

God Is No Respector of Persons

When we hear about people afflicted with spiritual problems and addictions, we should feel sad that these have gotten such control in a person's life, and we should pray for them and pity them, not feel an aversion toward them. We could have ended up the same way, given their situation. Our attitude should be, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

The Lord tells us that our attitude and dealings with people who are ensnared in sin and addiction should be loving and kind, as we do our best to give them the Gospel and the truth, that they may be delivered: "The servant of the Lord must not strive (be quarrelsome or contentious); but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."¹

Making a hasty judgment of a situation or person or group of persons, based on something negative that you hear about them, is not wise, and is usually incorrect. God has given us a better way, and that is to love one another. In our dealings with others we must be very careful to "judge not according to outward appearance, but to judge righteous judgment."² If we respond to the first negative word about a situation or people by rejecting any possibility of there being any good in them, then we are certainly guilty of answering or judging a matter before we hear it in its entirety, and it will be a "folly and shame unto us."³

We should not let the sin negate our love for the sinner, for "love covers even the multitude of sins."⁴ We should not see the sin as all-encompassing. As the Bible says, "There is none righteous, no, not one,"⁵ and we need to see beyond the sins that all of us have to the good that all of us have. No one is all bad, and nothing is all negative, and we need to look for the good and the possibilities in people and situations.

Think about how we would go about leading people to the Lord. We try to lovingly woo them and look at them with eyes of love and possibility rather than railing at them about their sins that are separating them from God. We instead emphasize God's loving hand reaching out toward them to bridge that gap through His son, Jesus, who came "not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."⁶

It's important that we make that distinction between the sin and the sinner. We are to love the sinner even if we abhor their sin. And whether someone is black or white, Jew or Gentile, Buddhist, Hindu, or whatever, that has nothing to do with it. It's sin that the Lord doesn't like, not the race, color, or social status of the sinner, or even what kind of sin it is!

This same principle applies to criminals in the prisons where we minister. No matter how great their crime, Jesus will forgive it if they will just come to Him. He offers His love to "whosoever believeth in Him." They just have to receive it.

When you start putting more emphasis on damning the sin than loving the sinner, that's not a good sign. God does everything possible to love us into His kingdom first. What won you to Jesus? Was it seeing your sins exposed one by one and being told you were "a filthy rotten sinner"? Were you

belittled and criticized and condemned for all of the wrong you had done? Or were you told it didn't matter what you had done; there was a wonderful, loving Father who loved you so much that He was willing to pay any price—the greatest price of all—to make a place by His side for you in heaven, where you could be forever happy and at peace with Him. “God commendeth (demonstrates) His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”⁷

If people have to be free of their sins before we can love them, who will there be to love? If we start judging people on the basis of their sins, who is going to stand? “If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand.”⁸ We're all hopeless without God's love, and that's the only thing that can save us.

God loves all people equally

I feel very sad when I hear that some Christians look upon others as not being as good as they are.—Or when we give the impression to our children that we are better than others, instead of teaching them that God created all of these different people and He loves them all, and we have nothing to feel superior about.

God's great love and grace reaches out to all His creations the same, and He didn't make some that He loved less and others that He loved more. He didn't label the fair-skinned, blond-haired folks the most loved, and the yellow or brown or black-skinned less. And if we show a prejudicial, belittling, demeaning spirit toward others, it must hurt Him very much.

We are supposed to love all people the same. It is our belief that Jesus died and gave His life for all humankind. How could He give His life for the Jew and also for the Gentile and love one of them any less than the other?—When He has shown the very greatest love possible for both by dying for each one of them.

I love our Jewish friends as much as I love our Christian friends. I may not agree with or like the Jewish theology as much, but as people whom Jesus died for, I have as much of a desire for them to know Him as I do for our Gentile friends. My heart goes out to the Jews just as much, and even more so, because I know that it is usually harder for them to believe because of the teaching they have received.

The fact of the matter is that God loves all humankind equally, and gave His Son for each one.

When you're a parent, as your children come along you love each one to the fullest; you give each one the same. You give them all they need in the way of housing, warmth, clothing and attention. You put everything you can into each one according to their particular needs. You give your life over again for each one. And regardless of their differences, you love each one individually with as much love as you have to give.

But if some of those children happen to draw closer to you and go out of their way to please and obey you, you will probably reward that child or those children with extra appreciation and

gratitude for doing things that they didn't necessarily have to do, for going the extra mile in showing their love and appreciation for what you have done for them.

I have a feeling that this is the way the Lord is with all of His dedicated children who try to live for Him and sacrifice their lives for Him—He rewards them in a special way because of their love for Him. But generally speaking, it's not that He loves them more, because basically there wasn't anything more He could do than give His life, which He did, for each one of us. What greater love is there than that? But He gives special rewards to those who love Him.

But these special blessings and rewards that He bestows upon His obedient children should be distinguished from the love that God has for all His creations and the great yearning He has that they would all come to repentance and all be able to enjoy Him and His heavenly kingdom forever. Jesus died for them, and He wishes that all—each one of them—would come to repentance. He is not willing that any person should perish, no matter who they are or what their sins are.⁹

So how can we say, “This person must be so evil and sinful, and it's God's judgment on him that he's suffering; therefore, he deserves to die in his sins. He's too bad for God. God must not love him. After all, how could God have sent Jesus to die for him when he's so bad?” That's exactly who He died for!—Sinners. Including you and me.

Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.¹⁰ Those who are dying spiritually and even physically because of their sins are the most likely to accept His forgiveness. So how can we not answer the call of a lonely, sin-sick person, dying in their sin? Can we say that his or her sin is too great? God didn't. Can we say they are not deserving of God's love and forgiveness? God didn't.

Jesus said, “As My Father has sent Me, even so send I you.”¹¹ His Word says, “Christ left us an example, that we should follow His steps.”¹²

¹ 2 Timothy 2:24–26.

² John 7:24.

³ Proverbs 18:13.

⁴ 1 Peter 4:8.

⁵ Romans 3:10.

⁶ John 3:17.

⁷ Romans 5:8.

⁸ Psalm 130:3.

⁹ 2 Peter 3:9.

[10](#) Matthew 9:13.

[11](#) John 20:21.

[12](#) 1 Peter 2:21.