

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



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The Orlando Massacre

Whose Side Are You On?

–By George L. Faull, Rel. D.

Excerpts of a Sermon delivered on June 19th, 2016

In **Luke 13:1** we read, "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices."

Now I have a sneaking suspicion that the Judeans, who were always kind of down on the Galileans, interrupted Jesus and said, "You know, there were some "fanatic Galileans" who were worshiping, and Pilate came along and mingled their blood with the blood of their sacrifices."

Jesus is kind of rebuking him. **"Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?" I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. How about those 18 people in Jerusalem?** (Now he is talking about the Judeans.) **...upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."** What is He telling us, and can I make it relative today?

If Jesus spoke to us today, I wonder if He'd say, "Suppose ye that those 49 murdered victims and the 53 wounded people in Orlando who Omar, the Muslim, killed were sinners above all them who dwell in Orlando. **We mustn't judge that God was striking dead people because they were homosexuals. I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."** It's obvious the calamities are not the test of sinfulness. Remember Job?

A week ago today, we who love the Lord were fast asleep at 2:00 a.m. We were getting ready and preparing, trying to be rested up to come to the Lord's House on the Lord's Day to eat the Lord's Supper with the Lord's people. But at 2:00 a.m. the same morning, a thousand miles away, was a man of another faith. He

was not asleep. He was a Muslim bent on destroying Gays. Many of whom he personally knew were in what they call, a Gay bar. He was a hypocritical Muslim. I call him a hypocrite; not in the fact that he was going to murder them, for his faith practices execution for homosexuality. He was a hypocrite in that he, himself, was a homosexual, which his faith does not allow. He was a hypocrite because he had a love/hate relationship with homosexual lifestyle himself. So that poor demented soul who had been in that Gay bar many times in the last few months did what Allah approved.

He went into the bar at 2:00 a.m. while we were sleeping, to kill those who pursued that lifestyle. As I said, he wounded 53 others. How many of those 102 different people whom he shot were homosexuals and lesbians? I don't suppose we'll ever know, but laughingly, unmercifully, he killed those people as he stalked his victims from room to room as they tried to escape.

Now finally, at 5:00 a.m. not too long before we got up to come to Church, he was finally shot dead himself. The horror that those young people felt and experienced is probably beyond description. They were hiding in bathrooms, hiding in cupboards, hiding, waiting in great fear. By the time we were at Church service last Sunday, the preachers in the Western United States had heard the news, and were preaching about this massacre.

In Arizona, a preacher got up and was celebrating before God that there were 50 less pedophiles in America today. That assumes, of course, a lie, because not all homosexuals are pedophiles. He expressed that he felt that the government should have done it instead, hinting it would be good for us in America to live under the Law of Moses and execute homosexuals or be like the Muslims and execute them.

In Sacramento, California, a Pastor said the tragedy was *"that more of them didn't die"*. He claimed that Christians should not mourn the death of sodomites, adding, *"I'm kind of upset he didn't finish the job."*

Those comments were also repeated over and over by people who made like comments on the Internet. Many of such sentiments were by professed Christians. Is it any wonder they accuse us of hatred?

Here's my proposition. I find the comments of these professed Pastors and Christians are as great of a tragedy as the massacre itself. It sounds more like the followers of ISIS, or Muhammed, than Christ. It's Muslim doctrine, not Christian doctrine. I want to challenge your thinking this morning to a more Godly and Christ-like thinking. Before I do, I want to assure you that I realize the Bible teaches homosexuality is wrong. I know Leviticus says they were to be put to death, but that's the Law of Moses. I know homosexuality is condemned in the New Testament Scriptures three or four times, and it speaks very plain and, in my opinion, you have to have professional help to misunderstand what the New Testament teaches.

However, the New Testament Scriptures (**Rom. 1:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 1 Tim. 1:9-10**) does not teach that we are to kill them. Death is in the hands of God, not us. The text I read to you is teaching us calamity or accidents are not the way we determine what God thinks about things. God loves homosexuals, and we have an obligation to try to reach them, not kill them; not to wish they were dead.

Now as I preach, the first thing to keep in mind is I am not ignoring that the New Testament teaches it is a sin. It even says homosexuality is a sin worthy of death. This is one of my very points. In **Romans Chapter 1**, *"...leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was [necessary or right]. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."* -- **Romans 1:27**

But listen to the rest of it... *"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable [or irreconcilable], unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."*

My point being, yes, God says they are worthy of death, but He happened to name a whole bunch of

other sins worthy of death. In fact, *"...the wages of sin is death."* This event should not be looked upon as God striking down all of those young people because of that particular sin. It's a very bad mistake for us to play the role of announcing what God is doing. Years ago when there was a tornado down in Georgia when it had killed several students at the school, people said, "Now where is your God?" The President of a Bible college said, *"I don't judge my God by cyclones or tornadoes or accidents. I judge God's love by what He did for me at Calvary. That's where He proved His love, and God allows accidents, and He allows calamities."* He even allows mass murder because man has free-will.

But we don't want to be guilty of going around saying what those preachers said. That was speaking for God. I think Christians ought to speak comfort to people who have lost their children or a husband, wife, or grandchildren. It's not a time to lay things like this upon God. I think that is the worst thing about this event.

The Second Thing I want you to keep in mind before I get into the very basis of my sermon... My point is when I speak this way, don't forget what God says is to be done if a *Christian* practices sins of immorality. **1st Corinthians Chapter 5** shows it. We do it with any fornicators. I'm not saying no judgment from the Church ought to come to a professing Christian. The Bible plainly says if they're unrepentant, they are to be removed from the Church. I know **1st Corinthians** talks about homosexuality and names it right out by name and then says something wonderful. I love it. *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus..."*

I just simply want you to keep in mind people can change, but when a Christian is involved in these sins, the Bible says, *"...put away from among yourselves that wicked person."* As you listen to me criticize what these Pastors said, I am hoping you will remember I am not saying we ought to just turn our head the other way and not do anything about a *Christian* who is involved in these kind of things.

You discipline your own children, and God wants His children disciplined. He tells us they are to be disciplined, and they are to be put out of the Church. But you don't want to look at what happened in Orlando there and think like these preachers do. I want to remind you that the penalty under the Law was death. That was the Law. You had to put them to death just like the Muslims do today. That was God's Law in the Old Testament, but that's only one of the sins in the Old Testament that was punishable by death. All the Ten Commandments were punishable by death!

Someone quotes Leviticus and says, "They are supposed to be put to death." This was true but so was fornication. So was adultery. There are dozens of sins where death was God's demand for the guilty. Sins like cursing your father and mother were punishable by death. I'm worthy of death. You are worthy of death. Because we have broken the Law of Moses, but we're not under the Law. That Law was a temporary Law God gave to give a knowledge of what is sin. He made the punishment extremely harsh.

Why? He did that so people would see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It was a tutor to teach us what sin is and how bad it is. Under grace...thank God...we do not have to kill our friends and relatives who are homosexuals, fornicators, or adulterers. Would you rejoice and speak like those men spoke if it had not been a Gay bar? What if just "straights" were out at 2:00 a.m., trolling for a one-night stand, and your son or your daughter made the mistake of going there, and some crazed person came in and killed them? Would you say what these guys said? *"They should have killed more of them."* *"The government just ought to line them up to the wall."* One of them said, *"and shoot them all."*

Our ignorance is showing if we think that was justified because the Law of Moses said homosexuals were to be killed. Then it stands that adulterers ought to be killed. Do you know any adulterers? Maybe some of you have even committed adultery or fornication. It is a sin worthy of death, but under grace we do not have to kill you.

Would you rejoice if you had awakened this morning and found out that some crazy, sick Seventh Day Adventist who believes the Sabbath is on Saturday (which it was) went in to one of the local factories and killed 49 people who were working on Saturday? Well, the old Law is if you break the Sabbath, you are to die. Would you rejoice over that? "We should have lined them all up and killed anybody who was working over there on Saturday. They're not supposed to work on Saturday. That's what the old Law says." That was true of the Ten Commandments.

Now let's try to get focused here. We are not under the old Law. When I talk about grace, I'm not talking about a sin permit. I'm not talking about a license to sin. I'm talking about we're not under the Law; we're under grace. We can be saved, even though we have committed some of these sins. If we lived under the Law (and there are some people who would love for us to live under the Law), we would have to kill all idolaters like the Muslims do. Under the Law of Moses, if your brother said, "Hey, come with me. Let's go over and sneak over into the worship of another god..." It's

not enough for you to say, "No, I'm not going." You had to turn him in and stone him to death for trying to get you to worship another god. Your own brother! Your own son! Your own daughter! Whoever it was. That was the penalty under the Law. We're not under the Law of Moses, and if you don't make a distinction between the old Law and Christ's Law, you're mistaken... You don't just open the Bible and flip it open and say, "That's what the Bible says." Yeah, that's what the Bible says in the Old Testament, but that was written to the Jewish nation. I need to explain to you the difference between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ.

The old Law God gave to Moses was for the nation of Israel. Even the Sabbath He says, "It is a sign between Me and Israel." God never gave the Sabbath to all men. The Sabbath was only given to the nation of Israel. The Bible says in Nehemiah that God came down and "made known unto Moses the Sabbath". No one in Genesis kept the Law of the Sabbath because the Sabbath hadn't been made known yet. He said, "It's a sign between Me and Israel." That was the sign of the Old Testament covenant, and that Law was from God because Israel was a theocracy. That's where God rules. God was considered the King, and the King (God) made the rules of what was going to happen in Israel. It was never intended for the whole world, nor was it permanent.

God was going to use Israel as the sheriff nation to make his laws known, and He made the penalties extremely harsh to not only make sin known, but to make sin appear exceedingly sinful. It was a model to teach us what was wrong. Under grace, we don't have to execute adulterers (aren't you glad?) and fornicators. We disfellowship unrepentant Christians, but we don't kill them. We **"...deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh..."** In other words, if they don't repent, they are to be turned over to the Devil. But we are under grace; we don't have to kill people. We didn't have to be killed. There's no one in this room who has not sinned against God as far as the Law of Moses is concerned.

We don't want the Law of Moses to be the law of the United States of America. Our citizenship is in Heaven, and we don't try to take the virtues that are the Christian religion and make them mandatory national laws of America. It is no better to try to make Christian laws the absolute law of America than it is to take Sharia law and make it the law of America. It's tyranny when the Muslims come in, populate and finally outnumber a people, and then establish Sharia law.

We don't want to take the laws of God, even the laws in the New Testament, and force them down the throat

of fellow Americans who are not Christians. That would be wrong. That would be tyranny. That would be no better than Sharia law. If it was on the ballot box, "Do you want the Law of Moses to be the law of the United States?" I'd vote *no*. I don't want the Law of Moses to be the law of America any more than I want Sharia law to be the law of America.

What we are to do is teach Bible principles, the principles of Christ, and the virtues of Christ and be an example on how we, as Christians, live. The biggest mistake the Church ever made in America is the moral majority, when preachers like Falwell and other such men, tried to force Christian morality on America.

Did they used to hate and fight us? No. It's when Christians became an organized voting bloc that the world turned against us and began to persecute us. If we had just lived our lives and we had simply evangelized rather than politicked and tried to put it into law as Christians in our own lives, we would have not become so hated and opposed.

When we started trying to make laws and make non-Christian people (Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Baha'i, Jews) obey the laws we Christians observe, that was a mistake. That's when the persecution started. I'm just simply trying to say to you, it's very, very important to realize that Islam was spread by force. Christianity was forced to spread. That's the difference between Islam and Christianity. Islam was spread by force; Christianity was forced to spread. They are persecutors, we are their victims.

When Christians become the persecutors, others become victims. Remember the inquisition of both Catholics and the reformers as they both killed, instead of loved, those who differ from them. The sword of the Spirit is our only weapon.

When Christians pick up the sword and try to force our laws, and try to make people live like Christians, that's when we start getting in trouble. We're just supposed to be lights in a dark and perverted world. Shining as lights we set examples. What caused the fall of Rome? Christians wouldn't go to war. They wouldn't go to battle, not because they thought it was wrong for fighting, but they had to make an oath one day a year that Caesar was God and they wouldn't do that.

When Christians modeled Christ, a great majority of Romans became Christians as a result and the world became Christian to a great degree. Along came Constantine, and he made his men go be immersed in water. He forbade people to worship on Sunday and other days and made the world do what Christians had already been doing for 300 years (meeting on the first

day of the week). He sabbatized Sunday and forced Christianity to be the state religion and brought into the Church all kinds of hypocrites and people who had never been born again and never been converted. The worst thing the Church can do is to try to force people to be Christians. It was not intended that we do that. Our citizenship is in Heaven. Let's just wait till we get there to have the bliss and the peace it brings. In the meantime, let's just keep on living Godly and evangelizing, speaking the truth in love.

Thirdly, let me say this... What should we do about the homosexuals in our country? Well, we ought to fight them, not with a sword and not with guns. We ought to oppose anybody who tries to destroy God's three main institutions which He put in the world: First; the family, Secondly; the Church, and Thirdly, the nations. The Bible plainly shows God sets up nations as it pleased Him. He sets the boundaries.

If the homosexuals try to make laws that don't allow us to live or practice our religion, then we ought to vote differently. Do it at the ballot box, do it by example, and do it by protesting by writing letters. Do not use guns and swords and not by rejoicing when young people, who disobey God, are killed and wounded.

We should not join them in their sin, of course. The Bible plainly tells them, "Don't be a partaker of the works of darkness, but rather rebuke them." The Church ought to be on record as not agreeing with homosexual marriage and abortion. We need to take a stand, and they need to know where we stand. But they need to know we love them, that we are opposing what they are standing for, not them personally.

We ought to love them as individuals and friends and neighbors just like we would young people who are living together in fornication or people who are adulterers or those who left one mate and went and married another mate. The Bible calls that adultery, but we treat them right. We treat them neighborly. We treat them as we would want to be treated. That's part of the great rules Jesus laid down. Yes, we disfellowship those who are Christians in an attempt to restore them and keep a pure Church, but we do not kill them.

I don't know whether you saw on your Internet the pictures of the victims. They were handsome, young men and young ladies. It broke my heart because they're going into a Christ-less eternity. They are lost. "George, you're judging." No, I'm not judging. Jesus' apostles taught it. Paul says no drunkards, fornicators, adulterers (I'm talking about unrepentant ones), and homosexuals are not going to enter the kingdom of heaven, but he adds, "**Such were** [past tense] **some of you...**"

Anybody can be saved, but God has already passed judgment. In Revelation, He tells us who is going to hell, and fornicators are mentioned. That doesn't mean we rejoice when they're killed. That's when we ought to be sorrowful. If they have a business, patronize them unless they have an agenda to support the homosexual agenda and social revolution.

I have a friend in this town who is a homosexual. I'm always glad to see him. I shake hands with him. I love him. I've talked to him. I eat at his restaurant. We talk and he is glad to see me. I eat at his restaurant, but he doesn't take his money and turn around and try to change the act of marriage. He doesn't take his money and fight against other virtues or promote his lifestyle.

I don't support large corporations if they push the homosexual agenda that destroys God's original institution of the family or the Church, or infiltrate the Church with people who are practicing those vile sins.

Let me give you a test really quickly. Do you agree with God? Read **Ezekiel 18:23** and listen to what it says. This is God talking. These words always just amaze me, and it ought to pierce our souls. **Chapter 33**, verse 11. Listen to what this says. **"...As I live,' saith the Lord God, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?'"**

God doesn't have any pleasure in the death of the wicked. God wasn't saying, "Get on with it, Omar" when those poor people were being murdered. God didn't want them to die. He doesn't have any pleasure in that. Those pastors...I don't know what book they're reading, but they're not reading the Word of God when they have those kind of attitudes in their heart.

God is **"...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."** It's important. Yes, there's Church discipline but do you remember what He saw in the Old Testament? He saw the city given over to sin, and listen to what He says. "I looked for a man among them, someone among them, to stand in the gap, fill in the hedge. I looked for somebody who would pray and make intercession. Because I couldn't find any, I had to destroy them."

God is looking for intercessors. He isn't looking for murderers. He is looking for intercessors, someone who will pray for people, people who would pray for a city or a nation that it would repent. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He says, "Why will you die?" He is looking for someone among the sinners who will make intercession, who will stand in the hedge and pray.

Remember what Samuel said to the people? **"...God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you..."** It's a sin against God not to pray for sinners. If you don't pray for sinners, you're not pleasing God. You're sinning against God. He is looking for intercessors. He is looking for people, yes, who are sorrowing for the sins that are being committed in the land like Ezekiel talks about in another Scripture.

The Hebrew letter, *tav*, looks like a cross and in vision it was put on the foreheads of the people who were sighing and crying for what is going wrong in the country. Then He said in **Ezekiel 9:4**, "And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." The Bible says the men with the swords went out at the very steps of the temple and killed the old men who were sitting there.

If you were not weeping and praying for those souls, you're in danger of judgment yourself. There certainly shouldn't have been any rejoicing after they were killed, wishing that Omar had gotten more of them. You do not have the Spirit of Christ. You're like John and his brother who said, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven on these people who are rejecting you?" He said, "You don't know what manner of spirit you have." He did not come to destroy, but save people.

Those preachers don't know what manner of spirit they have. They don't have a clue. They have no business in the pulpit because Christian people are free from having to kill homosexuals, fornicators, or adulterers. We don't have to do that. They can live. He is merciful. He is gracious. He allows them to live long enough for us to be able to teach them. You have to ask yourself, "Am I praying for the workers of abominations?"

Here's one last piercing question. Have you prayed yet for the 53 survivors? Have you prayed yet for the families of those boys and those girls? Put yourself in their place. I have three sons. I tell you, if I lost one of my boys to sin or if one of my sons had been in that Gay bar, I don't know whether you could've ever comforted me.

Have you prayed for the survivors? Have you prayed for the victims' families? That's the Christian thing to do. Do you remember how the homosexuals opposed Chick-fil-A? They were writing letters that said, "You can't even build a store in this town." They ran them out of business. But while people were lined up by the hundreds last Sunday morning to donate blood just

hours after the massacre, Chick-fil-A (which tries to be a Christian organization and normally does not open on Sundays) had a few Orlando employees volunteer to open that Sunday morning, cooked and delivered sandwiches and drinks to the people who were standing in line to donate blood to the victims of the massacre.

That's forgiveness, isn't it? I mean, that's tremendous for Chick-fil-A to open up on a Sunday and feed the people who were waiting and standing in line to give blood. The Church ought to be giving instead of saying... "I'm celebrating what happened in Orlando."

The last question is this. If sermons like this aren't preached in our pulpits and we only preach the sinfulness and the ugliness of homosexuality and we preach it with an attitude of, "I wish they were dead. I wish they would have killed more of them. I wish they died. They're worthy of death," and only say that about the homosexuals (don't say it about adulterers or any other sins that are in the Bible), it just might be possible that we could raise up an Omar in this congregation.

If you constantly preach, "They're worthy of death. They're scum. They're *this*. They're *that*" and they're never told, "God loves you, and we want you saved," and try to get them to repent, we're wrong. I'd as soon baptize a homosexual as I would anybody in the world, maybe more so. If we don't talk right at home and we don't talk right in the pulpit, I mean, **whose side are you on?** He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..."** All sinners! All are welcome at the throne of God because of the cross. If we don't preach that, we could raise up some freakish, crazed kid who thinks he would please us if he went and killed homosexuals. What a shame that would be to Christ.

Whose side are you on? Do you have pleasure in the death of the wicked? Do you pray for them? Have you yet prayed for the victims who are alive, the survivors, and for their families? I hope this has pierced your heart.

Let's pray. Father, we know You're a God who is just. We also know You're a God of love, and You're not willing that any should perish but that everyone should come to repentance. The whole purpose of Your sending Christ into the world was to save sinners. We're not doing our job if we don't try to win those who have fallen into this sin as well as the adulterer, and the fornicator, and the thief, and the covetous, and the greedy. Lord, lay some of these that we know on our hearts that we'll purpose in our hearts to introduce them to the salvation that's only in Christ. It's in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

The Biblical Concept of Restoration

--By Richard Sprague

"Brothers, if a man is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself; you also may be tempted." (NIV) **Galatians 6:1** The word "restore" in this verse means bringing the person back to the perfected condition from which he had fallen. It is translated "set him right" in the New English Version. Thus to "set him right" means to "restore" him to what is right.

