

The blood of Jesus/Yeshua cleanses from ALL sin!

This is a salient gospel truth the Apostle John is sharing with us in his first pastoral letter. Jesus came to save sinners! And who would have brought this consolation to our attention, but our precious and beloved Apostle Paul himself having been regarded by so many of his contemporaries as the worse of all sinners! Yet, in the eyes of Jesus Paul was precious for after He had brought him to the Cross, Paul was a NEW man in Christ! We can just consult his letters and we will be able to sense his lifelong thankfulness of heart, bringing in remembrance the great and immeasurable grace of God!

However, one thing I have found among Christians is that many of them don't really take confession of sin seriously. They would for instance glibly refer to sins that have already been confessed and which are supposed to have been washed away by the shed blood of the Lamb, as though those sins are still well in place. That is, pertaining of course to somebody who has confessed his or her sins (the confessant) and who has then indeed broken with his or her old ways. There is also clearly a sinful lifestyle over against a sin somebody has temporarily lapsed into or perhaps better described as "circumstantial", and there is therefore a difference in the degree or measure of the sins we succumb to. Was it for instance habitual or not?

Now, what this boils down to is that, should we keep the record of sin against somebody, we are opening ourselves up to that very same sin as the slate of the sinner confessing his or her sin, was cleansed by Jesus himself. And because we are condemning that person who has done the proper thing, namely to have confessed his or her trespasses boldly and openly - that is meaning in the company of others and not only confessing quietly between God and themselves, something many, many are apt doing - we ourselves are trespassing/sinning as the sins of the confessant have already been nullified by Jesus! Surely, Jesus did not mean that once we have confessed a trespass, that that sin must remain a stumbling block in our lives and loading us with guilt feelings forever! Didn't He come for this very purpose, namely to make us whole, to help us overcome sin?

Shouldn't our eyes then be on the Cross and not on the sins of the one who has properly confessed, i.e. in conformance with God's prescriptions? Why probe the lives of the blood-washed as if they are still guilty? Isn't Jesus/Yeshua our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Deliverer? Didn't He die on the Cross to set man free from the bondage of satan who is the destroyer of souls and who is then that evil one who will do his utmost to lead us astray and especially should we as bloodwashed harper on sins that had been overcome through the grace of God (Acts 10)? Besides, who can fight and overcome satan by himself and in his own strength? Wasn't Jesus/Yeshua the One sent by God the Father to perfect us through His shed blood?

And this is then something we must take well to heart for nothing can be so detrimental as reminding somebody constantly of his/her "previous" lifestyle or of a trespass sometimes committed because the confessant was either tempted by satan or who has then succumbed to the type of situation that those who are so quick to condemn, would perhaps themselves have fallen into, boots and all, had they too been in that very same situation. [And how many Christians "undermine" their fellows in Christ, which is nothing but mind power and which is then used by satan to destroy their target's peace of mind?]

Now, does not Jesus also weigh our circumstances in His balances - that is when He observes a situation, also somebody struggling to survive in a difficult situation? Do we ever think of Jesus' place in the life of the sinner, that is when we are so quick to judge? Can a person perhaps become despondent and sinful just because of loneliness, weakness of the flesh, peer pressure, unanswered prayers - which can be a factor should a definite change in circumstance not set in timely! Doesn't Jesus know that insecurity, fear, social isolation, unhappiness, rejection and especially having no money to change one's drab lifestyle, can destroy one's proper standing in the Lord? Can one really condemn a child who steals a bread because he is poor and hungry, and especially with the purpose of sharing it with his destitute sister or brother? Doesn't Jesus/Yeshua know that we are vulnerable to frustration and that, should a situation become unbearable to us, we may fly off-handle? (I think we should never approve sin but what I mean is that we must be merciful and compassionate like Jesus who was always taking the holistic whole into account, e.g. the woman caught in adultery).

Now doesn't Jesus/Yeshua know our personalities and our traits and that some "good" souls may also be prone to, e.g., a hot temper, venting their anger when the going gets tough? Doesn't He see behind the screen, full knowing our struggles and onslaughts and that not every person experiences things the same way? And isn't His omniscience indeed making Him such a wonderful Saviour and Friend? Indeed a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Psalms)!

So, will He not forgive us if we call upon Him for courage and help, confessing our sins and especially our sin of unbelief? Wasn't He himself tempted and doesn't He too know the subtle strategies of the enemy of our souls? That satan is always ready to floor us and especially when our situation changes from bad to worse?

Doesn't Jesus know us and that our circumstances can indeed have a deep effect on our lives and especially on our actions and reactions? Will He ever condemn someone whose life has completely gone out of control or, e.g., a woman who is compelled to leave her husband because he is assaulting her cruelly and all the time? How many "Christian" women are compelled to remain in an abusive marriage just because it is taught that they must forgive and forget all the time and as though they have no marital rights? Didn't the Apostle Paul give a solid directive, namely that a husband must love his wife AS Christ loves the Church? (Just think of Jesus and His depth of feeling for each member of His flock and you will understand Paul's wisdom and directive. The reverse can of course also be applied but because women are regarded as the weaker sex, surely this rule of thumb is indeed very appropriate).

The big question is : Doesn't Jesus have mercy also on those who are suffering? Of course He does!

Fact is, we all have sinned at one or other stage in our lives and this is something Paul of Tarsus boldly states: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save SINNERS (1 Tim. 1.15) and then, so true to Paul's honest and transparent lifestyle, i.e. after his Damascus Road experience, going on to admit that he regarded himself as the worse sinner of all! Needless to say, Paul was always reminded by the false brothers, those who were so bent on projecting a "pious" lifestyle, of his previous sinful ways! Had Paul then not so firmly believed that he was forgiven by Jesus, I am sure he would have phased out quickly, leaving the gospel scene as fast as he could. But luckily he did not take notice of those sinners(!) who had made "sin" their main conversation in stead of looking to the Cross where sin was completely atoned for! And especially pertaining to believers who are walking the way of the Lord.

Bringing somebody's faults and failures of the past forever up in conversation, is then something God abhors for it was for this very purpose that He sent His Son into the world, "...born of a woman, born under the Law" - the Law and all its works that could indeed not save the sinner (Gal. 4). For this cause God loved us so much that, in order to release us/set us COMPLETELY free from the bondage and the power of sin, He was even prepared to sent His precious and only Son - the sinless Christ (Heb. 4) - to a cruel Cross and so that all who want to come to this Fountain of Life, could be saved, could be washed, could be spiritually cleansed once and for all. There is and was then indeed a balm of Gilead that could save every desperate soul in and through the precious shed blood of Jesus/Yeshua!

A Christian woman (I think it was Corrie Ten Boom) once remarked that once somebody has confessed his or her sin, that sin is under the blood of Jesus and "no fishing is allowed"! Why? This is Jesus' area for He is the Redeemer of the world who came to SAVE sinners from their heavy load of guilt and shame. Not intending, however, to forgive forever but to equip the sinner with a new mind-set!

It seems that somebody who has tasted the power of sin, can be used better by the Lord than somebody who is sanctimoniously pretending to have never succumbed to sin! The sinner who has tasted disobedience to God, is also better equipped once the taste of redemption has been properly applied to such a life.

Remember that confession of sin is a necessity, i.e. according to the Word of God (1 Jn .1.9). This way, we are crucifying our flesh and we are empowered by God, through His Spirit, to walk away from our sinful lifestyles. Some also profusely succumb to sin whereas others lapse into sin in a more "modest" way, if I could put it this way - being less brazen and then more moderate in their trespassing. Some will freely hop from one

bed to the other (an adulterer in the true sense of the word) whereas others may enter into a pre-marital relationship only once and never again (the latter is not treated the same way, i.e. Biblically, as the adulterer who goes on sinning, trying out one partner after the other before settling "nicely" down in marriage. And the married partner living in adultery, is indeed sinning on an ongoing basis, not only against God but especially against his wife who often has to grin and bear it, and more than often, in a strange and weird way, patted on the shoulder by "Christians" as though forgiveness is an automated button the sufferer just has to apply without complaint!

