

DIFFERENT DRUM

by Tricia Berg

Wonder why I keep beating the same drum about how children of God should behave like it if they are serious (and not call themselves by His name if they're not - 2 Tim. 2:19)? Because in the Bible, God gave us a picture of what it means to belong to Jesus. When we are members of the Body of Christ, who is HOLY, then it is like our defiling Him when we sin deliberately. (Heb. 10:26-29) This is particularly true when we sin against our bodies (i.e. sexual immorality - any intimate physical relationship other than that in marriage between one man and one woman), because we are one Spirit with Him and He dwells IN us. (Eph. 5: 22-23, 1 Cor. 6:12-20, Col. 1:24-26) So committing those sins is actually profaning the temple where He dwells. Whoever is willing to defile and profane Christ and His temple does NOT love Him and apparently, does not even KNOW Him or they would understand how WRONG it is. (1 John 3:6, 1 Cor. 3:16-17) They would value His holiness, beauty, glory, honor and gift of eternal life MORE than the absolute GARBAGE this world has to offer, including temporary physical pleasures.

When we who believe live like the rest of the world, not caring about what pleases God, that is compared in the Bible to selling our inheritance rights for a bowl of soup like Esau did. (Heb. 12:14-17) This is not something to take lightly—not by a long shot! (1 Peter 4:17-18) We are told that to love the world is hostility toward God and it will jeopardize our glorious inheritance. (James 4:4, 1 John 2:15-17, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Gal. 5:19-21, Rev. 21:7-8, Rev. 22:10-21) Choosing to “fit in” amounts to loving ourselves and others more than God. (Matt. 10:37-39, 2 Tim. 3:12-13) That is not how we go about ensuring we will hear “well done, good and faithful servant” when He returns. (Matt. 24:26-25:46, John 12:25-26, John 14:2-3, 1 Thess. 4:16-17, 1 Cor. 15:51-52)

The Holy Spirit dwelling in believers has not always been the case—it's a profound mystery of this age regarding the Church (not an institution or building, but the gathering of all called out believers in, and followers of, Jesus.) (Eph. 3:6, Col. 1:18) We have received mercy and the opportunity to be grafted in to Israel's blessings due to their disobedience (for which most of them were “hardened of heart.”) There is a “full number of Gentiles” to come in and then God will “unblind” Israel. (Romans 11) So in other words this is a limited time offer—it ends when our personal time is up or when the full number of Gentiles comes in and Jesus returns (all of which only God knows when they will happen).

We have entered into the blessings of the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29, Col. 1, Heb. 1:6, Heb. 12:22-24), yet most of us don't treasure this unimaginably great inheritance enough to give up worthless "treasure" for a short time here on earth? If that's the case, then we will get what we deserve, which is at the least great loss of reward if we truly do believe (1Cor. 3:15) and at the worst, we will not end up where we thought we would if we are only pretending to believe, as though we could fool God. (Rev. 2:20-23) God is as He said He is in the Bible—we are NOT free to invent our own "improved" version of Him—one who "understands" why we "can't" stop committing our favorite sin, perhaps? Just know this—everyone is either FOR or AGAINST Jesus. (Matt. 12:30, 1 John 2:23)

Paul said we need to examine ourselves to see if we're even in the faith if sin still enslaves us. (2 Cor. 13:5, Romans 6) It's incredibly sad how many are deceived. (Jude 1:4, 2 Pet. 2:18-22) No wonder Jesus said it was a narrow gate to pass through. (Matt. 7:13-14) People just keep doing the same as has always been done (except that what is "acceptable" gets worse over time, snowballing), and doing the same as they see people around themselves doing, forgetting that Jesus said the broad path leads to destruction!

I wish when I beat this same drum over and over again, that everyone who needs to would hear it and the tune would get stuck in ALL of our heads until we actually sing along (heed the warnings, like those in Rev. 2-3). The Bible tells us to encourage one another in our walk with God—He knows it's not easy to go against the flow. (Heb. 10:24-25, Heb. 3:13, Titus 3:8, James 5:19-20, Matt. 5:14-16) This "song" (God's message to the Church) needs to stick with each of us throughout every day. It is so ironic that when we say we want to "march to the beat of a different drum," we mean focusing on ourselves as unique individuals—but that's the wrong kind of "different drum." God called us to die to our old sinful selves and live to Christ. (Gal. 2:20, Col. 3, 2Cor. 5:14-15, Rom. 6:6) That is the way to get off the broad path and onto the narrow one. That is the different drum to march to—not the one the deceived world marches to, but the one our Savior marched to.

The one who overcomes is the one who LOVES God more than themselves, enough to want what He wants and always choose His will and His way, no matter what. That is exactly what Jesus did, and He is our example to follow. (1 Peter. 2:21, 1 John 2:5-6) Jesus said if we love Him, we will obey. (John 14:15-21, John 15:10, 13-14) The Bible also says that the wonderful things He has prepared are for those who LOVE Him. (1 Cor. 2:9-10) Who couldn't love Jesus after He laid down His life for us? (John 10:14-18) Let's wake up and be ready to rejoice! (Rev. 3:1-3, Eph. 1:15-22, 2 Tim. 4:8, 1 John 2:28-29)

Therefore **be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness **must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.** Let there be **no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place,** but instead let there be **thanksgiving.** For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has **no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the **wrath of God** comes upon the sons of **disobedience.** Therefore **do not become partners with them;** for **at one time** you were darkness, **but now** you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light** (for the fruit of light is found in all that is **good and right and true**), and try to **discern** what is **pleasing to the Lord.** Take no part in the **unfruitful works of darkness,** but instead **expose** them. For it is **shameful** even to speak of the things that they do in **secret.** But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, **"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."** Look carefully then how you **walk,** not as unwise but as **wise, making the best use of the time,** because the days are **evil.** Therefore do not be **foolish,** but understand what the **will of the Lord** is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled with the Spirit,** addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord **with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything** to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of **reverence for Christ.** Ephesians 5:1-21

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