Church have much the same problem in that we focus on a *churchy* walk, a *moral* walk, and a *withdrawn from the world* walk. That is why Paul said to the church, "Do all these things, but please do them as *activated-and-motivated within faith*. Otherwise you are not pleasing unto the Father. Instead you are pleasing unto each other as *satisfied-with-ourselves church members*.")

As Judge in the New Covenant and as Light sent from above, Jesus had the authority to forgive the woman, to make this claim of himself, and to make this claim of those that would follow him. In doing these things, then, he 'separated' himself from the Jewish leadership. And by this he changed (i.e. controlled) the topic of the argumentation.

**8:13-16 The Pharisees [i.e. other Pharisees who had not charged the woman] therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true [i.e. referring to the law's requirements regarding testimony].**

**Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.**

**And yet if I judge [as just now with the women], my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.**

True judgment among Christians must be with Jesus and the Father present. If not then we are straying into dangerous territory. Better not to judge than to judge by human understanding of doctrines... when God and His Son should be doing the judging.

But note that Jesus had said that he was not (and is not) in the judging season, which he will do later in its own season.

Here is more of the 'separation' between Jewish leaders and Jesus, with Jewish leaders being the lower and Jesus being the higher. How much did that upset the Jews?

But also Jesus was making clear the 'separation' between *judging according to human*

*understanding of the law and Jesus working within the new Christ-law.*

God gave the Mosaic law as a *righteous commandment* to his people. Even so, now in this encounter, the new Christ-law began working (as seen in verse nine). Thus, in these arguments Jesus and the Jews were at loggerheads (just like America's political parties in the struggle about which way America shall proceed in the years ahead). These Jews were trying to be righteous in the law *by defending the righteous law*.

Many through the ages and today are trying to be righteous in Christ *by defending Christ*, and their best way to it is by defending their church doctrine. God and His laws do not need defending. Nor do His Covenants need defending.

Here is man's righteousness within his works versus God's righteousness working compassionately through His Son.

### **8:17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.**

Jesus emphasizes ( i.e. '**in your law**') that the Mosaic law is *their* light... and so it was left to them within the law to discern what was true.

Ah, but God in heaven knows all truth. As He desires, He can by His Spirit reveal truth at the time of need... and it is this very fact which Paul teaches and implores the churches regarding *judgments* by the leaders among the brethren. They are to be far more compassionate: that is, *the Spirit revealing and convicting* more than using church doctrines *as a stick of guilt and chastisement* (even as the Jewish leaders used the Mosaic law in this passage).

Jesus continues to distinguish himself from the Jewish leadership.

### **8:18-20 [Yes] I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.**

**Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?**

**Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.**

Jesus continues to introduce the 'separation' of ways, by which he is different from and is above them.

**8:21-23 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? [as they were thinking to do that very thing] because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath [i.e. earth]; I am from above [i.e. heaven]: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. [So] I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he* [i.e. 'I exist' from heaven, as I am telling you], ye shall die in your sins.**

Jesus continues making the 'separation' that he is not of this world. Note that the topic is switched to *from whence he came and whence they came* (i.e. the source of each). They believed that they *worked for* heaven. Jesus claimed that

he *was of* heaven.

Moreover, consider that the Greek word '**sin**' in this verse is different from the word '**sin**' with the woman in verse 11. And here as well is 'separation'. But here the Greek word means '**offense**'. Jesus says that they shall die in their '**offense**'; and he states it as a *fixed* condition.

That is, it is in their *offensiveness* (i.e. *sinfulness*) as they continue using the Mosaic law *against* God's people instead of for their *up-building*. As shepherds of the people, God shall hold them accountable.

In verse 11 the Greek word means *to err from God ways for the people*. But in this verse the word means *that offenses were being committed by the Jewish leaders against the people and against God*.

In verse 11, though the '**sin**' was against God's good intent for woman, nevertheless the woman's '*err*' was even more of a hurt unto herself, which is why Jesus said, "Go and sin no more". Ah, but '**offense**' against God is by far the greater '**sin**' with greater consequences. Too many "shepherds" today use the Word to keep the flock in moral line, even as did the Jewish leaders. The Righteous Law and the Word both are for up-building in the Spirit and not breaking of the spirit.

In the Law was the means from God for forgiveness when an Israelite '**erred**' from the law (as the woman had done in verse 11), and when done in faith it was pleasing to the the Israelite's God. However with this women and with the men who accused her Jesus dealt with them by means of the New Covenant in Christ.

