

What is Jesus Doing?

NO EXCUSES

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

- Genesis 3:22-24

In pulpits across the planet, Christians are taught that sin and death entered the world when and because of Eve and Adam's disobedience to God in eating an "apple" which He forbade them to eat. The implication is that we should always obey God and usually through the adherence to, and application of the 10 Commandments as they were given to Moses much later in the Bible.

Certainly, the timing is right, and disobedience to the Lord God is the paramount reason that sin and death abound in the world today, but the nuances of the Lord's Word is often lost to the flock in this simple teaching. Perhaps this is the reason why so many today are quick to hurl judgment at others while being unwilling to examine themselves by the words of the One True God we can know in Christ Jesus (Jesus Messiah).

We were created to be eternal beings, but only once we allow a relationship with God that can only be had and solidified in a desire for, understanding of, and receiving into relationship with God the Father through the death and resurrection of the Son through the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

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You see, by actually partaking of the fruit of the tree of the KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, our progenitors became people WITHOUT EXCUSE for making bad choices and they passed this legacy down to us. This is why we could not be given the additional gift of eternal life from the other special tree in the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Life, at least not in an unsaved condition.

Let's ponder why it is that God did not prohibit Adam from eating of that tree, but specified only the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil... Could it be that God, the loving Father, knew that it is in a child's (childlike Adam's) nature to disobey and so He not only prohibited the eating of that fruit but allowed the enemy, in the form of a serpent, to lie to and convince Eve to seduce Adam into the disobedience that would allow sin and death to come into the Garden?

Before you shout "heresy!" consider this... Jesus' death on the Cross was never God's Plan B but the foundational purpose of the entire Creation! This leads me to believe that in order for mankind to begin the journey that would culminate in God's True Israel (those Jews and Gentiles that give their lives to Christ) becoming the family of God in Heaven, they HAD to have a knowledge of good and evil so that they could make REAL choices. This is also why we cannot blame God for the awful condition of the world (sin, disease, crime, hatred, bigotry, etc.) but we MUST accept responsibility ourselves.

There is certainly now and has been throughout history REAL EVIL in the world. There are those today and throughout the story of mankind that have reveled in causing anguish, death and destruction upon their fellow men and women. There are many of these who perpetrated atrocities in the VERY NAME OF GOD and even in the NAME OF JESUS!

So... how do we differentiate the true Good from the real evil? Simply by adhering to the Word of God. How do we know what the Word of God says, let alone what it MEANS?

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By having a RELATIONSHIP with Jesus, the Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit which begins in the DESIRE of a person to KNOW God and not merely to have power over other persons (which is all empty religion accomplishes). Although it is surely ONLY God's Grace and Mercy that sent the Messiah/son to die for all mankind, it is the true desire of individual people to have a relationship with God that opens the door of the heart at which Jesus knocks.

Jesus certainly knew the difference between the lost and the wicked. Note that throughout the Gospels, the lost are the broken sinners (the drunks, the fornicators, the homosexuals, the demon-possessed, the prostitutes, even the tax collectors) and the truly wicked (the religious Pharisees). He dined with the former in fellowship and forgave them, taught them and loved them, while the latter he physically scourged out of the Temple and reviled them calling them a "brood of vipers".

It is little wonder why the wicked religious and political leaders of today (not all certainly but FAR too many), have little regard for the poor (Jesus template for how to love Him was how you love THEM) and great regard for personal wealth and privilege (Jesus said you cannot serve God and Mammon/money). A true shepherd after the Chief Shepherd's heart will always love, tend and feed the flock while the false shepherds will uncaringly FLEECE them for profit.

"The wicked will be cast into outer darkness and eternal torment on the Day of Judgment" is what the Bible tells us. So much for the wicked.

However, many people will say "but wait! I'm not a wicked person. I'm a good person. I just don't want to have anything to do with religion. (or in the case of Christians "I don't really need to go to Church, read the Bible, defend the poor, blah, blah, blah...) I don't want to say I'm a sinner. I don't sin. I don't even think that there is such a thing as sin so how can you judge me?" Really? Jesus said that there is NO ONE good but the Father in Heaven.

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Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

- Proverbs 3:7

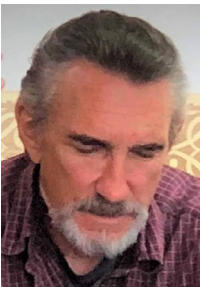
This implies that by believing your own desire to be right rather than seeking God's perspective, you have done evil.

To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

- James 4:17

This great truth eliminates all the other excuses that people have for not taking care of the poor, their neighbors and even their own family ESPECIALLY if they call themselves Christians.

Jesus, the Son of Man and Son of God, accepted His purpose to be vilified, scourged and hung to die on the Cross to be a propitiation, a SUBSTITUTE for each one of us wretched sinners and endured the shame for the JOY that was set before Him! What was that JOY? The sure knowledge that those that would desire a relationship with God could and would come to Him and lay their burdens/sins at the Cross in humility and rise up to an earthly life of Godly power through prayer and supplication, and on THROUGH death unto ETERNAL LIFE. THAT is why God allowed sin and death to enter the world through the disobedience of the first Adam... So that despite the BAD choices many who knew the difference between good and evil would make, there would come out of the world the true FAMILY OF GOD who would make the GOOD choice to follow Jesus and forever LIVE!



In the Might of His Spirit, in His Love, with blessing,

- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi