

A Question of Life

by Randy Nusbaum

We talk much about the preaching of Christ but it comes to me that many people see no difference between what they are hearing in church and what is the preaching of Christ. Most preachers just preach things you should not do or things that you should do. The scriptures become law and we become no different from Israel trying to keep the ten commandments written on tablets of stone.

The christian life is not deeds, **Christ is the life** of the christian. Certainly his deeds will change but herein is the difference between what most people preach and the preaching of Christ: Most people put the emphasis on the doing or not doing of deeds, instead of the emphasis being on Christ. We are not to put off bad deeds and then put on good deeds. Notice where Paul puts the emphasis: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the work of darkness and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly; as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." (Romans 13:12 & 13) Many will stop right there and teach that the christian life is one of abstaining from bad and converting to good deeds but the next verse points out the thing we are to put on; "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof". (Verse 14)

Paul emphasizes Christ, knowing that He will produce the proper works in the believer. Again he shows us this truth in Ephesians 4 where Paul says: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness". (Ephesians 4:17-19) Once again we stop here and would make the next scripture read "But ye have not so learned to act." We always make it a contrast of good and bad actions and Christ is not in the center. Thank God the next scripture reads "but ye have not so learned **Christ**." It is the putting on, or the learning of, Christ that keeps us from these things. We don't engage in these evil deeds because we are learning Christ and are conforming to His nature performs good deeds, for He will. My concern is to learn Christ daily and let His nature take care of itself. Can you now see a difference between the preaching of Christ and the preaching of the works of Christ? Most preach only the necessity of living a "christian life" with the emphasis on us instead of Christ.

These scriptures in Ephesians continue this thought, for as I said, we are not to put off bad deeds and then put on good deeds but are told to put off the old man (verse

22) and are to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness". (verse 24) It is His nature that produces righteousness and true holiness. We are not to try to reproduce the works of Christ but are to "be renewed in the spirit of your mind." (verse 23) We are to reckon ourselves dead and Christ as the life that lives unto God! The cross (our being dead with Christ) is a fact but there are multitudes who are not affected by it because the power of the cross is knowledge. It is not just accepting with my mind that the cross really happened but by searching the scriptures, filling my mind full of the word, giving the Holy Spirit a continuous opportunity to reveal Christ to me and in me. The knowledge spoken of here is not that of our brain being filled with doctrinal truths but that the Holy Spirit reach down into the very Spirit of our mind and renew it with the knowledge of Christ, It is not a question of good versus bad, but rather if we will allow Christ in us to live His own **life**.***