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8:25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou?

And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning [i.e. the beginning of their debate].

Now let us consider the beginning of the debate which began the day before:

John 7:15 And the Jews [i.e. men of letters] **marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned** [at Jewish institutions]?

7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

Here we see that Jesus had begun to make 'separation' regard their different doctrines. Doctrine is where 'separation' always begins. They taught about God and about God's ways for the people in the Law. This was all well and good with one exception: they used the Law, adjusted from its original by tradition, to keep the people morally in check. The many churches today with their many varied doctrines do the same.

Where God in the Son differed then and now in their doctrine is that Jesus

Christ is the I am (i.e. 'I exist') from heaven to earth for salvation to the world. Salvation to Israelites was always by faith in the Messiah-to-come (and he shall come again). Salvation to Christians is always by faith in the Savior-who-did-come (and he shall come again). What was taught then and now about this One to come does not save. Only God through His Messian-Son (then and now) saves.

This is what Jesus meant in saying, '**My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me**'. It is where he began the Two Day Argumentation.

Ah, but true and real 'separation' goes well beyond the '*source of the doctrine*'.

7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Yes, here is the crux of the matter... the Source... not the source of mental or spiritual teaching... but rather whether *at any given moment* it is initiated and is coming from man or from heaven. That is, is the Spirit at work or is man trying his best... whether or not the person is *studied* or '**knowth letters**'.

7:18 He that speaketh of himself [even with 'letters;] seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his [i.e. God's] glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

Here is the problem of many *with 'letters'* speaking for God today. The questions should be 1) is he or she '**sent**'; and 2) if '**sent**', is he or she silent of God's words until the Spirit truly is working?

Many ('**sent**' and 'not **sent**') ones have simply *arrived*. And they *are simply working as shepherds as required it of them by the church that pays their salary*.

One can remain silent of God's words *and* at the same time silently *stand* where God has placed him or her. Many of the prophets had to do this until God gave them (sometimes forced them) to speak or to write. Only God knows how many such silents ones He has had through the ages. It is in this that God can silently accomplish many good things in them and through them. '**Be silent and know that I am God**' is most precious in His sight. Silently 'separated' unto devouring the Word is the primary way of it.

Ah, but the flesh, even in '**sent**' ones says, "Let's get to work!" God is usually doing things in and through waiting-ones much more than they know. Patience in the Lord is a godly virtue.

7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

'**keeping**' can be *having Christ's doctrine*. But true '**keeping**' is *walking and living in it*. The Israelite who was truly '**keeping the law**' would in such Spirit-

moments begin to recognize the True Completer of the Law. Jesus Christ is the true Completer of the Law, and many of the people (and of the Jews) were faithing on Him even as most of the Jews were arguing with him.

Back to Chapter 8

8:26-29 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and [presently] I speak [truth] to the world [i.e. not just to Jews with 'letters'] those things which I have heard of him.

[Even so, says John] **They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.**

All true Christians know Jesus as Savior and many know him as Shepherd; but how many who speak for God are '**of the Father**' (i.e. who know the Father)? Jesus is the True One '**sent of the Father**', but the Father is the *Sending One – Truth Itself*.

Jesus continually made this as clear as it could be, but too many could not hear.

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

The Greek word translated '**taught**' actually means '**caused to learn**'. These days we think of a teacher as “teaching and that it is up to the student to learn what is being taught”. But not too long ago in our own society “teaching” meant that real “learning” was going on... and if “no learning” was going on... then also “no teaching” was going on.

The Father had '**caused to learn**' His Son. Truth is only conveyed to a child of God as God's Spirit '*causes him or her to learn*'. All other good things of knowledge that we have learned and know is '**doctrine**' *taught by good men and women and learned by good men, women, and children*.

8:30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

Jesus reaffirms that he is Judge and that in some season he will have much more to say and to judge; but not now. Now he is in the process of the Father's business of both the 'separation' and the constituting of the new Christ-law.

Many in the crowd, having observed what Jesus did in verse 11, were listening to the debate between the scribes and Pharisees on one side and Jesus on the other side. Many were being convicted and inspired by God's Spirit from heaven toward Jesus' side. Within themselves, then, each came to understand and to decide regarding this man Jesus... that in fact he is the

Messiah. This fact was only the beginning of what they would be '**caused to learn**'.

