

The Tabernacle

Christ The Light Reveals Distortions

Introduction

In the consideration of the Lord as the “True Light” (Jn. 1:9) it is evident that there can be no compromise and by word and deed He will be constantly exposing error. Light is unchanging and though man may try to find fault with the Light, it is an exercise in futility. This is seen in the incidents of the coin when he was asked: “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar?” (Matt. 22:17); the woman taken in adultery (Jn. 8:3-5); or when the Pharisees asked: “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?” (Mk. 10:2). No matter how man tried, the Light was undiminished, therefore not only did it always end in failure, but more wonderfully made the light shine more gloriously. He ever was the true “Eliminator” of confusion on the situations of life and the “Remover” of spiritual darkness.

However, the problem is man. Saved or unsaved man does not want the light because their works are evil (Jn. 7:7). This then creates a crisis for each individual. Will such an one accept the light and change or live against the Light. The problem really is, “How do I know my own distortions?” This is answered by the Lord for as He showed the distortions of humanity, He showed the distortions of every human being.

Illustrations Of The Light Shining and Man’s Distortions

1) The distortion of motives and hypocritical deception:

- a) “Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them . . . when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men . . . And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.” (Matt. 6:1-5)

2) The distortion of true values, living for time instead of eternity:

- a) “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. 6:19-21)

3) The distortion of pseudo spirituality and refusing to accept God’s diagnosis:

- a) “And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Matt. 9:11-12)

4) The distortion of supplanting the law of God by the traditions of men:

- a) “And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.” (Mk. 2:23-27)

5) The distortion of making the law more important than life itself:

- a) “And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

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Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.” (Matt. 12:9-14)

6) The distortion of the selective adherence to the law, nullifying the law of God:

- a) “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.” (Matt. 23:13-37; similar to Mk. 7:9-13)

7) The distorted views on separation:

- a) Due to their distorted views separation had been degraded into isolation. Israel was to be a light to the Gentiles, “Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified . . . And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isa. 49:3, 6). The Lord counteracted this when He spoke to the woman of Samaria (Jn. 4:7-27), and when questioned He told who a true neighbour is (Lk. 10:30-37).

8) The distortion of those who honoured Him with their lips but were blinded by their religiosity:

- a) “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalted himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” (Lk. 18:9-14)

9) The distortion of those who valued the traditions more highly than the law of God:

- a) “Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” He decried the destruction of God’s original purpose of the law. (Matt. 15:1-3; Mk. 2:27)

10) The distorted perception of those who thought themselves to be morally clean:

- a) “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5:19-48)

11) The distorted view of a superficial keeping of the law:

- a) “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” (Matt. 5:20-48)

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12) He spoke about the distorted attitude of those who imagined they had a position with God but ignored the spiritual features:

- a) "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." (Jn. 8:39-40)
- b) "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 8:11-19)

As the Light He will expose:

- 1) The distortion of using the kindness of God for personal monetary enrichment. "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables" (Jn. 2:13-16)
- 2) The distortion of the true meaning of the Sabbath. The Lord made a man whole on the Sabbath. "The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." (Jn. 5:9-10; Mk. 2:27; Lk. 6:9; 13:14-16)
- 3) The reaction of God on those who know the truth but were too stubborn to see. "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other." (Mk. 3:5)

Illustrations Expanded

Religious hypocrites professing to be God fearing but, restricting the development of the truth of God and seeking the approval of men. Men who go to any length to promote their traditions. A decision had to be made. Accept the easy way out and keep quiet, be diplomatic, don't shake the boat, compromise a little!! This leads to the question, "Could the light be consistent and not expose?" The Light being consistent must manifest the distortion of formal dead religiosity which was void of any spirituality. We can learn from this that God is not blindsided by external appearances, and what they really were before God (Matt. 23:13-16)

Men thinking, despite saying otherwise, that they were more holy than others. They imagined, because of religiosity, they had an in with God as they compared themselves with others. A decision had to be made. Does the Light let them continue in their ignorance or seek to teach the truth? Would Light, accepting the easy way out, be silent, could the Light be consistent and not expose this sin? The light, being consistent, must expose the distortion of false righteousness and the inconsistency of pride and egotistical humility. That which was exposed was the obnoxious pride that they reeked of. (Lk. 18:10-14)

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

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia