

WAS JESUS DIFFERENT?

David Clayton



into the struggle, the primary ingredient is our faith and surrender, but somehow it seems that the most important thing is our human input. With these, all things become possible. Those who believe this do not even emphasize the need to be born again, it is all about human effort. I once believed this, but this was before I understood what it means that Christ is my righteousness.

A DIVINE HUMAN

2. The second perspective is that Jesus was a human being who had a divine mind, or spirit. Genetically he was fully a man, with all the limitations of a man, but inwardly in the spiritual part, he was the Son of God who pre-existed and came from heaven. Though he left his memories and powers behind, he did not leave his identity behind. He was still the Son of God. But the question is, in what sense was he still the son of God? He was still the son of God because he possessed the one essential quality which separates divinity from all creation; that one quality is that he was good in himself. His nature was good, not because God was

There are two perspectives among us as to what God accomplished by sending Jesus to become one of us.

JUST ANOTHER HUMAN

1. The first perspective is that Jesus was just another human being, exactly like all men, who was able to live a perfect life by faith and surrender to God. God lived his life through him, but Jesus' part was to trust and surrender. In this perspective, the central issue is whether or not we have faith and choose to surrender. If we can believe and surrender as Jesus did, we can live exactly as he did. The key consideration is what we put

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living in him, but his nature was good because he himself was God by nature!

BORROWED GOODNESS?

There were two possible sources of the goodness which was in Jesus. The first possibility was that it was a borrowed goodness, infused into him by the indwelling holy spirit. In other words, Jesus was not good in himself, but goodness appeared in him because God (the Father) was manifesting himself through him. Without this presence of the Father in him, Jesus would not have been good, but would have been just as carnal and evil as all other men.

INHERENTLY GOOD?

The second possibility is that Jesus was good in himself, just as God the Father is, because he is the *begotten* son of God. He has inherited the nature of God which essentially is pure goodness (selfless love). Though he was fully a human, genetically identical to all men, suffering the same genetic deficiencies as all of us, yet his mind or his spirit was not the same as ours. Yes, it was limited to human capabilities like all of us, but it was *morally*, far superior to ours. Jesus never hated anyone, Jesus never desired evil for anyone, Jesus never had a selfish motive, but where did that come from? Was it another being (God the father) loving through him, or was it Jesus himself loving men from the basis of his own loving nature? The answer is very important and let me explain why.

SUBSTITUTE

Those who say Jesus was good in himself (which is what I believe), understand that Jesus did not come to be an example to us as to how to overcome sin. That was not his mission because there is no man

who lives, or who has ever lived who can live the life that Jesus lived. He is the only man who ever lived and who will ever live who was absolutely flawless morally, in whom Satan could find not the least area where he fell under Satan's principles. Jesus did not come to show us the way, he came to *be the way!* He is not our *example* of how to overcome sin, he himself is our *victory over sin!* In other words, he does not say, "look, see how I walked, now follow in my steps." No, no, no. Rather he says, "step into my arms and I will take you through. I will live instead of you." We do not follow Christ's example, instead we allow Christ to live again and he who lived perfectly once, will do it again in us. It is not the imitated life, but the substituted life!

I am not saying that Jesus' example is not a good thing to seek to emulate. His life was perfect and surely a good ideal to reach for. However, there is more implied in the concept that Jesus is my example and that is what I am opposed to. Most people who say that Jesus is our example, insist that Jesus was exactly as we are, plus or minus nothing. These are the people who believe that the ultimate goal in the universe is the keeping of the law. So they say, Jesus came to show us that it was possible for the law to be kept. His life says, "I did it so you can too." In other words, the life of Jesus was primarily a challenge to us which says, if you emulate me, you can do just as I did, I did it, so why can't you?" This perspective presents Jesus as the "way shower," rather than the way. It makes Jesus the means to the end, rather than the end itself. Is the victorious life a matter of emulating Christ, or is it a matter of receiving Christ and allowing him to live through us as we surrender to him moment by moment?

THE NEW HUMANITY

It is true that Jesus had to come as a man, fully under the conditions of fallen humanity. He had to take the curse upon himself on the cross, but was it as an example? Did he do these things so that he could then ask us to imitate him? This is the perspective which leads to legalism. No, he did these things so that he could take the old humanity upon himself and take it to the cross to death. In the resurrection he was raised as the second Adam, the head of a new human race in which the curse has been destroyed and which possesses all the attributes which he hammered into that life when he was a man. This is what we **inherit** when we are born again into Christ. It is what we inherit, not what we **imitate!** Jesus had to be us, so that he could create this new reality for us, not so that we could imitate him.