Premise: The Biblical Concept of Restoration in this verse applies to saved individuals who may have sinned and therefore are in need of being restored to their previous forgiven state. It is up to those who remain in the forgiven state to attempt to restore that individual to their previous forgiven state.

James 5:19-20 refers to this same idea. "19 My brethren, if any one among you wanders from the truth and some one brings him back, 20 let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." The word "restore" in this verse is a different word in the original language. It means to "cause him to turn back" so is translated "restore" him to his former condition.

An example of this is seen in **Chapter 5 of 1 Corinthians** where the Apostle Paul reprimands the entire congregation for allowing an individual to commit the grievous sin of having his father's wife as his own. "1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. 2 And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this?"

Paul said "put that man out of your fellowship," and "hand this man over to Satan..." This is equivalent to telling them they must not allow that sin to go on. But the reason to take this action is to bring about the restoration of that man into the fellowship of the forgiven. This is expressed in the next sentence, "so that his *sinful nature (sarkos)* may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord." The Interlinear Greek/English New Testament renders this as follows: "for the destruction of the flesh." The word "sarkos" is from the Greek "sarx" meaning flesh. It does not imply that we are born with a propensity towards sin. Sin is something we learn to do, or not do, as we grow. The purpose for putting him out was to bring him to repent and stop the sin. Then the

brothers could restore him to fellowship with the church. This is further explained by Paul in the following verses wherein he refers to the sin as “old yeast” or “leaven”.

Note **verse 6**, “Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?” This naturally refers to the idea that the entire congregation would be infected by the sin of the one man unless they did something about it. He continued in **verse 7**, “Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 Therefore, let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.”

The guilty man had fallen from “sincerity and truth” and needed to be restored to it. He had to learn to “put to death his sinful desires” as Paul wrote in **Romans 8:13** when he said “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do *mortify* (put to death, RS) the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (KJV) The man had to learn to control his sinful desires.

Professor Thomas Friskney wrote a commentary on I Corinthians while teaching at Cincinnati Christian College (now C C University). He said about this case, “*The form of discipline is figuratively stated as ‘to deliver such a one to Satan.’ Though this expression is commonly taken as having reference to the infliction of bodily punishment, the context lends more weight for its being in reference to excommunication. In verse 7 Paul says, ‘Purge out the old leaven.’ In verse 9 and verse 11 he stresses ‘not to keep company with fornicators.’*” (ASV)

Then, in **verse 13**, Paul wraps it up by saying, “Expel the wicked man from your number.” This act by the church is, in this modern age, referred to as “excommunication.” It is seldom used among many modern denominations yet it is a concept that is clearly stated in this context.

But what does Paul later say about this matter? We refer you to **II Corinthians 2:5ff**, “5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. 7 Now instead, you ought **to forgive and comfort** him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, **to reaffirm your love for him**, 9 The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—

if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake. 11 In order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”

We conclude the man who had been put out from among them had repented and now the rest of the church is to forgive the man of the wrong he had done. Once that forgiveness is given he could be restored to the fellowship and the “excommunication” could be expunged.

Restoration of the individual to the fellowship would then be complete. But it was the responsibility of the entire fellowship of believers under the leadership of the elders to do what was needed to make restoration possible. That is what Paul meant when he wrote, “You who are spiritual should restore him gently.” The word “restore” refers to returning him to his perfected condition before he so grievously sinned. He had “missed the mark” which is what the word “sin” actually means.

Restoration Not Limited to Individuals

What we often fail to see is the Biblical concept of Restoration is not limited to individuals who sinned. It is just as applicable to entire bodies of individuals such as churches who have departed from the truth and are in need of being restored to that from which they have fallen if they were ever in it.

An example of this is seen in the letter to the churches in Galatia. Note what Paul wrote to those churches in **Galatians 1:6ff**, “6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!”

