

The Immense Bigotry of the “Christian” Churches

Today – and All the Way Back to Jesus’ Disciples!

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One of the biggest problems with human nature is that we all want to be special! We all want to be better than someone else. And indeed we are special, but not in the way most people would like. We are ALL special, because we ALL are loved by God. We are ALL His children, those who are good and those who aren’t – at least they aren’t being “good” at the present time. Jesus has promised ALL of us that,

“He will never leave us or forsake us.” Hebrews 13:5

Jesus found this arrogant desire to be better than others, to be a serious problem, even with His own disciples. He constantly instructed them that everyone is equal in His eyes, but they never understood it - - until Pentecost.

Before Pentecost, even though Jesus’ disciples were with Him every day, they continued to desire “special status.”

1) The mother of James and John, asked Jesus if her sons could sit on his left and right.

Jesus said to her, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to take the suffering that I am about to take?” They said, “Yes, we are able.” He said to them, “You will suffer as I will suffer. But the places at My right side and at My left side are not Mine to give. Whoever My Father says will have those places.” Matt 20:22,23

Then Jesus said, “It is the UNBELIEVERS (mistranslated Gentiles) who lord it over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them. But it shall NOT be that way among you (Believers). But whosoever is great among you, let him be your servant (not “minister” as it is incorrectly translated in virtually ALL Bibles). Matt 20:25,26

Jesus is telling us that it is those who do NOT truly believe in Christ who lord it over each other, as is done in ALL churches. The “minister” is held up on a pedestal. That is NOT Christ’s way. He came to “serve, not to be served.” Matt 20:28

2) When Jesus was in Samaria and the Samaritans were not accepting of Him because He was headed toward Jerusalem, Jesus' disciples said, "Should we bring fire down from heaven to consume them?"

Jesus was horrified at their suggestion, and rebuked them saying:

"You know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:54-56

The Israelites hated the Samaritans because they were half-breeds: half Israelite and half of another pagan nationality. Jesus' disciples were anxious to KILL them because they wouldn't accept Jesus.

One more important point here is that Jesus rebuked His disciples for wanting to burn people alive – the very thing that Christians believe God will do to the wicked in the end.

And Jesus said that He had come to SAVE men's lives, NOT to destroy them. Why does the Christian Church think He will NOT be successful at saving all – and will instead have to DESTROY them – the very thing Jesus said He would NOT do!

3) Why was Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman at the well? The Israelites looked at the Samaritans (who were half-breeds) as impure. They wouldn't touch them, or even talk to them. When the disciples, who had gone to buy bread, returned and saw Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, they amazed and confused as to why He was talking to her, since it was forbidden for an Israelite to talk to a Samaritan. They wanted to question Jesus about it, "But no man said, 'Why are you talking to her?'" John 4:27

4) Peter and the Sheet: According to the Acts, chapter 10, **Peter** had a vision of a **sheet** full of animals being lowered from **heaven**. A voice from **heaven** told **Peter** to kill and eat, but since the **sheet** contained unclean animals, **Peter** declined. That occurred 3 times, but Peter continued to decline.

Then there was a knock at the door from friends of Cornelius, a Gentile, asking Peter to come to minister to them. Again, in the bigoted Israelite culture, this was forbidden.

This text is often used to "prove" that God approves of humanity eating unclean meats from animals that are scavengers, put on the earth to clean up the filth, animals such as pigs, vultures, and other scavengers. But Peter got the point, when he said:

“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.” Acts 10:34
(God is impartial. He loves everybody the same.)

But when the apostles and other Christians in Judea heard that Peter had gone to the “uncircumcised” – Peter was in big trouble, again because of the bigotry of Christians.

5) More bigotry from the scribes and Pharisees:

“Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem saying,

“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.” Matt 15:1,2

The Pharisees and scribes were NOT speaking of the hygienic practice of washing one’s hands before eating. They were referring to the Israelite ritual of washing their hands up to their elbows before eating, in case they had happened to rub elbows, or touched in any way, a Gentile – when they were in the market place.

Jesus rebuked their bigotry and hypocrisy, saying:

“Why do you also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition?” Matt 15:3

5) Parable of the Prodigal Son

The younger son sowed his wild oats – leaving his father (leaving the church) – while the older brother stayed WITH his father (stayed IN the church). When the younger son spent his inheritance on sinful activities, his heart was changed and he returned to his father with great humility. But the one who stayed home was angry when his father threw a party for the younger returning son.

This represents the anger of “Christians” when they find out that God is going to save everyone, even the sinners who have gone astray. God knows how to win them back, but “Christians” seem to HATE that fact, particularly when they have “been faithful members of the church for all their life.”

6) Parable of the workers in the vineyard. Some worked all day, some only a few hours, but they all got the same pay. Even though Jesus told that parable, those who claim to be “Christians” respond: “That’s UNFAIR!”

There's the bigotry again!

Nothing has Changed!

It seems not much has changed from 2,000 years ago. Everyone still wants to be better than someone else. Those who claim to be Christians – followers of Jesus Christ – have formed exclusive clubs called “churches” in order to separate themselves from others in society who don't believe as they do.

They try to enlist biblical approval for their bigoted practice by repeating the following verse:

“Don't Forsake the Assembling of Believers”

Doesn't the Bible tell us **NOT** to **“forsake the assembling of believers”**?

Doesn't that mean that we should have worship services in Organized Churches?

Didn't God ordain the “Organized Church”?

“Let us hold fast the confession of the expectation without wavering: for He is faithful that promised.

“And let us consider one another to incite to love and ideal acts:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves, as the manner of some is; but entreating one another: and so much the more, as you are observing the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:23-25

Three forms of Worship

There were three forms of “worship” in Christ's time: in the temple, in the synagogues, and that of the Essenes, a group who separated themselves from society and refusing to marry, in order to spend their time fasting, praying, and focusing on their own holiness – much like many Catholic monks and nuns today.

To whom was the book of Hebrews written?

“The letter was addressed primarily to Israelite converts to Christianity who no longer followed the Pharisees who were the leaders in the synagogues – the “Organized Church” of the day. These Israelites were familiar with the Old Testament and were being tempted to revert to Phariseeism and/or to pervert the true gospel by the infiltration of Phariseeism. (Galatians 2:14)

“Some have suggested that these professing Israelite Christians were thinking of merging with a sect, such as the Essenes at Qumran near the dead Sea, who lived an ascetic life. The accounts by historians Josephus and Philo show that the Essenes led a strictly celibate and communal life — often compared by scholars to later Christian monastic living.” Introduction to the book of Hebrews, New International Version of the Bible, pg 1857, 1858.

Apparently some of the Israelite (Hebrew) Christians were in danger of joining the Essenes, a group that believed in a celibate, monastic life of repeated fasting — a plan of salvation by works - something the Bible condemns.

“Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits, and doctrines of devils:

“Speaking lies in hypocrisy: having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

“Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from eating food (NOT “meats”) that God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth.” 1 Timothy 4:1-3

The author of the book of Hebrews warns against this ascetic, monastic life by saying:

“Let us hold fast the confession of the expectation without wavering: for He is faithful that promised.

“And let us consider one another to incite to love and ideal acts:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves, as the manner of some is; but entreating one another: and so much the more, as you are observing the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:23-25

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves, as the manner of some is (such as the Essenes and their ascetic, monastic, life of “salvation by works”) but entreating one another. . .”

In this passage, the author of the book of Hebrews is NOT endorsing a system of “Organized churches” when the author speaks of the “assembling of believers” because that would be endorsing the Pharisees and the synagogue system they founded, a system that Jesus strongly rebuked, that undoubtedly culminated in His being put to death by these same leaders of the “Organized church” — the Pharisees.

Instead, the author of Hebrews is denouncing the idea of living a celibate, monastic, life far away from the masses of humanity who need to learn of the perfect Life of Jesus and God's marvelous grace and salvation. They were – and we are – to be “lights” in a dark world.

The Israelite Christians and those who had converted from paganism (the “nations” – mistranslated “Gentiles”) were meeting in homes and in groups along the riverbanks, worshiping on the Seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) – the Lord's Day. The pagans, on the other hand, worshiped their gods in gorgeous temples of stone with magnificent adornments, even though the Bible says:

“Howbeit the most High dwells NOT in temples made with hands. . .” Acts 7:48

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells NOT in temples made with hands.” Acts 17:24

God does NOT dwell in temples (churches) made with hands. **Our body** is the temple of God's spirit. He dwells in us.

“What? Know ye not that **your body is the temple** of the Holy Spirit (God's breath of holiness) which is IN YOU, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” 1 Corinthians 6:19,20

When Jesus was on earth, He made no attempt to set up an Organized church. Even when He was soon to be crucified, he strongly rejected His disciples' desire to be part of a hierarchy (“Who will sit on your left and your right?” they asked Jesus). Jesus said,

“The Unbelievers (mistranslated *Gentiles* = “nations” = those “who know not God” according to 1 Thess 4:5) lord it over each other, but it shall NOT be that way among you (the Believers).” (Mark 10:42,43)

Again, the pagans (the heathen – the unbelievers = “nations”) had a strong hierarchy, but Jesus instructed His followers to reject that system because when “man” lords it over man, his “power” always corrupts him.

