

A Study in Self Denial: The Marks of a True Believer

Cinnamon Studies #301

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When an unregenerate person is birthed into a regenerate believer, certain things begin to be understood by the young follower of Christ. A believer will begin to understand that they have nothing good in them until Christ takes over their once darkened heart. The born again soul begins to realize that every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: **verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity**. Selah.

Psalm 39:5 KJV

Believers wrestle with dying to their self... to their sin... and it is a continual learning progression until our heart becomes whole again from its once darkened and alienated state from God.

Let us not forget how Paul groans and groans waiting until the outer man dies and the inner man is perfected and matured.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, **even we ourselves groan within ourselves**, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body

Romans 8:23 KJV

Self denial is something seldomly preached by pastors and elders in the church today, and it is an endless topic, requiring endlessly diligent effort

throughout the Walk as a believer. We will shed light on this prominent part of the gospel as much as we can.

Upon first glance, the Bible is full of offensive speech about ourselves. Churches today do not like talking about self denial because more people hate hearing it, while few people begin to rejoice in it. When we do read the Scriptures that are harder to hear, more abrasive or accusatory, we tend to think those are only written about and for unbelieving wicked people.

My friends, passages like this are for the believers, to which we need to remind and re-read them as often as possible, lest we puff ourselves up and start to worship ourselves over the Creator.

Do not be puffed up with pride. Tremble rather--for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you
Romans 11:21 KJV

Here is a verse from the old testament that we will look at regarding ourselves:

Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.
Ezekiel 36:31 KJV

As someone who is born again, who can relate to looking back at who they were and being absolutely mortified? We thought we knew it all, we thought we acted right, we thought we were better than the rest. Looking back at who I was makes me incredibly grateful and humble for how God is building me now.

Self is the idol to which all men naturally bow. You will hear thousands and thousands of self proclaimed followers of Christ to “follow your heart” or “I feel in my heart it must be true,” without realizing the idolization that comes with trusting yourself over the Word of God. Your feelings and thoughts have become your law without any real study in what the Word has to say about it.

But as Scripture says

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

Jeremiah 17:9

As Scripture tells us,

“Let God Be true and every man a liar”
Romans 3:4 KJV

The words of Jesus come from the Father via the Holy Spirit. The true Son speaks the true and faithful words of God and we show we know the Father by **hearing and believing** in those words.

“The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.”
Proverbs 20:12 KJV

His words are not the words of those who are preaching “another Jesus” and another gospel...

For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him
2 Corinthians 11:4 KJV

Many false believers in Christ will preach what is in their heart, speaking of **their own** Jesus. Satisfying themselves, hating the Word of God and preaching their own versions in substitution of it.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”
2 Timothy 4:3-5 KJV

When “the Truth” is talked about in the Bible, its precedent is always a definite article: “THE”, meaning there is **one** Truth. The Truth does not change, because God does not change.

I am the Lord, I change not.
Malachi 3:6 KJV

We're to become as children and deny ourselves in order to learn a new doctrine which is the true Word of God, which is rare to be taught in any churches.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;
Acts 17:24 KJV

Acts 17 starting at verse 18 is very interesting to note, and I encourage you to take a break and read that portion as well. In summary, Paul meets with philosophers and men of great religious status and they accuse Paul of worshipping some demon, (the word for "strange gods" in verse 18 is demon) because they have never heard what Paul is preaching in the synagogues or churches. It's referred to as new wine, new doctrine. A Word that has not been heard before, and once it is heard, believers turn right away and dive in deeper because they feel so consumed and filled with joy and wonder.

When we hear the Truth, we turn, and our old self slowly and painfully begins to die as we are birthed again. We become as little children relearning everything all over again. Unbelievers will reject the truth, and reject self-denial and begin to worship themselves.

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy”
2 Timothy 3:1-2 KJV

They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. **We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.**
1 John 4:5-6 KJV

He must increase but we must decrease as we are to lose our own church thoughts, traditions of man, and rituals in exchange for His Way. His testimony is from Heaven while the testimonies of earthly-minded men are from earth.

He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: **he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.**
John 3:30-36 KJV

We must be found in the Narrow Way at the hearing of His words, which is The Truth, and not go about defending our own "righteous" church works or beliefs in

opposition towards what we hear in the Word. We are to hear the truth of God and believe it, in contrast to the many false Christs currently out there being preached.

To believe in Him and His words is credited to us as righteousness.....the righteousness which is of God by faith.

“**And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness**, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”

Philippians 3:9 KJV

Without doubt, many false believers in the churches of mens doctrine will hear and not believe Him. They will reject what they hear as they will consider the “old” testimonies of earthly-minded men as better. They will choose their “another Jesus” rather than listen to the real Jesus of the Bible whose name (authority) they will not believe in.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Revelation 19:11-13

But blessed are those who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:9

We are to die to sin, our evil speaking of perverting the truth. We are to put to death our comfortability with our own thoughts, and instead keep His sacrifice (the Lamb...being conformable to His death) in our lives so that we may enter in to His understanding (the marriage supper).

The marriage supper of the lamb is food and drink that we never hunger and thirst again. Thy word is truth. The Lord says, my blood is drink of truth and my flesh is food of truth.

For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your

fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

John 6:55 - 58 KJV

Believers will receive something very different, and rare to find in today's world. We are flooded with preachers who wrest the Scriptures, teaching that which they are unqualified, teaching opinions and doctrines of men. Let us put to death our ways, and follow His forever.

That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, **when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God,** which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:12-16 KJV

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