

## **The Burden of Proof vs. Mercy**

### **Wednesday: August 17, 2016**

At one point or another, if you have ever followed any type of high profile criminal cases, you have heard the term "the burden of proof is on the prosecution". This means it is the responsibility of the accusing party to prove the defending party's guilt beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt. Don't worry, I am not going to get into specific cases or go as far to discuss the difference in civil cases. The Lord gave me a very specific message that, with the help and leading of Holy Spirit, I will convey as best as I can. He hit me with it and it ran deep and I pray it does with everyone reading this.

When the Lord gave me this word, He hit me with these words: "Which side are you on? Are you siding with Me or with the accuser of the brethren?" You can imagine my grief when I realized I have been siding with the accuser in certain things. Do not misunderstand this message. I personally believe we are called to judge situations with the eyes of Jesus and the Spirit of God but sometimes that judgment turns to blame and accusations. When I say I believe we are called to judge situations, I mean just that, situations; not people. I often find myself judging people instead of the situations. When we get into judging the people within a situation that is when we change sides and become part of the opposition, in the enemy's camp, without realizing it.

Let us go into our imaginations and play out a scenario. Place yourself in the position of the defendant. Jesus, our Lord, our Savior, our friend, our brother, is your defending lawyer (**1 Timothy 2:5**). In this scenario you are guilty. The accusations coming against you are true. The prosecutor, which is satan (the enemy), has all the evidence to fully condemn you. The prosecutor brings character witnesses against you to prove to the court your guilt. Your defense lawyer, Jesus Christ, shows that you have repented of your actions and that your debt has already been paid (**Romans 5:9**). He asks for mercy from the Judge (God the Father). Mercy is granted to you from the Court with the stipulation to not continue with participating in this crime.

Now, place someone else in that exact situation. How many times have we been one of the character witnesses called forth by the prosecution? How many times have we played right into the hands

of the prosecutor to bring condemnation upon someone? Judge the sin not the sinner.

**Romans 3:23-26** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

By no means does this mean we have to continue to stay around a situation. If someone is being used by the enemy (whether they know it or not); if someone is being deceived by a false spirit (whether they know it or not); it doesn't mean we have to stand in agreement with them, no matter how convincing they may sound or how much they give us scripture. The devil knows the letter of the law better than any of us but he does not understand the Spirit of the law.

The next time any of us find ourselves either wanting to or actually accusing a brother or sister of doing something against God let's think of the following; better yet let us ask our Lord Himself the following. How would You, Jesus, defend the person and mediate the situation? How would You, Righteous Judge, God our Father, judge the person and the situation with Jesus as the Mediator? Are we being used as character witnesses to bring forth and prove the accusations against our brother or sister (which includes those not yet in the Kingdom)? I urge all of us to read **Matthew 18:23-35**. This parable is from the mouth of the One that sits at the right hand of God and intercedes for us (**Romans 8:34**).

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*Father, forgive me for the times I have come against You by coming against Your children. Forgive me, Father, for the times I was being used as an advocate for the enemy. Continue to show me, Holy Spirit, where I am going against God and His will. Thank You, Father of Heaven and Earth, for The Way, Jesus Christ. Thank You, Jesus, for the blood You shed to reconcile me back to The Father's heart. Thank You, God, for Your mercy and forgiveness. Help me to choose to forgive others in every circumstance just as You have forgiven me. In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen!*