

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

TIMES OF SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study.....9:00 A.M.
 Worship.....10:00 A.M.
 Training Class.....5:00 P.M.
 Worship.....6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study.....7:00 P.M.



Weekly Bulletin
 October 14, 2018

Zeal for Christ in the Spirit of Christ

by Rick Liggin

“And it came about, when the days were approaching for His ascension, that He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem; and He sent messengers on ahead of Him. And they went, and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make arrangements for Him. And they did not receive Him, because He was journeying with His face toward Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, ‘Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?’ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, ‘You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’” (Luke 9:51-56).

In commenting on this text, G. Campbell Morgan made a profound observation; he said, “It is possible to be zealous for the honor of God in a spirit which puts us out of fellowship with God.” (*The Gospel According To Luke*, p. 132). This

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statement seems to exactly describe the mistake of James and John on this occasion. Their deep sense of loyalty and respect for Jesus caused them to want to defend Him in the presence of those who did not share their respect.

Their loyalty, by itself, was not a bad thing. In fact, it was a good thing—and quite admirable. But the way in which they wanted to show their loyalty proved that they had not yet imbibed enough of the spirit of Christ. Their response was totally out of character with His life and (saving) mission. Instead of trying to save the enemies of Jesus, James and John wanted to kill them—with fire from heaven! Here was zeal, for sure, but zeal with the wrong spirit.

This same thing happens to us today when we find ourselves despising the enemies of God—hating the sinner, rather than just hating the sin. Oh, we pay lip service to the fact that we only hate the sin, but our attitude, at times, subtly suggests otherwise. We tend to look down our noses at those whose lives are messed up by sin, thinking, “He’s just getting what he deserves.” Our attitude, even as we try to tell him about his need to repent, is, “You’re going to hell and I’m kind of glad of it!”

This wrong spirit also manifests itself in the way some of us (especially in writing) defend truth against error taught by denominational preachers—or even by our own brethren. I find myself, at times, in agreement with the point of truth being defended, but completely opposed to and even embarrassed by the spirit manifested in the one defending the truth. Instead of trying to correct those in opposition to truth with kindness and gentleness, in genuine hope that God will “grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of truth”

(2 Tim. 2:24-26), we seem to be more interested in being quarrelsome and stirring up strife.

When such an attitude finds place in our hearts it proves that we still have a carnal spirit—despite our zeal for Christ. It proves that, despite our loyalty to Jesus, we still have not yet imbibed enough of His spirit. Such actions and attitudes are totally out of character with that of our Lord’s. And that carnal spirit, though filled with a loyalty to Him, will cause us to be separated from God.

Shall we give up our loyalty to Christ and compromise the truth? Never! Should we continue to zealously defend Jesus? Absolutely! But let’s make sure that our zeal is tempered by His godly spirit! Let’s not be zealous for God in a way that puts us out of fellowship with Him. No one wins when that happens—well, no one but the devil.

Christ in Me

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...” (Gal. 2:20).

For Christ to live in me (Gal. 2:20), His words must live in me (John 15:7).

If His words live in me, His mind lives in me (Philippians 2:5).

If His mind lives in me, “every good thing” lives in me (Philemon 1:6).

If every good thing lives in me, sin cannot (1 John 3:6-9).

Bottom line: If His words and His mind live in me; and every good thing found in Him is found in me, my life will look just like His life (1 John 2:6).