



Infants in Christ.

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Infants in Christ.

All Christians are called to be a good testimony to God, to the name of Jesus and before others, but in reality, we do not always live up to this calling. Does this mean that those who are failing to live up to this calling are not saved, or does it mean that those who are saved will have their salvation taken away? To find an answer, this article looks at how Paul dealt with the ungodly behaviour in the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. 3:1-15). In the Corinthian church Paul is speaking to brothers and sisters in Christ who he wanted to feed with solid food, but tells them he can only give them milk, because they are infant Christians acting in a human way (babies feed on milk). These infant Christians were not ready for solid food, but what was it that was stopping them, why were they not ready for spiritual food, what did they need to do to be ready and to be Spiritual?

SOME MIGHT ASK, "WHAT IS SOLID FOOD AND WHAT IS MILK?"

Milk refers to teachings regarding Christian behaviour, while solid food refers to teachings regarding the Scriptures, prophecies and doctrines etc. The important thing to note is that both those on milk and those on solid food are saved. Milk is not about salvation, but about being a good testimony to God, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to others. It is about treating other humans with kindness, compassion and love. It is called milk because treating others with kindness, compassion and love is basic common sense even those in the secular world generally know that it is the right thing to do. Christians especially should not need to be taught how to live, but unfortunately many of us do.

Paul referred to the Corinthian Christians as people of the flesh infants acting in a human way, because there was jealousy, strife and the exaltation of their leaders. He says, while these things existed, they cannot be Spiritual. This shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that being spiritual in this context is about behaviour, it is about living in grace, kindness, forgiveness, mercy, compassion and love, it is about caring and showing compassion and putting others before our own selfish goals and ambitions. Jesus said, the Ten Commandments can be summed up in the words Love God and love thy neighbour as thyself (Matt. 22:37-39) (Mark 12:28-31) in the New Testament it is called the Royal Law (James 2:8). This shows that after loving God and the Lord Jesus Christ the next most important thing to God's heart is loving humans, which simply means doing good to others. Should anyone this this statement is not true, consider the following words of Jesus:

- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

When talking to the Corinthian Christians Paul likens the present Kingdom of God to a building whose foundation is Jesus Christ, and everyone else who believes in him is building on this foundation. A building may have many walls, stories, rooms etc., but it can only have one foundation. Carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, painters, landscapers and labourers all work to complete the building, and decorators spend their time enhancing and beautifying it. If the carpenters put inferior timber in the building, or the bricklayers, plumbers, painters and landscapers do a shoddy job and the decorators use damaged furniture, the building will still be finished and still function, but it will not be as perfect as it could have been. Nevertheless, all who worked on it are still part of the team, howbeit not as skilled as some. There are many different skills and talents needed to complete a building. Whoever has tried erecting any building soon realizes that not everyone involved in the construction is able to achieve the same quality of work, even so everyone who has been involved in erecting the building on the foundation are all part of the same group and will receive

wages accordingly, so the construction of a building is a perfect picture of the church and the global body of Christ. Everyone in the assembly of a church comes from different, backgrounds, families, cultures and customs. Many have pre-conceived ideas and teachings, some will have an advantage over others because of their childhood or the environment they have been raised in, nevertheless everyone who has been involved in building the church on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ are part of his body and will receive rewards accordingly.

NOTE: don't make the mistake of limiting the church to only the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings, they may be a part of the body of Christ but they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives. God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth.

Paul warns: let each one take care how they build upon the foundation (Jesus Christ) because if anyone builds on the foundation without taking care in what they are doing, when the skilled master builder inspects the building, he is going to notice the work each one has done (good and bad). Even so all who helped in the construction of the building will still receive their wages (salvation) even though they may have put a wall in the wrong place, or left a window out, or painted a room the wrong colour, but they will miss out on the bonus's they could have received.

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward (1 Corinthians 3:11-14).

NO ONE NEEDS TO BE A WALKING BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA TO BE SAVED TO ETERNAL LIFE

Not every doctrine or teaching in the Bible is necessary to know for a person to be saved. A large amount of Scripture simply explains OT history. Some verses are about how Christians should live in the world or behave in the church. Much of the Bible tells us what happens when people die and a great deal of Scripture is plainly used to prove that Jesus is who he says he is. Some verses give signs of the end of the age and the return of Christ while a vast amount of the New Testament is about how we should live and treat other humans.

THE GOSPEL

Salvation is about believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, recognising that one falls short of God's Glory and absolute Holiness. It is about repentance, baptism and abiding in the faith. Throughout the entire history of mankind there has only been one man who has ever been able to attain to God's perfect standard. Salvation is recognising this reality, repenting before God and accepting His foreordained plan of salvation. Salvation is about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, looking forward to his return and being raised to eternal glory.

INFANT CHRISTIANS

Paul when speaking to the Corinthians Christians does not say they are not in Christ or saved because of their poor behaviour. In his mind he sees them as saved, but though they have faith in Jesus they are living in a human way rather than in the Spirit (gentleness, mercy, grace, kindness, forgiveness, compassion and love etc.). Paul calls them infant Christians and people of the flesh acting in a human way rather than people of the Spirit, nevertheless even though they are acting in a human way they are still saved, because their foundation is Christ, but if they do not learn to live in the Spirit they will suffer loss. Living in the Spirit in this context means, treating others with decency and respect and kindness, grace, mercy, compassion, forgiveness and love etc.

REASONS CHRISTIANS AIM TO KEEP THE LAW

Christian are not called to keep the law so that they add to their salvation to complete or maintain it since we are all saved by faith not works. They are called to keep the law because it is the right and loving thing to do. The spirit behind the law is love, because each law protects a human being from harm the Bible says, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" this is because love does no wrong to a neighbour (Rom. 13:10). The spirit of the law is to protect, because each law protects an innocent human from harm (i.e., thou shalt not murder, steal, commit adultery etc.). Christians aim to keep the law so they walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, and it is the right and loving thing to do, it fulfils the Royal Law, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39) (Mark 12:28-31) (James 2:8) and the six Commandments concerning humanity. It brings a good testimony to the name of God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. Christians aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because they are saved. Everyone who belongs to Christ and understands the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ knows that righteousness that leads to salvation is granted as a pure and free gift of God to all who have faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ (Col 1:10).

LAW AND GRACE

The law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, but as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure. Law and grace go together, simply because the law without the Gospel is diagnosis without remedy, but the Gospel without law is only the Good News of salvation for people who don't believe they need it, because they have never heard the bad news of judgment. The law is not the Gospel, but the Gospel is not lawless (Rom. 3:19-20) (Eph. 2:13-22). (Author unknown).

SUMMARY

Infant Christians can be saved even though they act and behave in a human way, their poor behaviour does not mean they are not in Christ, but it does mean they are people of the flesh rather than people of the Spirit. (Gentleness, mercy, grace, kindness, forgiveness, compassion and love etc), nevertheless even though they are acting in a human way they will be saved, but will suffer loss of reward.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