At the time of Christ, God's presence resided in the Temple. The Temple service and the Priesthood was set up by God in the Sanctuary in the Wilderness. At the explicit direction of God, **no one was allowed to enter the Temple except the priests – under penalty of Death!** God could not be any more direct, or

stronger, in his prohibition of the people entering a building and sitting down to hear “man” tell him what to believe about God. The penalty for doing that in the temple – was Death!

On the contrary, the synagogues were the counterfeit religion. It was the Pharisees – the enemies of Jesus Christ – who set up the synagogues so they could teach the people their false doctrines – the oral traditions that Jesus so strongly rebuked as “making the Word of God of no effect” (Mark 7:13). God’s presence was in the temple. It was God’s house.

Jesus said, “Make not **My Father’s House**, a house of merchandise.”
John 2:16

God’s presence was NOT in the synagogues. Jesus referred to them as “their” synagogues.

“But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the councils and scourge you in **their** synagogues,” Matt 10:17

Since the synagogues were of “men” and not ‘of God’ they were a false – counterfeit – religion. And the synagogues, started by the Pharisees – the enemies of Christ – were/are the model for today’s “organized churches.”

Shutting oneself off in a monastery makes one useless to God, in addition to the secret sin of self-righteousness, in which one concentrates only on his own life and his own salvation, rather than being concerned for, and working for, the salvation of others.

When the author of Hebrews warned against “forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” he was not endorsing an “Organized Church” but instead he was warning the Israelite Christians NOT to sequester themselves away from life and civilization by pursuing a monastic, ascetic, self-centered existence.

God wants us to be “witnesses to Him” – by circulating in society demonstrating His character and disposition.

A Caste System in Heaven?

Will we have stars in our crowns in heaven and the New Earth?

Many people in the Christian church believe that in heaven, they will receive a star in their crown for every person they win to Christ. Pastors even preach such things.

But there is no proof in the Bible for such a teaching. It is based solely on tradition. In addition, the principle behind it is also contradictory to the teaching of Scripture.

From where does this false teaching come?

The only place the Bible comes even close to teaching such a doctrine is in the following text. The passage states that the righteous who win souls to Christ, will **shine as stars** in the next life. It does not say anything about people having stars in their crowns. The people themselves are the ones shining as stars.

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.
Dan 12:3

If some people will have “more stars in their crown” than others in heaven, then a caste system will be operating. Some will be perceived as better – or more holy – than others.

God is completely against that.

“God is no respecter of persons.” Acts 10:34

When the disciples were arguing over who “would be the greatest” in Christ’s kingdom, Jesus said,

“Ye know that the princes of the Unbelievers (the heathen/nations - mistranslated “Gentiles”) lord it over each other, and they that are (considered) great, exercise authority upon them, but it shall NOT be so among you (the true Believers): but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant (slave).” Matt 20;25,26

Jesus said, ALL people are equal in His sight. No one is above another.

“But be not ye called Rabbi: for One is your Master, even Christ: and all you are brothers.” (You are ALL the same.) Matt 23:8

And Jesus gave the following parable that teaches clearly that we could never do more than we are called to do. Every good thing we do was planned in our life by God – before we were ever born. We can do NO favors for God, therefore we cannot receive an extra reward.

“But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to eat?

“And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?”

“Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.

“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” Luke 17:7-10

According to 1 Cor. 3:5-9, we all have a part to play. Some plant, others water, **but God gives the increase**. It is God who gets the credit for saving people – not us.!

“We are laborers together with God.” 1 Cor 3:9

We all play different roles in the process, but ultimately the credit can only go to God.

The Bible tells us that it is not “our will” that makes the decision for Christ, but it is God who puts that decision in our heart – in HIS time.

“It is not he who is willing or he that runneth, but God the merciful.”
Romans 9:16

It is God who puts that desire into our heart – in HIS timing – not ours. Jesus said,

“No one can come to Me unless the Father draws Him.” John 6:44

The false doctrine of “stars in our crown” pits one Christian against another and encourages competition rather than cooperation. It gives the impression that some will be in a lowly position in heaven while others will live in splendor – supposedly “more loved” by God – and “respected more” by all those in heaven.

But that person demonstrates a heart full of envy and pride, and no one with that character will be ready for heaven.

Therefore, this doctrine is without any basis in the Bible.

Everyone wants to be special – MORE special than everyone else!