But should such hardened adulterer break with his/her sins, accepting responsibility for his sinful lifestyle, confessing sin properly in the hearing of two or three witnesses, then surely even such a sinner will be forgiven too (1 Jn 5.7-9). For the principal forgiver remains that One who died on Calvary! [Admitting our sins, is the first step towards sanctification].

Once the sinner has confessed, NOBODY is allowed to keep that record as though that person is still living in the very same sin he was enmeshed in previously! Paul clearly draws the line between what the Colossians were previously and what they later had become in Christ! (Col. 3).

Coming back again to Paul: Although Paul regarded himself as the worse of all sinners (he persecuted the Church cruelly before his conversion) we never encounter him in his epistles as apologetically making excuses for his previous lifestyle. In fact, we never hear from his lips anything concerning the life he had lived before his Damascus experience, i.e. concerning his own family, his marriage (?) as a young man according to some source - the cause of her death is unknown but many died giving birth to a child. All we hear from him is that he was blameless in his pursuance of the Law. But why this silence generally? Because Paul concerned himself with his new life and lifestyle in Jesus Christ! He was a new creation indeed! He therefore did not regard it necessary to keep old outdated pages still in place!

Let this then be a lesson to all of us, especially those who are so quick to condemn. Once we accept Jesus/Yeshua we are a TOTALLY new creation in Jesus. And because we are a new creation in Him, only the life we live for Him NOW counts! (Paul to the Galatians).

Have a wonderful, guilt-free day in Jesus Christ who came to save you and to forgive your trespasses, giving you and me the taste and experience of the wonderful gift of Calvary's saving grace!

And last but not least: There are Christians who habitually participate in gossip also slander. Remember that slander is demonic and that it is directly linked to satan as it brings division. Those who therefore make a habit of participating in this evil practice are not part of the Body of Jesus and they will have no share when Jesus comes back rewarding the faithful. This is a Biblical stance.

Comment added on 2014/08/11:

Note that sin can never be condoned and believers in the resurrected Jesus/Yeshua must not only participate in the confession of sin, i.e. according to the apostolic directives, but they must also rectify their lives properly, breaking with sinful ways and conduct. Marriage is also to be honoured, as this is the cornerstone on which a healthy family life and lifestyle is based. Confessing Christians, laying claim to Biblical values, and who are practising pre-marital sex on an ongoing basis must either get married or get out of this type of relationship, should an intimate relationship not lead to tying the marital bond properly. Christianity and the Christian walk is always based on Scripture and its particular prescriptions. God knows best for us and for this very reason we should know that we must honour and respect whatever He has prescribed for us. And those Christians who remain unmarried for one or other reason also has self-worth and they too must be respected for what they are and especially what they are doing for the Lord - i.e. dedicating their lives to God as Paul pertinently gives directives in his letters. In true apostolic fashion our Christian walk is about Jesus and dedicating our lives to him, be we unmarried or married, as long as we live by faith in the Son of God, doing what God demands of us

in the love of Christ our Lord. Fact is, whether we modern Christians like it or not, we are called to "holy living" and this is something many claiming faith in Jesus don't really understand properly, however, should we open ourselves up to the early Church's value system, we will see a clear difference between believers in Jesus over against those who belonged to the world, those who were saved and those who were not. And this approach revolves around a New Testament concept we must probe for ourselves, namely "holiness" (=not to be part and parcel of the world but to separate ourselves and committing/dedicating our lives to Christ our Saviour). This type of repentant lifestyle calls for personal conviction and being led by the Spirit of God, and it can therefore not be imposed on those who are not spiritually mature. As we grow in faith and love for Christ, tasting the "deeper" walk with Him, we will progressively move closer to Jesus and His prescriptions for us!

Ester Blomerus

www.housealtarnetwork.com

August 5, 2014