Here was a situation wherein not just one congregation, but several, were “deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ...” They were “turning to a different gospel.” This “new gospel” was an effort to require Gentiles to meet the requirements of the Law of Moses before they could be baptized and become Christians. The rest of the book of Galatians is Paul’s protest to requiring Gentiles to observe the requirements of the Law of Moses before they could be included in the church.

Paul states very clearly that the churches in Galatia had “fallen away from grace.” (5:4) “You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ: you have *fallen away from grace*.” When whole congregations have departed from the truth of the Word they need to be restored to the truth from which they have fallen. They had been saved but now they find themselves “alienated from Christ.”

Thus Paul wrote to show them the error of their way in his effort to restore them to that from which they had fallen. He went so far as to make it a major part of the discussion with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem when he returned from his mission trip to Galatia. We see this in **Acts 15:4ff** where James reminded the church leaders that God had prophesied the time when Gentiles would be included in God’s family. **Verses 16-18** are quoted from **Amos 9:11-12** in which Amos foretold the time when Gentiles would be included in the rebuilt “house of David.” This had evidently been overlooked by the churches in Galatia so now the brethren in Jerusalem had to help restore the Galatian churches to the right thinking on this subject. It would be good for the student to read the entire **Chapter 15 in Acts** to get the full understanding of this matter.

The fact is, when whole groups of people turn away from the truth of the Gospel and begin to teach different forms of doctrine, they are “deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ.” If and when that happens they need “restored” to the truth originally taught by Jesus and the apostles.

Restore Implies Truth From Which One Has Fallen

Whether it is an individual who has sinned, or a group of people who make up denominations who perpetuate division, restoration is needed to return them all to the original gospel and doctrine of Jesus and his apostles. In doing so they would be restored to that one church Jesus built.

The truth revealed by Jesus and the apostles guided by the Holy Spirit is the perfect message we are to believe and preach in order to be the church Jesus said He would build (**Matthew 16:18**). When we see different denominations teaching contrary doctrines that do not come close to resembling what Jesus and the Apostles taught, we need to help “restore them” to the one church for which Jesus died.

As we each come to an understanding of the truth as revealed in the Word of truth, we are then responsible for trying to help bring about restoration to that truth all who no longer teach it. Teaching false doctrine by

a denomination is as wrong as the sin of “having his father’s wife.” In essence, the latter may infect a congregation of believers as surely as teaching a gospel that is not the gospel but is a departure from the gospel. Restoration of the erring brother as well as the erring congregation is needed.

Consider the Seven Churches of Revelation 3 and 4.

The seven churches mentioned in **Revelation Chapters 3 and 4** are examples of what we are talking about in this lesson. Only two of the seven were accepted as being what they were supposed to be. These two were not in need of restoration as they had not slipped into false teachings or other types of sin. However, the five that had fallen in one way or another were in danger of losing their salvation unless they repented and were restored to that perfected condition. Remember the word “restore” includes the idea of being set right or returned to their perfected state from which they had fallen.

The five churches that had not remained faithful in all things had one thing in common. They all needed to restore that which was lacking among them. If they were committing sin they needed to stop. If they were teaching false doctrine or allowing it to be taught, they needed to stop allowing it.

The one word that covers their start towards being restored was the word “repent.” For example, the church at Pergamum stands out in this regard (**Revelation 2:12-17**). Note **verse 15-16**, “15 And you have others who hold to the teachings of the Nicolaitans. 16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”

This indicates clearly that false teaching must be combatted by using the Word of truth mentioned in **Ephesians 6:17**, “... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” This is the only way restoration can be accomplished when someone has deserted the truth of the Word.

Repentance is the way towards restoration. But before one can be restored to what has been given up there must be a recognition of what has been lost. The Galatian churches were warned they had fallen away from grace. We are not told in Scriptures what their response was to Paul’s warning but we can certainly conclude they were in the same situation as the five churches in Revelation. If they did not repent of their departure from “the one who called you by the grace of Christ” and return to the original gospel message, they, too, could lose access to God’s grace.

But it takes a humble person to recognize and admit to being wrong and be willing to repent and return to the pure form of doctrine from which they had departed. Only when that happens will the person, or the church or groups of churches, find restoration to the truth.

