



A Spiritual Encouragement Message April 10, 2020

Sacrificial Love

In Matthew 7:21-27, Jesus draws a distinction between two groups of people: Those who he “never knew” and those who “hear these words of mine and do them”. The distinction should be easy enough to decipher, after all, good and evil is almost always obvious, right? I’ve seen Hollywood movies. I know it’s always the guy in dark clothing! I know that sinister music plays during evil scenes...

Unfortunately, good and evil are often difficult to discern. In fact, note what the people “he never knew” were doing: “Did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, and do mighty works” (Matthew 5:22). I don’t know about you, but I’ve not done any of those things. The only prophecies I’ve ever spoken were secondhand! I’ve never even witnessed the casting out of demons. Yet, these people who “performed” these deeds were linked up as those who Jesus will say “he never knew”. Why?

Well, theology is rarely summed up in a single article, but I wish to share one aspect about faithful people that these “mighty workers” failed to uphold.

In **John 14:15**, Jesus said, “**If you love me, keep my commandments**”. These “mighty workers” apparently understood the words of Christ to mean doctrinal correctness, strict adherence, and abstention from sin are the fundamental aspect of faith. However, these are but parts of the whole. They’re not to be eliminated, as much as they need to be placed in proper perspective. After all, Jesus said there are **TWO** great commands, to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves (**Matthew 22:37-39**). Furthermore, the apostle Paul made a great distinction between those who could perform wonders but failed to

uphold the greatest commands.

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing” (1 Cor. 13:1-4)

Love is the primary force of ALL of our faith. Love is the driving motivation for everything we do. Our drive and focus are motivated by either our love of self, or someone else’s love of us. We NEED love. Jesus demonstrates the greatest form of love in WORD and DEED (**John 15:13; Rom. 5:10**). The question we should ask ourselves is, how can we show love in this broken world? God has given them prophecy, miracles, and freedom. What can I give?

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