8:31-32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Here Jesus acknowledges that many of the Jews hearing were also believing. He encouraged them toward discipleship with *truth* and with *freedom* from pleasing God with good works of Law and doctrine. It was their 'believing' (i.e. faithing in the Son) what was pleasing unto God.

8:33 They answered him [i.e. responding to what Jesus had just said to the Jews who believed in him], **We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**

The '**they**' in this verse is the '**they**' in versus 13 through 29.

The Greek word translated here (and in so many places) as '**answered**' actually means '**conclude for oneself**', which is equivalent to '**respond**' to that which one has '**concluded**'.

Thus, from what Jesus had just said to believing Jews, the arguing Jews '**concluded for themselves**' that Jesus was generally *confused regarding Israel and specifically confused regarding their religious freedom*. In fact, the arguing Jews were responding and trying to convince these new believers in Jesus that "they were already free by the Law". Ah, but Jesus was in the very process of offering freedom in a new, better, and higher way. Indeed, Jesus Christ Himself is the 'freedom'.

On the one hand, Jesus had addressed those who were believing in him; but on the other hand, it was the scribes and Pharisees arguing who butted in with continued argument... to which Jesus then '**responded**'.

8:34 Jesus answered [i.e. responded to] **them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**

Again the word '**sin**' in this verse means '**offense**', in that, those arguing with Jesus were *offenders toward God the Father*. Indeed, while they were *defending* "the faith" *as they understood it*, at the same time they were *disallowing faith to take hold of them* to at least listen. We Christians also '**offend**' when we should *be quiet and listen*. It is hard to hear God when we are talking. It is hard to perceive the beam in our own eye when instructing others.

The Greek word for '**committeth**' means '**to make**' or '**in the process of doing**' and it implies *a process*. Therefore, those arguing with Jesus were in

the *process of offense* toward God.

8:35-38 And the servant [these arguing Jews were servants] abideth not in the house for ever: *but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you [i.e. these arguing servants] free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.*

Even while Jesus is inviting these men to allow him to make them free, he is speaking to them and to all present about the reason *why* they cannot believe and *thus they will not allow him* to make them free.

So often, here is the very essence of the servant's flesh. Jesus was *speaking* yet while these Jewish servants were busy *doing*. Yes! The flesh of the servant wants to *do for God*. But so often God wants him or her quiet so He can speak. Indeed, often He is speaking and we are busy doing. Sad, that we miss so much of Him.

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The Father was in control of the situation and the argumentation. And He was speaking through the mouth of His Son; and thus in Jesus He was bringing up a number of subjects which He wanted aired before the people; for these things were leading up to the Son's crucifixion and Resurrection.

I suggest that if you have time you might read on through the rest of this chapter, bearing in mind that the process is one of 'separation' from the Old and ushering in the New.

**8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.**

**John 9:1-3 And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin [i.e. err], this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned [erred], nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**

Jesus and his disciples had slipped away, and they would have more run-ins with Jews who wished to capture and kill him, but not yet was the time.

Moreover, the Jews were afraid of the people.

Albeit, *the Father was not yet finished*. To make matters worse for the Jewish leaders, the Father through the Son would *make the blind, born from birth, to see*. In the eyes of the people these things were beginning to convince them that it was the Jewish leaders who were blind.

**9:4,5 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh,**

**when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**

If Jesus is '**the light of the world**' while he is in the world, and if Jesus is in the Church in worldly America, why are the creatures of darkness out and about in broad daylight parading in the streets of America?

There have always been in America creatures of darkness hiding away in their dark and dank holes. The whole drug scene, which *obviously is with us*, has **not** been *openly* with us for all that many years... only for fifty years more or less. I was in the Navy in the late fifties through 1961 and I had not even heard the word "drug" much less heard of the varied assortment of drugs. I was in college in the early sixties and only then was I hearing of such words; but not in college, instead in the news flashing across America about drugs.

What about the movies?

What about half-truths and misrepresentations (i.e. lies) now so common in our society. He who lies the most and/or lies the best seems to be the winner. Our society seems to admire those who can go around the law and/or break the law... And there is much gossip, innuendo, and lies used by some to bring down others. Our society is cutting itself to pieces.

If Jesus is *the light of the world in churches across America*... why all of these things?

It seems to me that sometime between the close of World War II and the Fifties that something changed. God surely had greatly helped the Allies in WWII to defeat those who would conquer the world. And yes the Free World was thankful... for a while...