Professor Friskney also wrote a commentary on The Book of Revelation entitled, "*Strength for Victory*". In this book he wrote the following thoughts regarding the Church at Pergamum.

"Repent therefore; or else I will come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth." (KJV) "Here is their call to repentance. False teaching must be dealt with. Christ, who has the two-edged sword, is the one not only with a message of encouragement to the faithful but also the one with a message of judgment for the false teachers and those deceived by them. As Jesus says, 'I come quickly,' and He gives assurance that the due judgment for their sin is **sure**. This fact is more important than **when** it will come." They must stop false teaching and restore the truth.

Now consider wherein there has been desertion from the grace of the Lord.

Just as the man in Corinth had committed a grievous sin, even so many individuals have done the same or similar kinds of sin. Paul warned the Christians in **I Corinthians 5:9**, "...not to associate with sexually immoral people of this world..." Read the next verses to get a more complete picture. There is a need for people who fall from grace to repent and seek restoration to the fellowship of the forgiven.

Just as the congregations in Galatia had departed from the pure gospel, even so today many have departed from what the Scriptures reveal as the true gospel. They, too, must repent of their divisive teachings and restore the correct teachings as given in the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

Division among believers is wrong. It too must be repented of and unity of the Spirit restored to the churches of today. Jesus prayed that His followers would remain united. **John 17:11** contains this thought, "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name – the name you gave me – so that they may be one as we are one."

Truly there is a need for restoration of the unity of the body of Christ "so the world may believe" as Jesus said in **John 17:21**. Please read this and make it your desire to help restore the divided churches to the

unity that God wants for the church that He built (**Matthew 16:18, Colossians 1:18**).

The unity of the one church Jesus spoke of in **Matthew 16:18** is seen in **Ephesians 4:3-6**, "3 Make every effort to **keep the unity** of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called – 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

There is no room for debate on those subjects listed above. The common word among them is the word "one." One body, i.e. the church, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. This is the "unity of the Spirit" that we are to "make every effort to keep."

Conclusion

We can safely conclude that there was a truth that was complete in the first century Christian Church. Whenever any person or group of people departed from that truth they needed to repent and be restored to it. It is obvious that Christianity is divided today with various factions competing against each other.

This is contrary to the way Jesus and the apostles taught. There is a need for repentance and a return to the unity of the body of Christ "so the world may believe."

May the Lord Jesus bless all who will work to restore all believers to that oneness that was what Jesus prayed for "that the world may believe."

That, I conclude, is the Biblical Concept of Restoration. May this short introduction to that concept lead everyone to seriously consider how they may help make it happen.

Summit's Fall Semester Schedule – Enrollments Open!

Classes begin Aug. 23 – Ends Dec. 15th, 2016

Fall Break – Nov. 21st – 25th, 2016

Tuesday

7-9 PM Personal / Evang. 2 cr. Kendall Faull

Wednesday

9-Noon Pers./Spiritual Devel. 2 cr. Jerry Paul
1:30-4:30 Acts 3 cr. Terry Carter

Thursday

9-Noon Parables of Christ 3 cr. George Faull
1:30-4:30 History of Israel 3 cr. Shane Capps
6:30-8:30 Bible Customs 2 cr. G. Faull/T. Carter

~Second Wind Ladies Jubilee~

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For Ladies 13 Years and Older for 2016

Gatherings @ the Church of Christ at Grissom 1461 W. Matador Street – Peru, IN 46970

Lodging Available at Summit's Resident Dorm (Across from the Church Bldg)

* * All Meals Will be On Your Own – See Costs for Lodging/Sessions on Registration form on back * *

1st Session Friday – 1:00 PM - 2nd Session Friday- 7:30 PM - 3rd Session Saturday – 9:00 AM

Registration Forms, Directions, and More Info - www.summit1.org or call



Guest Speaker
Melody Belcher

Music Concert Friday PM
& Song Leader
Krista Melton



Aug. 19th–20th, 2016

THEME: Out of Egypt

“Coming Out of Bondage to the Promised Land”

Workshops Friday Afternoon

Kay Young
Donna Young
Brenda Barker