LOVE DISPLAYED

In addition to this, let us consider this truth: If God had been the one living the life of Jesus, then how could it be true that God's love was truly displayed in Jesus? If Jesus was simply a surrendered vessel being used by God, then on the cross when Jesus died for us, was it that Jesus went through with it because his love for us was so great, or was it that he went through and endured it because of the wishes of His Father? Was the cross a display of Jesus' love for man, or of his obedience to his Father, or both?

GOD'S LOVE OR DIVINE NATURE?

Many in the godhead movement have tended to focus on the gift of Jesus as the ultimate manifestation of the love of God, and I am one of those. However, there are other facets and angles to that demonstration of love which need to be

explored. It was not just God's feelings of love which needed to be demonstrated, but the very fundamental nature of what God is truly like. The only way God could be revealed to human beings in his true nature was if he came down to our level, became one of us and lived his life on our plane, without pretense or fakery, under conditions which could not be manipulated. We all know that God could never become a man. He could take on the form of a man, but he could never be truly a man. It would be pretense, play-acting. He would still be God almighty, just in an assumed form. But the SON of God could become a man! His power, glory, knowledge, memories etc. Could be taken from him and he could be placed in circumstances where he could reveal God on a human level, because his nature is the **express image of the father's person**. Even if he became a man, the inward nature of God would remain pure and holy, utterly selfless. Therefore, in this way, though he were a human being, yet the glory of God - God's utterly selfless love, God's mercy and tender compassion would shine through him on a human level.

HIS OWN GOODNESS

This is the critical point. If Jesus was not manifesting his own divine goodness, then he was not really revealing what God is like. He was only revealing what God can display through any human being. In fact, there is every possibility that it could have been a show put on by God, using a human body. The acid proof that Jesus was good in himself, is Calvary. On Calvary God abandoned Jesus, left him alone. Why did Jesus remain good and continue to choose good? No created being can be good, or choose what is truly good without the influence of God's spirit. But Jesus did

not have that on the cross. If we are to believe the words of Jesus himself, God forsook him on the cross and he was left entirely alone to bear the sin of the world, to take the curse upon himself. Why then did he still choose good? How was it possible for him to do this when separated from God? The answer is that he did, because he is good in himself because by nature, he is God!

In other words, the true nature of God was revealed on Calvary. Jesus showed that fundamentally, divinity is selfless and cares more about others than itself. Jesus demonstrated that fundamentally, there is a great difference between divinity and the creation. Goodness is not a matter of what we know, or what we choose to do. Goodness is something which resides only in divinity. Jesus was not just defending God the Father as a person, he was defending the very nature of God, the nature of divinity so as to make it clear why it was impossible for any creature to sit in the same councils as God (as Lucifer had wanted to do). Only a divine being can truly be good. The difference between God and creature is not a difference in information, it is a difference of nature. All of us can learn more, we can obtain more information, but we cannot change our natures. None of us can make ourselves inherently good because that is a quality which belongs to divinity **only**. (Mark 10:18)

TEMPTED AS WE ARE

The question is often asked, “but wasn’t Jesus tempted in all points like as we are? How could this be possible if he was divine in his spirit? How could he be truly tempted as I am if he was not exactly like me with all my tendencies and limitations? Were the temptations of Jesus simply a pretense?

First of all, let us note that Jesus was not tempted as we are in all details. Jesus was never tempted to use drugs, to be a homosexual, to murder someone. At least, it is inconceivable to me that he was. I am not tempted by those things and some things such as homosexual desire will never be a temptation to me. My nature recoils from it. I am sure it was the same for Jesus with most temptations. So, the point is, when the Bible says he was tempted in “all points,” it must mean he was tempted as we are, in principle, not in details. The underlying principle behind all temptations is highlighted by John when he says,

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1John 2:16)

THREE CATEGORIES

In other words there are three principal categories into which sin falls and Jesus was tempted in all three of those categories, just as we are. When we look at his wilderness temptations it is clear that they fell into these three categories.

1. The lust of the flesh - the temptation to turn stones to bread in a moment of extreme hunger.
2. The lust of the eyes - The temptation to obtain all the kingdoms of the world
3. The pride of life - the temptation to show who he was by a vain demonstration of power

Look at those three temptations. They almost seem to be trivial. I hardly think any of those would be much of a

temptation for me if they were presented to me openly, up front. One wonders, where was there any power in those temptations? However, when we consider the true nature of sin, it becomes easier to understand. This is the key to understanding how Jesus was tempted.

