

OAK HILL MINISTRIES.ORG ■ 2115 GRAEFENBURG ROAD ■ LAWRENCEBURG, KY 40342
 JANUARY 12, 2006

“GIVING GOD OUR BEST”

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, - - -.”

(John 3:16)

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

(1 Peter 1: 18 & 19)

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

(1 Corinthians 6:19 & 20)

What more could God have done for you and for me? When God chose His only begotten Son, to offer as a sacrifice for our sins and to purchase us as His very own, did He not give to us “His best”? God, who is perfect, flawless and beyond human comprehension, entered into the human race, took on the form of man, and then spilled His own blood – God’s Blood – to purchase you and me! God offered us His best. He offered us Himself! Oh saints, should we not pause here and meditate on this spiritual truth, until it overwhelms us with a fresh awareness and deeper revelation of how great a price was paid for we mere mortals?

The highest price ever paid for anything, was God’s blood which bought you and me. I do not believe that we fully comprehend the magnitude of the “Price” (God’s Blood) that God paid to own us as His own personal possession. If we did, a lot of the shame and reproach that we, as Christians, are bringing upon His name, would stop. Instead of looking like, sounding like, and acting like the rest of the world, we would look like, sound like, and act like the One who we now so loosely refer to as our Lord – Jesus Christ. I say loosely because we deny Him as Lord, every time we set His word aside in favor of our own word, or that of another man. I heard a brother say recently that “Pastor knows best when it comes to spiritual matters.” This seems to be the prevailing belief among Christians today. Someone else, other than Jesus, knows best. May God have mercy!

Let me ask you, dear reader, who spilled their blood for “you”? Who was stripped naked, beaten to a pulp, mocked and spit upon for “you”? Who died a horrible death for “you”, in the blazing sun, with His blood matted hair swarming with flies? I ask you, dear reader, who? Was it me? Was it your pastor? Was it your priest, the pope, or your favorite Bible study leader? Who went through this hellish suffering to save your soul? Was it your wife, husband, daddy, your mother, your son or daughter? Did your very best friend in life hang on a cross for three agonizing hours while their life slowly dripped out of them – for “you”? “Of course not,” you say! “Jesus Christ died for me,” you say! Well if that is true, and Jesus Christ did, in fact, die for you, would you not owe Him, and Him alone, the best of what ever you had to give Him? Would you not owe Him the best of yourself? Is it unreasonable of God to expect His own to

give to Him their best? Paul didn't think so, when he wrote to God's people in Rome. Listen –

“ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

(Romans 12:1)

Does God, who declares that He never changes and is the same yesterday, today and forever (Malachi 3:6, Numbers 23:19, Hebrews 13:8) expect less from His sons and daughters today, than He did 500 – 1,000 or 4,000 years ago? Does He? Evidently most Christians believe that God has changed, and no longer requires of us what He required in days gone by. I can say that, without fear of contradiction, simply by observing our behavior, listening to many of our modern day Christian super stars, and reviewing the latest statistical data on what Christians say they believe. The evidence is undeniable. The vast majority of those who call themselves Born-again Christians do not reflect the likeness and image of Jesus Christ. They do not fear God, nor do they believe His word. They are convinced that God believes that they are O.K., maybe not perfect, but O.K. in His sight. After all they believe in Jesus, and that's all that matters. The false prophets abound, and “cheap grace” is the banner that covers us. Honey drips from the lips of the *Effeminate preacher* while the blood of the sheep drips from his hands. May God have mercy on us all!

The vast majority of we Christians today call God “our Father,” Jesus Christ “our Lord,” and claim that the Holy Spirit “lives within us”. Not only that, but we claim that the Bible is holy and that it is “the word of God”. The fact that we openly make these claims and at the same time divorce our mates at the same rate as do the Pagans – The fact that we make these claims with such confidence and at the same time display an unchecked lust for the things of the world as do the Pagans – The fact that we allow our mouths to make these claims while our hearts are void of any fear of God and our love of pleasure far exceeds our love of God – These facts confirm that the vast majority of Christians in the Western world today are – Liars!

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know him”, and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

(1 John 2:3 & 4)

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

(1 John 2:15)

“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent me.” (John 14:21 & 24)

Dear reader, we may fool ourselves into believing that all is well between God and those who call themselves His people. We may raise more and more money, build more and more buildings, hold more and more conferences, put on more elaborate Christian pageants, produce more and more videos, books, and teaching tapes – but know this! – God is not impressed, nor is

He fooled by such religious behavior. Never believe that just because we are well fed, well clothed, and well sheltered, that God through His silence, is well pleased with us. To those who may believe that we can make all the right confessions with our mouth and continue to reproduce the sin and corruption that we are currently reproducing, and not incur God's anger, God would say:

“These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes. Now consider this, you who forget God, Lest I tear you in pieces, And there be none to deliver:” (Psalm 50:21 & 22)

God demands that His sons and daughters obey Him. He demands it! He will not accept those whose heart does not desire to obey Him out of a love for Him, because of the price that He paid to own them as His own. He will not accept into heaven those whose mouth confesses Jesus Christ, while their heart is far from Him. Don't say we were not warned.

“Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” (Matthew 15:7-9)

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)

The scribes and Pharisees said all the right things and outwardly they did the right things. They had God's word, read it continually and declared their faith in it, just as many of us are doing today. We too say all the right things and outwardly we do what we believe are the right things. We dress up and show up at the appointed hour in our church. We tithe (at least, a lot of us do), we sing our songs, say our prayers, and even do a lot of good or charitable deeds, including mission trips. But like the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day, if our hearts are far from Him then we too worship Him in vain. And like those scribes and Pharisees of old, we too are reproducing after our own likeness and image. Our Lord addressed this problem when He was here in the flesh and His words still apply to us today. Here is what He had to say:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.” (Matthew 23:15)

These words of our Lord should shake us to our very spiritual foundation, and cause us to examine ourselves to see if we are truly in the faith, or if we are deceived (see 2 Corinthians 13:5). Sadly, the fact that most of us read these words and are unaffected, reveals our true spiritual state. I greatly fear that, for the most part, the Christian community has gone the way of the scribes and Pharisees of old, and are now making more and more sons and daughters of

hell. Deception is so strong today that, if possible, even the elect would be deceived into believing that God had changed, no longer requiring obedience to His word, and the denying of ones flesh, to be acceptable before Him (Matthew 24:23-26).

**“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”
(Proverbs 14:12)**

May God have mercy on us all and grant us the grace to examine our hearts through the holiness of His word, unfiltered by our own personal opinions or those of other men and women. Always remember – *“Just because we may believe something to be true, does not make it true.”* Only a fool would trust his or her own heart in these latter days. Heaven or hell awaits each of us. The stakes could not be higher. We have been warned that many of us have been called, but “few” of us will be chosen (Matthew 20:16 & 22:14). Our Lord made it clear and easily understood when He declared that the gate into heaven was very narrow and that everyone who called Him “Lord”, including those in ministry would not make it. In fact, Jesus indicated that many who called Him Lord would fail to enter heaven. Only the “few” who “do the will of God” will in the end make it. Please read it for yourself in Matthew 7:13-27.

I can imagine that many who read these words would be very discouraged. If that be the case with you, please allow me to offer you a word of encouragement. Our Father will never ask that we do anything that He is not willing to help us do. He only asks that we exercise our “free will” by choosing to agree with Him and believe Him! If we are truly “born again” sons or daughters, He will, by His indwelling spirit, enable us to do that which would otherwise be impossible to do (Zechariah 4:6, Philippians 4:13, John 15:5). We exercise our freedom of choice in favor of God, and that means embracing His word down to the last jot or tittle (Matthew 5:18). Father, then steps in to help His child, by confirming His word in and through that child. The key, dear reader, is your choice. God will not violate our freedom of choice. If we choose not to believe God’s word, for whatever the reason – any portion of His word – then we will suffer great loss (Matthew 4:4, Galatians 6:8). As we choose to accept as truth Fathers word, there will be temptation after temptation to turn away from God’s word in favor of human reasoning. Oswald Chambers said that there will be times when every thing in us will scream – “it’s a lie!” However, Father will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to “stand firm on His word.” He will not (1 Corinthians 10:13), Provided that we are soundly converted through spiritual rebirth. Always remember that the mark of spiritual rebirth is a love for God’s word in the heart and mind (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10, John 14:21 & 23). If that mark is not in the heart and mind, it is most likely that that person is not soundly converted, regardless of what they say. Father always encourages His own, even though at times He must severely discipline them (Hebrews 12:8).

We are now living in a time where it is critical that we choose to believe God and to obey His every command. Our very survival will depend on having our minds set on things of the Spirit rather than the things of the world (Colossians 3:1 & 2). Following the spiritual principles of God is not an option for those who desire to walk in His favor. One of those principles involves our offerings that we offer or give to Him. When I speak of “offerings”, I am not speaking of money alone. Offerings to God include, in addition to money, our worship, our praise, our prayers, our study of His word, our relationships within and without the Body of Christ. In fact, our offerings to God include all things in life that we do.

**“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)**

Have you ever considered what God’s attitude is toward His people when they fail to obey 1 Corinthians 10:31? Have you ever considered what God’s attitude is toward us when we offer to Him “less than our best”? Are you beginning to ask questions of “why”? as the dust of destruction piles up around us? If so, please be patient, as these questions will be answered in part two of this message.

God Bless,

Tom

P.S. Please visit our website at www.oakhillministries.org