Catholics believe they are SO right in their doctrines that their church teaches that they have the right to KILL those who don't believe as they do. In fact, during the Dark Ages, the Catholic Church did just that!

Jehovah Witnesses believe they will be the ONLY ones who are saved. They also believe that the true 144,000 are all Jehovah Witnesses, and that Jesus came ONLY to the Jehovah Witnesses in 1914.

Seventh-day Adventists believe they are the remnant: the TRUE people of God, and refer to others as "outsiders."

Evangelicals believe they are specially blessed because they believe that today's Jews are the chosen people – and they reverence and support Jews – who are genociding the Palestinians, and also think they (the Jews) have the right to rule the world, and kill Christians. They also believe that Jesus was a Jew. In addition, the evangelicals believe that God will punish those who don't revere and support the present day Jews.

Lutherans believe they have the truth, and that tradition is just as important, and approved by God, as God's Word – the Bible.

Mormons believe they are special and have a secret society (just like the Freemasons) to "prove" it, even though God abhors all things done in secret. Mormons also believe that there are some sins that will place the transgressor beyond the redeeming power of the blood of Christ. The blood of Jesus is not enough to cover their sin. So, that person's OWN blood must be shed, even by another Mormon killing him, in order to atone for his sin. In other words, if the sin is very grievous, a human being's blood will cover it, but not the blood of Jesus Christ. In that case, human beings become their OWN "savior."

A group called **Christian Identity** takes bigotry to a new height by believing that the white race is the true "Israel of God" and that only members of the white race can be saved!

"I made the right choice."

The epitome of bigotry is the "Christian" doctrine that we "make the right choice" in "choosing" Jesus Christ, even when He says:

"You don't choose Me, but I choose you." John 15:16

The Bible tells us,

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of

yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.
Eph 2:8,9

Salvation is a gift from God. No one can boast that he or she “made the right choice.”

“No one can come to Me UNLESS the Father draws him.” John 6:44

Everyone who comes to Christ does so ONLY after God puts it in our heart to come to Him. It is NOT “of us” “lest anyone should boast.”

If it were left to our own devices, NO ONE would be saved, because:

“There are NONE righteous, NO, NOT ONE.” Romans 3:10

“There are NONE that seek after God.” Romans 3:11

God says, repeatedly, in His Word, that He came to save the WHOLE WORLD. And what He says - - He WILL Do!

“For it is God which worketh in you both to WILL - - and to DO - - - of HIS good pleasure.” Phil 2:13

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and disciple ALL nations (ALL unbelievers). . .” Matt 28:18

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh ALL after the counsel of HIS OWN WILL.” Eph 1:11

“. . . He is able even to subject ALL unto Himself.” Phil 3:21

And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile ALL unto Himself: by Him, I say, whether they be on earth or in heaven.” Col 1:20

“And ye know that He was manifest to TAKE AWAY our sin:” 1 John 3:5

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those in earth, and those under the earth.

“And that EVERY tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.” Phil 2:10,11

Behold the Lamb of God who TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE (WHOLE) WORLD.” John 1:29

“And he is the propitiation (reconciliation) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.” 1 John 2:2

“My ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts (higher) than your thoughts.”

“Is there ANYTHING too hard for the Lord?” Gen 18:14

“I watch over My word to perform it.” Jer 1:12

“I have said it, and I WILL bring it to pass.” Isa 46:11

“Nothing is impossible with God.” Matt 19:26

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. . .? Eph 3:20

“God is the Savior of ALL mankind. . .” 1 Timothy 4:10

“The Father loves the Son, and has given **ALL into His hand.**” John 3:35

Jesus says, “ALL that the Father gives me (which is ALL), SHALL COME TO ME. And him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the WILL of Him that sent Me.

“And this IS the Fathers’ WILL which has sent Me, that of ALL which He has given Me, **I SHOULD LOSE NOTHING.** . .” John 6:37-39

God has clearly declared that He WILL SAVE ALL.

God is “no respecter of persons.” Acts 10:34

Jesus died for all and He will save all.

“They will know you are My disciples, when you love one another.” John 13:35

We have passed from death to life because we love the brethren.” 1 John 3:14

Who is my brother? The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), told by Jesus, shows that everyone is our brother.

The Priest and the Levite, both esteemed members of the organized church of the day, "walked on the other side," not wanting to be involved with a person they considered "unclean."

The Samaritan, a half-breed hated by the Israelites, ministered to the injured man.

Until the salvation of everyone in the world becomes as important to us as our own, we are not safe to save. Only then will the bigotry of Christianity, be gone!