

Conviction vs. Culture

Psalms 51:3 (KJV)

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

A necessary element that acts as a forerunner to regeneration is strangely absent in modern Christianity. This essential element has been labeled as politically incorrect in modern evangelical circles and thus stereotyped as abrasive, negative, and unnecessary. This missing element is what our scripturally correct early church fathers termed as "conviction".

Conviction is absolutely mandatory if true redemptive re-genesis is ever to be attained. All through the Word of God we find this attribute working deep within the human breast preparing it for the salvation experience. Shortly after the birth of the church at Pentecost we find the Apostle Peter standing before the great crowds preaching with passion as he was empowered by the Holy Spirit, laboring together with Him, bringing conviction upon their stubbornly wicked hearts.

We soon find these pernicious men pricked in their hearts, groveling underneath the weight of their sin crying: *men and brethren what shall we do?* Shortly thereafter three-thousand souls were gloriously born again. The cloven tongues of fire that blazed upon these tarrying few transformed them insomuch that the words that they directed towards their listeners seemed to be impregnated with a fiery divine presence that penetrated each sin bound heart revealing the depth of inner depravity.

This smiting revelatory work is termed as conviction. The Bible records that these men were pricked in their hearts. They were most miserable men inwardly because their depravity was revealed in light of God's righteous and perfection. Yet, their salvation was not possible without this deep inner work of preparatory grace. Before David was pardoned for his murderous crimes against God he acknowledged that his transgression and sin was ever before him.

Modern evangelicalism has stripped the preparatory tools necessary to secure regeneration right out of the hands of the Holy Ghost. It has become a culturally unpardonable sin to confront and reprimand sin from our pulpits for fear it may be unpalatable to our itchy-eared parishioners.

God's man behind the pulpit has sold his soul to the appeasement of congregational expectation. Hence, God's man is controlled by the degenerate appetites of man and not by the will and command of God.

The introduction and maintenance of this appetite driven theology has resulted in a tremendous chasm in true redemptive work! Beloved, our modern orthodoxy has stolen every fiery arrow of the Lord from the hands of His ministers based upon phantom cultural frailties. This suggests that our culture has developed within itself an inability or an unwillingness to face its own ugliness. Moreover our culture has perceived itself through the darkened lenses of degeneration being blinded to its inward spiritual malignancy. Yet, because of culturally created hypersensitivity, God's flaming ministers of fire are spurned because they have been commissioned to change these lenses and thereby illuminate the hidden atrocities hidden in their subject's hearts.

Multitudes of our modern pulpiteers have been reduced to mere puppets controlled by the expectations of perverted appetites. God's chosen men soon become enslaved to committees that have never come face to face with the Lamb of God. Therefore any attempt to allow Him ascendancy is voted down by apprehensive committees. This idealism has gained momentum within culturally refined Christendom but it has disrupted and contaminated the flow of divine life which once flowed freely towards the church. Modern Christianity rarely trods through the valley of the shadow of death, nor does it embrace the heart pricking conviction of the Holy Ghost simply because it is defies culturally defined etiquette.

David's heart felt plea: *"and be clear when thou judgest"* was an inward exposition of willingness to transcend the barriers of cultural etiquette and to commit himself to the raw judgments of God without reservation. We could learn from his example in an age of modernistic, culturally defined, pseudo Christianity. It would do us well to accept the Person as well as the work of the Holy Spirit. He has come to convict the world of sin! Our hyper-sensitive cultural etiquette must bow down to His sovereign will, hence committing ourselves to His judgments without reservation.

It is absolutely impossible to secure true salvation while evading the deep inner anguish of conviction. If God's men would wrap both hands around the two-edged Sword, cooperating with the Holy Spirit of God, resigned to endure all consequences associated with presenting scorching Truths and stir the hearts of the people, we would experience either a riot or a revival, but it would get us off the fence.

This generation is in need of clarity. We need an invasion of Holy Ghost pulpiteers that identify with the Prophet Nathan in declaring: *"You're the guilty man"*. The question is not will God be clear when He judges; but will we be clear to hear?

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