But then in the booming economy it seemed that we began to think of ourselves as having saved the world. I was growing up as a teen in the Fifties and then was in the Navy; and everything seemed very good compared to later years, but looking back and having studied ancient history and modern history of the wars I can see that God generally has become left out of America and that the Church (churches) have had less and less impact in society and in our neighborhoods. Not only has God been left out of Government, but Government has been fighting against God in thinking that it can defeat Him with its foolish laws.

And sadly, we Christians think that we can get God to do our bidding and make America back the way it used to be as a "good nation". For we want our families safe, our neighborhoods safe. And we want our communities to see our churches as shining lights on a hill. And we want our neighbors to come to us and let us teach them. And we will "give God the Glory"... in that "our hands are His hands"; "our lips are His lips"; "our feet are His feet"; "our churches are His houses".

Why without us, we just do not know how He could do what He does.

**9:31-33 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. [But] Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.**

Is it not interesting how so many Christians use such a verse (which here is applied to Jesus Christ the Son of God) and apply it to themselves and to their church. We use this and other verses. And we use many verses where Jesus spoke exclusively to his chosen twelve disciples whom he was readying for Apostleship, and we think that we can get God to do our bidding... for Him, of course.

We are '**not sinners**', and we '**worship God**', and we '**do His will**', and so we surely know that '**He hears us**'. Jesus is the Light and he is in heaven; but we are here on earth for him. Are we not “the light” for God?

But are our works as the works of The Light? The world feared Jesus. The world laughs at us.

Presently governments and societies think that if they can limit God to be only in His churches then that is good, for they know that there is no power in the churches. Yes, the world still fears Jesus, but it has no fear of us Christians.

**10:37-42 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.**

Are our works the works of Jesus... '**of my Father**'? No. And that is why the world fears us not, but the world surely fears Jesus. It even kills some of us Christians, thinking that it is hurting God. But those killed for *Jesus' name* simply *go to sleep in Christ*, awaiting their just awards and awaiting the number of the martyrs to be completed (Revelation 6:9-11).

This verse should make it clear to us Christians that by Jesus and Jesus alone can a person '**know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him**'.

**Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.**

**And many resorted unto him** [i.e. took time off from their jobs and housekeeping to spend time with him], **and said, John** [the baptist] **did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.**

Eventually Jesus and his disciples left Judea and entered the region east of the Jordan River (i.e. north and across the river from Galilee) so as to reside there.

*But the Father was not finished with His 'separating' the Old from the New, for now he is going to raise the dead. And He is going to do it back close to Jerusalem. And He is going to do it in a family that was popular and well-respected in the local area of and near Jerusalem. And many people, including some low-level Jewish leaders and their wives, would witness it.*

Jesus and his disciples were busy as described in this verse. Then God the Father took Lazarus from among the living. A couple of days later Jesus received word of it and the Father told him to go to raise Lazarus from the dead. The Father was ever-arranging things for Jesus, as Jesus constantly told all of the people who could hear him. Some would '**believe**' Jesus' words and some would '**believe the works**'.

**11:46-48 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then** [in Jerusalem] **gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we**

**let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.**

**11:53,54 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.**

Yes, even the '**the chief priests and the Pharisees**' '**believe the works**'.

**Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.**

Do you remember when God worked in such a manner as to harden (and continue hardening) Pharaoh's heart before He 'separated' His people from Egypt? God was doing the very same thing with the Jewish leadership and their administration; yet, they suspected that many in their own midst were becoming believers in Jesus as the Messiah.

Pharaoh believed that if his slaves escaped he would appear as weak to the nations north of Egypt. And so he feared that some of those nations would attack and take over his conquered northern territories. Similarly the Jewish leaders feared losing control of the people in Judea, and that the Romans (who ruled the region that contained Judea and Jerusalem) would then take their rulership from them. And if that happened they feared that God's Kingdom on earth would disappear because their rulership was what was keeping God's Kingdom going.

This kind of egotistical thinking throughout history is what has driven the Church to do very foolish things. This kind of egotistical thinking continues with us today.

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God and 'separating'

Before the time of the Mosaic Law, God was 'separating' His chosen people Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph (and their developing families) from all other peoples and people groups. And even for 400 years in Egypt He kept them 'separated'. Then during the time of the Mosaic Law God continued 'separating' His people Israel. Up until the time that Jesus began his ministry this was true, and in fact, Jesus grew up in it and believed in it and he kept it so as to obey and honor his Father.

Albeit, even from Adam and Eve, God was 'separating' *individuals*. The Bible refers to it as '**chosen ones**'. This does not mean that only chosen ones believe in God, rather that out of the whole God chose a few for His own reasons. Obviously we see this in the prophets of old, but one can read through the scriptures and see many many many names

given and what God did in them and for them as He used them. Yet, the world could not contain all of the books that it would take for the stories of the multitude of unknown chosen ones. In fact, I suspect that we'll hear much of this in heaven when we have time for it.

However, with the beginning of Jesus' ministry, God the Father began 'separating' on a larger scale. We know this because the New Testament (which God developed for Christianity) shows us this. Let me emphasize that it was individuals, one by one, who were being 'separated' from their work, from their families, from their friends, and their religion, etc. Though calling but few of his disciples at a time, nevertheless it was God's Spirit leading Jesus to each one and also leading each one to Jesus. Notice in the Gospels that each of the twelve disciples are named and several of them have something of their individuality described. Also other believers are named and described such that we can see that God was drawing each believer unto Jesus out of what they had been.

Whenever Jesus taught and preached he knew that the Spirit of his Father was working in each person such that each person would respond to believe or not to believe (each had a choice). Always God has worked individually with each person. Whenever missions are emphasized in church meetings, from all Christians listening that sympathize with missions only a few are chosen by God to go to the mission field. Many stay and few go... and God knows the heart of each who sympathizes with missions. He is very pleased with each, for one's heart toward God is what counts with Him.

Indeed, it is always the case with each Christian whenever God works or speaks (whether he or she at the time is in the believing or not-believing mode. (I.e. listening or not listening; I like to write this as faithing or not-faithing at the time.) The epistle of James was written to Christians who were believing mentally in their doctrines (which was all well and good), but too often they were in the faith-turned-off mode. Their lips spoke of their faith, but their actions spoke otherwise. Often they spoke when God was not listening, but rather was watching.

I grew up in church during a time when it was preached that each Christian was supposed to have an individual walk with God, and then to come together regularly to worship, fellowship, and share. That is, the emphasis always was on the individual walk with God, and we were reminded regularly of it. However, now it seems that a much greater emphasis is placed upon the church body *together*. And as such, each person in the body is supposed to have loyalty to the group and function properly within the group. We hear, "Together we can do much more of God's work for Him."

I will not go into specifics since the reader can fill in those for himself. Yet, I trust that my message is getting through. I would never de-emphasize the role of the church for each child of God *as taught and described for us in Scripture*. Yet, I am attempting to re-emphasize the relationship of each child of God to the Father... made possible by the Son.

Dear reader, God saved you and expects you to walk with Him as His child. His relationship to you should not be by means of the church, but by means of *you being in the Word and on your knees humbly seeking to please Him*.

The Mosaic law gathered together God's people and kept them separate from others. Conversely, Christ-law 'separates' individuals and draws each individually unto God. But sadly, many churches have developed a *gathered-together-law* where *similarity in thought and deed is the goal*. This is true in small churches and in large churches. The body (in the gathered-together mode) is the emphasis and not individuals... except as individuals work harmoniously with other members in the whole body for the common cause. The common cause is assumed and claimed to be "Headed by Jesus".

Now let us look at a picture of what I mean. At Pentecost a unique something happened to the whole group, but in that process each individual was 'separated' (emphasized) by a flame of fire resting on him or her. We like to emphasize the *togetherness* of that occurrence, yet it was not long before each was individually (or in small groups) being separated by God for His purpose. In fact it was not many years later that God brought in the Romans to destroy Jerusalem (foretold by Jesus), which scattered the believers (nearly all of them). They were being persecuted and had fled the area.

Often God separates in a fashion not to our choosing. Indeed, often He moves an individual sheep from the flock and continues to push him into situations and/or areas where he would not have gone on his own. If the Christian gives God true permission to do as He would then often the Christian's will and mind is not nearly as important. The Shepherd his herds flocks and individual sheep here and there as he wishes; that is if the sheep are not rebellious.

But what about church members being '*separated*' from the people of the community? Are Christians supposed to be '*separated*' from non-Christians? Let us consider some passages --

Act 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, *separate* [unto] me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And these two went out and lived among the heathen. Never were they only with Christians and excluding the heathen; quite the opposite, they were constantly with the heathen.

Rom 8:35 Who shall *separate* us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to *separate* us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And never were they '*separated from the love of Christ*'.

