

The Tabernacle

Christ As The Consistent Light

Readings

- 1 John 1:5
- 2 Corinthians 1:3

Introduction

In the consideration of our normal living we readily discover that the only thing consistent about us is our inconsistency. Sometimes we get angry for very little and at other times our patience is amazing. In contrast to the Lord who was always consistent, He was not only perfectly man but a perfect man. It was irrelevant if He was alone or in public, with friends or those opposed to Him, in the temple, home, sea or cornfields, His consistency was without a flaw.

Being such necessitated His assessing each situation and not acting in the consistency of man's perception. Rather it was a consistency in the fullness of fellowship with the heart, mind, timing, and character of God and the Father. In writing to Theophilus, Luke wrote, "of all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). The order is important. It is not "teach and do" but "do and teach", that is all He taught. There was perfect consistency between what He said and did. No activity ever violated anything He said and no words ever contradicted what He did.

- a) How easy for us to profess without practice, preach without passion, professional sermons without power, to teach and practise baptism and the Lord's Supper, but fail to outlive their principles for behaviour. In a nutshell and broadly speaking, there is a failure to outlive what is professed. The Lord was never like that.

The Lord was consistent in every area of life, not just one or two. There was perfection of consistency in His revelation of God and the Father, in ever seeking the glory of God. There was perfection of balance between Him being the Son of God (Matt. 14:33) and son of man (Matt. 8:20); as a workman (that is a carpenter, Mk. 6:3); a teacher (Matt. 5:1-2); miracle worker (Jn. 6:14); evangelist (Lk. 4:18); shepherd (Jn. 10:11); mentor (Matt. 4:19); etc. Christ was the perfect personification of the Person of God.

What is God like?

God is Light therefore with God there is no shadow of turning (Jam. 1:17), that is, there will never be a shadow caused by His changing or turning for He is unchangeable (Mal. 3:6). Concisely put, God is always in all times and circumstances perfectly consistent. God is the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9, 13, 22) therefore there is never any dullness nor defusing of perfection; age will never cause deterioration of His mind so that His judgments are never impaired; no weakness of power; no bias in judgment; and never will there be any miscalculation of a statement. Since Christ is the true manifestation of God, then He also must be consistent in every iota of life and how that Light shone when He was here on earth.

Some illustrations of the Light shining

- 1) There was a day when the Lord was in the Temple teaching and the scribes came with a woman whom they said was taken in adultery. Setting her in the midst they asked the Lord: "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" (Jn. 8:4-5). If the Lord says "No," He breaks the Law of God! If He says "Yes", where is His love? On His response lies the life or death of this woman, the sanctity of the law, and His fellowship with God. Then the Light begins to blaze in all its glory, and while we are not told what he wrote, His words had a profound effect. He said: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (Jn. 8:7). Note the importance of the words "among you". Had that statement not been said, then He could have cast the first stone. As each of their conscience's began to prick they began to leave and the woman was left alone with the Lord and those around him. The Light had blazed in all its fullness. The Light was consistent in the interpretation of the law and the spirit of it.
- 2) There was another occasion when pseudo spiritual men, who imagined that true spirituality is holding external ritualism, man made regulations and tradition over the word of God, came seeking to find fault with the Light. These were the spiritual hierarchy, the ones from Jerusalem who saw the disciples eat with unwashed hands. This was inconsistent with their rituals and traditions, so wanting to accuse the Lord they asked Him: "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? (Matt. 15:2). Then the

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Light blazes as He asks: “Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” (Matt. 15:3). The light was consistent with truth and He would not back down. Truth is truth and He answers: “God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:4-9). The Light was consistent in the declaration of the truth in contrast to man’s traditions.

- 3) The Light will shine on what true life consists of. A father died and the inheritance was left to two sons. Clearly one was, for whatever reason, intent on taking the lion’s share, and the other son decided this was not right. Coming to the Lord he said: “Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me” (Lk. 12:13). This was not the time for the Lord to act as Judge (that is still future) therefore He refuses to say what the brother ought to do. Rather, as the Light He presents what is true living. We read: “And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Lk. 12:15).
- 4) Which is the more important, going to remember the Lord or assisting a saint needing help? The decision is, which is more important, ritual or life? In the synagogue on a Sabbath day there was a man with a withered hand, greedy for an accusation the religious rulers watched the Lord, pondering, “Will He heal on the Sabbath?” Looking straight at them the Light began to blaze as He asked: “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? (Mk. 3:4). With a censuring look of anger, the Light shone and in so doing the evil of man’s heart was manifested, for man hates the Light. Immediately their anger erupted from them like a volcano of seething frozen hatred. The Light was manifesting that life was more important than ritual and what to expect from the flesh when it is shown in its true colours.
- 5) The Light, to be consistent, had to shine on all humanity, those who opposed Him and those who were or professed to be His disciples. For instance:
 - a) Peter seemed to have a way of speaking or acting before thinking a thing through. When the Lord revealed His approaching rejection and death in Jerusalem, Peter strongly disagreed with such a suggestion. The Light then shone on the fact that it was not Peter’s characteristic which was speaking, but Satan was using Peter, therefore the Lord turning said: “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matt. 16:23).
 - b) Again, when the Lord spoke to Peter informing him of what he was to do, Peter then asked the Lord in referring to John: “What shall this man do?” (Jn. 21:21). The Light shone and very beautifully Peter was put in his place when the Lord said: “What is that to thee?” (Jn. 21:22, 23). The Light was telling Peter to do what he had been told to do and not to be concerned about what someone else was to do.
 - c) When the mother of Zebedee’s children came to the Lord desiring a place of prominence for her two boys, the Light shone and her ignorance of what she desired and who had the right to give position to anyone was revealed (Matt. 20:20-23).

Concluding Thoughts

When the Light of the Lord shone it was irrelevant if it was one of His disciples or a non disciple, the message was the same. If error was being committed or distortion of the truth, there will be no compromise from the truth. It is the same today, and at the Judgment Seat the Light will still shine. What surprises there will be. Then we will know as we are known on several levels as we begin to comprehend how undeserving we are of the least of divine mercies and grace, and how full and rich is the eternally efficacious sacrifice of the Lord.

May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13

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