

ROBERT JENNINGS

"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due", Psalm 29:2

11.21.94

Dear Brother

Greetings to you. I come from Oelwein, IA, and so NE Iowa is dear to me, but only because of Christ, your Lord and mine. I moved to MO in 77 for the work whereunto God called me.

I read your article, "Nothing Less than All". I agree with the title and rejoice in your call to devotion to Christ. However, unless I am misunderstanding you, I would disagree with you on a basic matter. It appears that you are saying that one can be a Christian, a convert, and yet not be a disciple. I would say that all Christians are disciples. That is exactly what one must submit to in order to become a Christian. That is precisely why so "many" (Mtt.7.22) will find themselves to have been false professors on the great day of the Lord and be banished to hell. They never did "do the will" of the Father.

I used to think that the narrow way and the broad way signified Christians vs. the world. I think rather, it is talking about true vs. false Christians. Look at the context. Our Lord immediately talks about FALSE prophets, and then false professors as illustrated by the parable of the two builders-- both heard the word but only one acted (obeyed) on it.

Let me offer some more proofs:

- Lk.8.21: my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.
- 2Tm.2.19: the seal...let everyone who names...abstain from iniquity.
- Tt.1.16: they profess to know God but by their deeds they deny Him.
- Js.2.17: faith w'o works is dead. Even the demons tremble (but don't obey).
- 1Jn.2.4: the one who says "I have come to know Him" and does not keep His commandments is a liar.

Do I believe in works-salvation? Absolutely not. We are not saved on the basis of works, nevertheless, if one is truly saved, good works, holiness (Heb.12.14) and conformity to Christ will be the sure result. You CAN tell a tree by its fruit. Admittedly, not all have the same amount of fruit -- some 30, 60, 100 fold, but there will be distinguishable fruit.

Our acceptance with God is based on the merits of Another (Rom.5), regardless of personal performance or merit. It would appear then, that it does not matter how we live. No, says Paul, we (all true Christians) are wired up such that we are slaves to righteousness (Rom.6). Those in the New Covenant have the Law written on the mind and heart (Heb.8). He has put His Spirit in us and causes us to walk in His statutes (Eze.36.27). The children of God and the children of the devil are generally quite obvious (1Jn.3.8f).

I'll not weary you more though much more can be said. Forgive me if I have misunderstood you, but your statements like "The urgent need of our country is not for more Christians, but for more true disciples" sounds like you are teaching optional obedience for heaven. Remember Paul's warning: "do not be deceived, the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom" (the phrase occurs three times in the same context-- 1Cor.6, Ep.5, Ga.6). Most of the pulpits in our country ARE DECEIVED on this very thing, and because of this carnal Christianity our jails are full instead of our chapels. Over that I groan.

Please consider what I say. I would be glad to talk more.

Truly,

W. Pennington
pastor at Hwy. M Chapel

In every field of human thought and activity, accuracy is considered a virtue. To err ever so slightly is to invite serious loss, if not death. Only in religious thought is faithfulness to truth looked upon as a fault. Ukn.