2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship

hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

2Co 6:17,18 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Here Paul teaches that “the Christian should be '**separated**' so as not to be '**yoked**' to unbelievers. He is speaking to Christians. Moreover, God would be a Father unto '**my sons**' and '**my daughters**'. Do you know any good father that would love and hold close one son or daughter above the other sons and daughters? God may choose one son to do this and another son to do that, etc., and choose one daughter to do this and another daughter to do that, etc., but he equally holds dear each one.

In 1Corinthians Paul wrote --

1Co 5:9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

And so here Paul speaks of individual Christians in the body whose sins (i.e. lifestyle) can infect other brothers and sisters when regularly gathered together in the body.

5:10,11 Yet [I speak of] not altogether [about being] with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go [entirely] out of the world.

But now I have written unto you not to keep company [with], if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat [i.e. fellowship].

5:12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without [the church in the world]? do not ye [should rather] judge them that are within [inside the church]?

Paul will have nothing to do with judging people outside of Christianity. He leaves such judgment completely in God's hands. In fact, he tries to fit in to their world-situations, hopefully '**to win a few**'. He says that logically (in the spirit) '**do not ye [should rather] judge them that are within [the church]'**?

5:13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves [i.e. separate from you] that wicked person [in the assembly].

Paul tells us that we are individual children of God who should deal individually with our God... And recognize other individual children of God within the assembly. Moreover, we should treat each honorably as a brother or sister and let him or her walk his or her path individually before the Lord.

And then, when we come together each should act pleasing unto the Lord. And when needed, we should 'separate' from the assembly any child of God that has become

poison. While we think of “safety in numbers” Paul tells us that there can be *danger in numbers*. Thus, one should walk closely with his God, for there is true safety whether he or she is gathered together with Christians or is elbow to elbow with nonbelievers.

Moreover, like Paul, each Christian should never judge a person to be an **'unbeliever'**, for only God knows the person. And each Christian should not judge his brother or sister except in the case when a fellow Christian has deviated to the point of being a **'wicked person'**. Such a one is not to be *judged* or *condemned*, but rather 'separated' (**'put away from among yourselves that wicked person'**), for he is a brother saved by grace.

'God judgeth' those **'without'**. And, Jesus and the Father will judge their own children in the season set for it. Each Christian has no business judging any other person, and Paul says that he does not even judge himself, but leaves that totally in the Lord's hands.

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## The Heart of David

**Psalms 119:129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep [i.e. guard] them.**

**130 The entrance [i.e. opening or disclosure] of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding [i.e. a dividing, discernment] unto the simple.**

**131-133 I opened my mouth, and panted [i.e. eagerly inhaled as to breath in]: for I longed for thy commandments. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do [i.e. a favorable verdict] unto those that love thy name. [And] Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.**

'Order my steps' is better translated as **'vertical strokes'** or **'hammer blows'**. Therefore, adding to it **'in thy word'** would be better translated in the total as **'vertical blows of thy word'**.

This has to do with *construction*: the vertical blows of the word conforming one into God's desired image for His desired purpose.

**134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.**

**135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.**

**136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.**

**137-139 Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful. My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.**

**140-142 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it. [Though] I am small and despised [i.e. counted of little value by others]: yet do not I forget thy precepts. [For] Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.**

**143 Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my**

**delights.**

**144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.**

The '**testimonies**' of God are the Old Scriptures of how God deals with His people in many varied circumstances and how different people responded to God. David is greatly encouraged by reading about the men and women who have gone before him who lovingly walked with the Lord and received that which David earnestly seeks in faith.

We know that the Spirit of God is as the Wind and one knows not from whence it comes nor whither it goes. Ah, but the faith of heaven placed in each child of God is ever residing, ready to respond toward God's will even when the will is unknown. I repeat, it is steadfast and ready to respond. If the Christian's prayer is steadfast as David's prayer then the Father will use His words as hammer-blows in His ongoing construction.

One cannot control the Spirit, but he can be ready with his ever-ready faith. The ways of the world in which we live and walk continually and successfully strive for one's attention. It is David's attitude and prayer within an individual walk with the Lord that so pleases God that He will complete that which He has started.

David walked in the light of the Lord. The Lord in the form of the man Jesus said, **“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”**

You walking in the light of Christ is you walking by faith as did David. How do you get to that place? It is impossible... but with God all things are possible. Ask Him for a humble heart and attitude and keep asking. In His time you will become humble before Him. Then you are on your way.

**Mic 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**

- C. Ronald Johnson at Christian Wilderness Press -