

What is Jesus Doing?

THE SPIRIT OF THE PHARISEE IN THE MODERN CHURCH

Let me begin this blog by saying that Christ's desire for the Church as God's Israel, the Body and Bride of Christ, is that we were and are to be a living organism, with many members, as a body has many members, and one Head, that is Jesus. I maintain that Christianity, as we call it, was never meant to be just another world religion. Yet that is exactly what it has become, in the mainstream, which may be why most Christians, when they try to evangelize, find that their arguments ring hollow with those with other religious-bents who are equally as fervent about their beliefs.

Through the centuries, Christ's amazing story (Messiah, Savior, Light of the world, Risen Lord) has survived, and thrived, in the hearts of true Believers all over the world. However, meanwhile, another church, born of the same pharisaical power mongering that called for the death of the Son of Man, has grown like a cancer within the Body of Christ, more political than faithful. The former lives because Christ lives in the hearts of these true Believers in the Person of the Holy Spirit. The latter, a much larger group, is religious at its core, and is more interested in politics and world domination than it is in being about Our Father's business. You recognize these because they are more interested in the benefits of having a relationship with God, than they are in bringing God the Glory He deserves by living the life He gave them for His Glory and not for their own benefit.

This is not to say that there are not many well-meaning and fervent Christians who love God sitting among these churches whose leadership are more interested in growing large than in drawing close and growing deep. However where these lambs sit on Sunday may be the central issue in their deep frustration at not seeing the power of God moving in their own lives and among the other members of their flock.

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At this juncture, let me be clear. Although the Pharisees who saw Jesus to the Cross were Jewish, they're being Jewish is not the issue. The issue is the spirit of the Pharisee, a demonic spirit, which lives in the ones who desire personal control because of their self-proclaimed status as God's "chosen people", be they Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Taoists, New Agers, or Christians.

I myself am a Jewish man. Some people ask me why I converted from Judaism to Christianity. I tell them I did not convert, but at His call, at the perfect time, I received Messiah as my Lord, the Son of God who saved me. I did this as any Jewish person who diligently searches the Scriptures and finds Yeshua is Messiah would do when they understand Who the Christ IS. My standard response is, "while I am certainly blessed to be one of God's original Chosen People, I am infinitely MORE blessed to have been allowed to choose Him back"!

The spirit of the Pharisee in the modern church is obsessed with the political nation of Israel and the end times. Why? Could it be because they are looking for a power-base on earth instead of drawing their power from the Source of all Power, God Himself, in the Person of His Son Jesus through the Holy Spirit? This is the spirit of the Pharisee at work.

Paul very clearly tells us that the "Israel of God" are those who circumcise their HEARTS to the Lord Jesus Christ

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. As many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

- Galatians 6:15-16

We who truly believe, and serve the Lord, are Citizens of Heaven who have been, as Paul also says, foreknown by God, called to this place, justified by Jesus' death on the Cross, and glorified with Him even now! (Romans 8:29-30)

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It is my daily prayer that God would glorify Himself through this servant by making me sensitive in my spirit to what His Holy Spirit is desiring me to do today, and to have the obedient heart to walk that out. Because of this prayer, and more so God's faithfulness, I see miracles of restoration and healing every day! It is my daily joy to interact deeply within the full Body of Christ to bless, pray with, encourage and often exhort the members of the Lord's Flock to follow Him as He said to do, by taking up their cross daily.

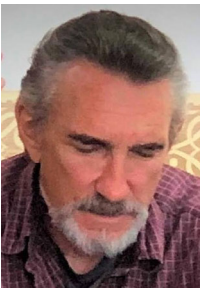
I have encouraged my homeless flock, and the Lord's soldiers whom I have been privileged to help raise up over the years, that while their cross may look dark and heavy before they bend to lift it, like Jesus' Cross was, when they finally make that hard choice to stoop to pick up that cross JUST BECAUSE JESUS ASKED US TO, that they find, when they take it up, that it is made of balsa wood and is filled with helium, and it actually lifts THEM.

As Jesus said in Matthew,

For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

- Matthew 11:30

The Lord gives Wisdom liberally to ALL who ask, and without reproach (James 1:5). I encourage you today to test these words against the Word of God and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the Truth to you personally. Above all, do what He says!



In His Love, with His blessing,

- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi