

The Wednesday Word, December 6, 2023: The Gospel and the Believer - Part 3

“And He is before all things... (Colossians 1:17).

One of the great tragedies in many of our churches is that we take self-centred sinners and teach them how to be self-absorbed Christians. As already stated, (in parts one and two) we find that in many churches Christ has been dethroned. The believer now reigns supreme. In some places, we are witnessing the day and age of the decapitated church. Christ, the head of the Church, (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 1:22-23) has been all but expelled. The head has been chopped off. In all things, according to the Bible, Christ Jesus is to have the pre-eminence, but now that honour mistakenly goes to the believer.

But you say, things are fine, after all we have a lot of activity in our church! I'm sure you're right about there being activity! However, I remember as a small boy, in Ireland, standing in a farmyard and seeing a chicken getting its head cut off. Let me tell you, I've never seen such goings on. That headless chicken got up and ran and ran. There was a flurry of activity, but the chicken was dead. Activity, I learned, was not necessarily a proof of life. The church that refuses to be Christ-centred is dead while it has the appearance of action and life.

This is not to say that we Christians should not enjoy being saved or that we cannot have marvellous experiences of God as we realise the implications of the Gospel. Far from it! But the point is, we dare not put our condition and experiences on centre stage. If we are to be faithful, Christ Jesus must be given centre stage in His Church. What a terrible trade has been made. The glories of Christ have been exchanged for an exaggerated emphasis on the believer's condition. Gold has been replaced by brass! (*See 2 Chronicles 12:9-10*). Yet the glories of our Lord Jesus remain infinite and unchanging for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9).

No subject ought to be dearer to the heart of a believer than beholding and knowing the glory of the Lord Jesus ... and no subject can do the believer more spiritual good!

Consider Him!

He is the great saviour from sin.

He is our righteousness.

He is our substitute.

He is our representative.

He is the Lord.

He is the one in cosmic authority.

He is the only Mediator between God and man.

He is the Sovereign who became the servant.

He is the Eternal Word who always was and always will be.

He is Emmanuel, God with us.

He is the anointed one.

He is appointed and ordained of God for the salvation of His people.

He is the only reconciler between God and man.

He created all things.

He is the sustainer of all things.

He is all of this and more, much, much more.

Is it any wonder then that we are to occupy our time by looking unto Him? (Hebrews 12:2).

He is amazing!

There are 27 books in the New Testament, 23 of them mention Jesus in their first verse. Jesus is mentioned in the first verse of,

Matthew,

Mark,

John,

Acts,

Romans,

I and II Corinthians,

Galatians,

Ephesians,

Philippians,

Colossians,

I and II Thessalonians,

I and II Timothy,

Titus,

Philemon,

James,

I and II Peter,

I John,

Jude,

Revelation.

Even though the writer of Hebrews doesn't mention Jesus in his first verse, in verse 3 he goes straight into a wonderful dissertation about the Lord Jesus Christ.

In everything, He must have the pre-eminence.

And that's the Gospel Truth!