



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

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“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”

Colossians 2:8 NASB

Dearly Beloved,

As you receive this *Letter of Faith*, the vitally important elections for the Congressional and Senatorial bodies of our governance will be complete. For each of us who have been prayerfully paying attention to the people and positions being competed for, there is bound to be some rejoicing and some grieving over the results. For all of us there has been an inordinate expenditure of intellectual, emotional, physical, and even financial energy over these past few months. This makes the warning words in the lead scripture very pertinent because it is so easy, in the heat of the moment, to *get caught up in a good cause* and forget to check with God, through prayer, to hear what He thinks of the idea!

The contradictions of spirituality and unsanctified carnal ambition or ungodly human compassion are the characteristics of the continuing historical confrontations between Causes and Christ.

For example, in 1787, when the authoritarian American Methodist superintendent, Francis Asbury, decided to bestow the title of Bishop on himself, John Wesley personally reprimanded him, writing: “How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called a Bishop? I shudder, I start, at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content, but they shall never by my consent call me a bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this!”

But Asbury didn't, and Methodism continued to increase its emphasis on the “Cause of Church Structure” instead of on Christ. Where in the Scriptures do we see church organizational structure a driving Cause for the Church rather than Christ?

A young firebrand named Saul was incensed with his fellow faithful Israelites who would not conform to the Sanhedrin's edicts against the upstart maverick Jesus, and became a one-man avenger—a Jewish Rambo—dedicated to eradicating this apostate sect. As you remember, God had to personally blind Saul with His Shekinah Glory to get his attention to Whom he was really opposing! From the midst of His glory, Jesus said to him, “Why are you persecuting Me, Saul?”

Ooops!

Then the scales fell from his mind and he comprehended the truth—he had met The Truth in Person! But there were still scales on his eyes until Ananias came to heal him and to tell him what God wanted him to do to serve his Lord and God, and the price of suffering he would pay in doing it. Then his eyes were opened, and he was able to see the full truth. From that time forth, Saul/Paul's one and only Cause was Christ!

The earliest church, founded on the Apostles' teaching, was focused on righteous daily living, loving personal relationships, and other demonstrations of the Life of the risen Lord Jesus. Their teachings and personal demonstrations of Christ's messages of Life in Him focused on experiential living relationships with God as Father, with Jesus as Lord, with the Holy Spirit as the ever-present, indwelling, and empowering One; and on pure and real and loving relationships between husbands and wives, between parents and their children, between friends, and between masters and their slaves (employers and their employees).

Jesus' teachings and the Apostolic writers concerned themselves primarily with moral issues, with issues of sin in practical daily living, with emphasis on healing, deliverance, and consistent, Godly social behavior as a witness of the agapé love of the indwelling, living Lord Jesus to the world's suffering unconverted.

There were no such things as spiritual grandchildren. Christ born within men and women by the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit was the only evidence of becoming a Christian. But the Pharisaical spirit still prowled about this earth looking for unsuspecting Christians to devour through which they could manifest their harsh and controlling **"traditions of men."** Counterfeit Church Causes can be traced down through the centuries by the path of blood they have left that has not only divided Christians from one another, but from the God they thought they were serving by destroying the lives or reputations of other believers who didn't agree with them: especially those "extremists" who had tasted the new freedom and life in Jesus Christ! Their unbending and unloving heathen-like behavior has turned unbelievers away from Jesus for centuries. And unrighteous behavior toward fellow saints is the greatest reason that so many Christians are not regularly attending any gathering or church meetings today.

Church history is unfortunately full of situations where ungodly behavior was perpetrated in the Cause of preserving true Christianity while actually dividing and defiling true Christian principles.

Zwingli and Luther, both mighty men of God and the Scriptures, could not agree on just one of fifteen points of theology, and bitterly split from each other in 1529. Their divisive disagreement was over a nuance of the nature of the bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper. Although they both rejected the error of transubstantiation, Luther held to the literalness of Jesus' words, "This is My body... this is My blood," while Zwingli held that the bread and the wine were only symbols which remind us of Christ's flesh and blood.

Defending the rightness of their particular theological "jewel" became a more important Cause to them than their God-ordained calls of the reconciliation and fellowship of the Saints and the re-presentation of Jesus. They each drew large crowds after themselves who all got snared by the same contentions, so a

contentious Cause became more important to them than unity in the Spirit among the saints and even Christ Himself.

Today we must beware of the spiritual pressures attempting to lead us to pursue a political Cause instead of a Vision of Christ; a theological mini-point instead of the Holy Spirit anointing; or a personal revelation instead of God's manifest grace and mercy and power as being proclaimed by increasing numbers of ministries today.

For example, how Christians respond socially or politically today to the sin of murder (abortion) should be a matter of personal conscience before God that is prayerfully based on His Holy Spirit-ignited scripture in your heart. We must make a clear distinction between government commanding us to do evil and laws that only permit us to do evil. If any Christian is commanded to do evil, he must disobey or face and deal with the consequences of sin. (James 4:17- **“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”**) However there is no Biblical precedent for so-called “civil disobedience” because in the Kingdom of God, the end never justifies the means. May we point out that in both Old and New Testaments the accepted cause for disobedience to governmental edicts is the forbiddance of private prayer and fasting and public preaching of the Word of God, the gospel—period!

In the last quarter of the 1700's, there was a powerful move of the Holy Spirit in Great Britain and many people were changed radically by becoming reborn of the Spirit. One of the outstanding godly leaders of this movement was named William Wilberforce, a member of the ruling social class and a member of parliament.

A small, kind man with the heart of a lion, he literally almost singlehandedly persuaded his fellow colleagues one by one over many years to vote to restrict Great Britain's buying and selling of slaves, and then banishing the use of slaves altogether in England and all of her colonies.

He did it by the leading of the Holy Spirit; wise step by wise step of gentle, but firm, persuasion.

Many gave their lives to the Lord in the process and became as convinced as he was that all mankind should be free. England was spared the wrenching and ripping apart of their nation in a bloody civil war like we suffered here in the United States that cost over 625,000 American lives—that's more than the combined American death toll of World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam.

Here we have a great example of a saint of God pursuing a “political” Cause established by Christ that seemed to be taking the place of devotion to Christ, but was in fact promulgating a deep desire in the heart of Christ for His people all over this globe. Wilberforce, like the Apostle Paul, had a zeal for a Cause that was truly a Vision from God.

So Beloved, as we consider the course ahead of us for our great country and our part in directing and/or correcting that course, let us consider carefully whether we are pursuing just a Cause, or a Vision from our risen Christ. Vision is a Cause ordained by Christ! When God ordains a Cause we are to promote, we are honor-bound to give it our all, just as the righteous founders of our country pursued with total dedication the governance Vision given them. But if the Cause we commit to is

spiritually misguided like some I have mentioned above, we may well find ourselves actually opposing the sovereign Vision of God.

Let us all recommit to a prayerful reappraisal of the righteousness of the Causes we are pursuing and committed to “in Jesus’ Name,” and then let us align ourselves with other of God’s people who perceive the same truths we have discovered or rediscovered. Then by God’s grace we must give our all for those Visions that are the Causes Christ assigns us to pursue until the final victory of Jesus is fully manifested here on earth as it is in Heaven.

Hugs,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul & Gretel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.