

PERFECT MAN

A Newsletter Designed to Communicate Truth for Perfection of the Total Man--Spirit, Soul and Body

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Spiritual Refreshment - "Ministry of Reconciliation"

By Booker Dismuke

As ministers of the Old Testament, it was the role and duty of the prophets and the law keepers to show the people their sin and transgressions. They indeed hammered this word into the minds of the people because it is necessary that man know and understand what his true nature is without God--that it is sinful and produces only death.

However, the message to the New Testament Church is not the same message once published to Israel or to the unsaved. If the Church is to grow (unfettered) in the Lord, we must publish (preach) the word of reconciliation and do so without a mirror of the past. For too long, these reflections of the past have hindered and held the minds and wills of the new man in bondage and lack. The message that Moses formerly gave to the sinner --not to the new man--is a message that causes confusion and hinders growth of the new spirit.

The word of reconciliation declares what God thinks about us and what we are in God. This new word also tells of the unlimited possibilities we have in Christ. The sad truth is that much of the preaching and teaching done today yet echoes those same words, "Show my people their sins and their transgressions."

In 2 Corinthians, we are told man becomes a new creature in Christ. If we are new creatures--and we are--then it stands to reason that we need a new message.

Scripture tells us in 2 Corinthians, that God has reconciled us to himself. As New Testament teachers we shouldn't focus on telling the Church how ungodly they are acting or beating the people over their

heads about sin, constantly pointing out what they are doing wrong. This approach will never bring us into his presence or manifest growth. In fact, this was the strategy of the Old Testament preachers, to magnify sin that it might become overwhelming and that it might be seen in its ugly reality.

We must nurture the new man with a new formula, "the ministry of the spirit" Also in 2 Corinthians, Chapters 3-5, Paul writes about the ministry of reconciliation. The Apostle points out first that God hath made us ministers of the New Testament; NOT of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter kills--in other words there is no growth in preaching the letter.

When we see and understand the spirit of the law, we then look to the Lord and depend on him for change. It makes no difference how much you preach about sin or even against sin; that preaching can never save--it can only cause blindness. "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ." (2 Corinthians 3:14) Causing the minds and hearts to focus on the Savior is necessary. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh:...yet now henceforth know we him no more." (2 Corinthians 5:16).

If we are to see and experience God's great deliverance in the Church, the old man of sin must become a past memory. Paul again points this out in Romans 6:6. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

We will cease to serve sin only when the body of sin is destroyed.

The body of sin refers to the memory of or the consciousness of sin. Throughout scripture the snake (serpent) has been the symbol of sin. If you've ever seen a snake when it was killed or its head cut off you realize that it is dead (it has no real power), although its body yet moves--often in excess of an hour. Likewise, the blow of the Son of God has crushed Satan's head. In truth God has judged him. It requires faith in the finished work of Christ to believe like this--not looking on the outside at motions of the flesh, but knowing what has taken place on the inside. It is then, we will begin to move mountains with the faith of God.

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, (as scripture

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states) let us go on unto perfection. It's going to take New Testament preaching and teaching of the word of God to move up to the place of our mark in Christ . I am not encouraging anyone to do anything that's ungodly-but showing you God's way out of sin. Continually pointing out faults, problems, sins, and the like serve only to frustrate and undermined our attempt for growth. This is not necessarily the easiest thing to do (changing the way we speak about one another). We have only the word of God as our road map; but his word is enough, for the word of God is alive (living) and abides forever (has always been).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass THE GLORY OF THE LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
2 Corinthians 3:18

It is clear from this scripture that the plan of God is to change us--even on the outside. That change will take place when we are focused on the glory of the Lord. Why do we need to focus? Because a picture is being taken and that picture is being developed in our spirits. At this very moment we are in God. In him is no darkness at all. We have been positioned in God's light.

In conclusion, I believe one of the most powerful scriptures we have concerning his glory is found in 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, *"Therefore, if any man be in Christ (born again) he is a new creature: old things are passed away (gone); behold all things (not some things) are become new. All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us ministry of reconciliation."* †

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