THE ROOT PRINCIPLE

The root of sin in essence, is the **self-governed** life, the life that is lived independently of God. Satan could have had no hope of success with Jesus by trying to induce him to commit those gross acts of transgression to which we fall so easily. He could not get him to commit adultery, to steal, to lie, to blaspheme etc. However, if he could get him to act on the **principle** of sin, the result would be the same. Jesus was tempted to act on the basis of self-government and in this sense, he was tempted upon the same points as we are. This is the foundation principle that underlies all sin. We sin (in whatever form it manifests itself) because we run our own lives! There is absolutely no other reason and there is no other explanation as to why born again Christians still fall into sin.

Jesus' temptations were more subtle, more sophisticated, but in principle, they were exactly the same as ours. They were focused on getting Jesus to act independently of God, on the basis of his own initiative. Self-government is the principle of Satan's kingdom. Living by the directives of God's holy spirit is the principle of the kingdom of God.

NATURE OR CHARACTER

The question may be asked, why is it that Christians still continue to fall into sin, even though they are born again? Doesn't

this demonstrate that the really critical factor is our own human effort, the exercise of our will, rather than the new nature which we receive? However, there are certain other factors involved which we need to understand.

When a person is born again, he receives a new **nature**, not a new **character**. Nature is inherited, we receive it when we are born, but character is formed or developed in the conflicts of life. We are saved on the basis of the nature we possess, the one we receive in Jesus, but we glorify God in the world by the character which we display. The basis of salvation is to some degree, different from the basis on which I reveal God's glory in the earth.

I am human, that is my nature and instinctively I behave like a human. But we know that all humans behave in inhuman ways if they are tempted strongly enough. It would be worse if there was another kind of nature involved pulling us in another direction. The point I am making is that even though we have a new nature and our instincts have changed, we still need to make choices and to consciously surrender, to yield, to exercise faith in giving Christ the reins of our life. We possess a new nature, but we still walk by faith. In other words, we have the instincts the desires and the capability to do what is morally good, but if this is not allied to faith, our habitual practice of self-dependence and taking the safer, or more pleasant route will override the impulses of the new nature and drag us into the path of self-government.

THE NEW BIRTH

One problem is that we have not understood the true nature of man, nor

the nature of the change which takes place when a person is born again. The Bible says,

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2Cor 5:17)

It is patently plain that this is not true in the absolute sense. The new birth is not a new birth of the conscious mind, the memories or the intellect. Everything which we have ever learned, our memories and our learned behavior still remains in our brains, even after we have been converted and born again of the spirit of Christ. However, what the Bible teaches is that the Lord Jesus has come to dwell in our **spirits** (2 Tim 4:22). It is a rebirth of the spirit, not a rebirth of the conscious mind. It is in the inner man that our motives and instincts have been renewed, but our conscious mind still is the place where our decisions are made and it is still influenced by the memories and habits and information gathered over our lifetime. So on the one hand we have the impulses of the new nature prompting us to do what is good, while on the other hand we have the intellect directing us into the habits of a lifetime. This is where the power of choice still comes into play. This is where walking with Jesus, abiding in him consciously, impacts upon the decisions we ultimately make.

SPIRITS, NOT INTELLECT

But here is the critical point; Our spirits are renewed, inwardly, all things have become new. This inward transformation is manifested in our outward behavior as we learn to “walk in the spirit,” as we “walk by faith and not by sight.” As we “lean not to our own understanding,” and

learn to act from the spirit rather than the intellect. This is where growth takes place in our experience. So we have the paradox that we are already transformed, new creatures, yet we are still growing and changing. The answer to the seeming contradiction lies in the fact that we are made up of body, soul and spirit. The conscious mind continues to learn and to be renewed. We never get rid of the information in it. All our lifetime the spirit will continue to grow and change and develop. But on the other hand, the spirit is completely transformed when we are born again.

The good thing is that we have the assurance that we are not saved because our characters are perfect. If this were so, I don't think anyone would be saved. No, we are saved because the life of Christ has been united with our life, spirit with spirit so that his seed is in us and remains in us. This is the basis of our salvation, not what we learn or how we develop, but the seed in us.

NO UNAVAILABLE POWER

Jesus exercised no power that we may not have in our conflict with sin. How can we reconcile this with the fact that Jesus was very different in his spirit than any human being? All This has to be true because it is Jesus himself who lives his life again in us. Surely, all that he did when he was in the flesh he is able to do again in our flesh when we are yielded to him! But the point is, it is he who is living, it is he who is doing it, it is not we who are doing it by emulating him. If you want to know the reason why nobody seems to be living the life of Christ then we need investigate no further after we have grasped this fact. We fail miserably, we speak but do not live, because it is we who emulate Christ, it is not Christ who

lives. We are in a relationship with the principles of Christ, with the morality of Christ, with the philosophy of Christ, but Christ himself is not allowed to live.

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LOCKDOWN ACCOUNT: A TESTIMONY

Mebaaihun Blah



The times we are living in are indeed significant. The Bible has foretold centuries ago that the world will come to a state such as this. Talking about the time of the end, Christ states in Matthew 24:7, "... there shall be famines, and pestilences and earthquakes, in diverse places." With the onset of the so-called Coronavirus, men's hearts are truly failing them for fear (Luke 21:26). The state of being locked up in homes, the inability to move freely, the fear of the disease, the uncertainty of food supply, financial insecurities, loss of employment, work overload and hectic study or educational schedules have caused anxiety, fear, depression. Psychological impact resulting from the present state of affairs is felt in most people and is a concern of different governments. It is inevitable that when restraints are imposed on people's daily lives and their freedom is limited, the

human mind is surely to be affected in one way or the other.

Following is my personal lockdown account which should not be taken as an end in itself but rather as a means to point us to the great urgency of having Christ in us so that He will fortify us with His faith to meet the fiery trials that await.

During the lockdown, I experienced much mental agony. FEAR was the main factor. I had fears of so many things that I hardly knew their beginning and end. The fears that overtook me became almost overwhelming. The slightest exposure to news of disease, death and especially suicides disturbed my mind and caused unrest in my soul. I avoided watching the news, documentaries and having conversations over the present scenario and its impact. I would be haunted by the stories of depressed people who saw no more hope that the only option they took was committing suicide. I feared about what if I someday reach that point too. I grew weary as I fought back thoughts of depression and suicide. Anxiety soon set in. I only wanted to lie down and think of nothing. I was afraid of my own thoughts – thoughts so negative, hopeless and fearful. My thoughts would at times be so

overwhelming for they would be of many negative things at once that I felt I would lose my sanity. Past fears also resurfaced. I recalled encountering a girl, possessed of Satan and this thought drove me steeper into fear. I felt my heart fainting and failing me. My imagination became plagued with horror. Every morning when I opened my eyes, I would try to think on God's promises but no sooner had I begun thinking on them than this great cloud of fear and gloom would overwhelm me all over again. When I attended to my chores and occasionally went out to get supplies, thoughts of depression, suicide and demon-possession haunted me and fear would just not let go of me or perhaps I was not getting go of it. The world and life itself became full of gloom and doom to me and I became exhausted of battling with these fears.

I cannot tell how such mental anguish arose in me but I can say that I never saw it coming even in my nightmares and I never was ready for such a mental and spiritual conflict. I realized how unprepared I was and I fear that many of us are still unprepared for our different battles of faith.

At the core of experiences such as mine, the issue to be addressed is FAITH. How much did I believe God's word to be sure and unchanging? How much did I believe in God's protection over me and my family and how much did I believe that Christ already possesses me and there is none other who can do so. During easy times it is not difficult to believe but when fear assails your very being, how hard it is to focus on our dear Jesus. Just like the disciples in the troubled waters, we cry, "We perish" (Luke 8:24).

I gather from my experience and am convicted that God's children will have their individual battles of faith to fight. For one it can be of a certain nature, for another an altogether different one. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we open our hearts to Jesus that through His life in us, we will be equipped with the faith and trust in God, our Father, and Jesus to face the trials ahead of us. Furthermore, we are to be very serious in our prayers. We must take time in asking God for patience and power as we run the race that is set before us (Hebrews 12:1).

Through all my experiences, my husband and I prayed more fervently than ever before to God for His blessings of faith and strength to endure our present trials and those to come. We prayed that we may be victorious through Christ in our battles of faith. I pleaded with God to let these fears pass from me. I searched the scriptures that I might find assurance and peace in God's holy word.

When Jesus promised, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," He did not promise in vain. Slowly but surely, Christ led me to understand God's word and its application to my experience. During one of our Bible studies, I was pointed to Matthew 6:34 where Jesus, to our comfort, states, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." This verse lifted a great weight off my shoulders. Anxiety seemed to melt away. Instantly my mind was opened and light from the throne of God pierced through the clouds of gloom. I no longer felt any fear for the future or fear regarding my future actions. I realized that if today

Christ holds me in His hands and takes care of me and my needs – physical, mental and spiritual – He will indeed take care of me tomorrow and all the remaining days of my life.

Even so, I was led to Psalms 81:9 which states, “There shall no strange god be in thee...” This verse assured me that Satan cannot claim for his own a child of God in whom Christ abides. Furthermore, Colossians 3:3 states, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Since our life is hid with Christ, there is no chance for Satan to take it from Jesus. Also, since “... our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29), who dares take us from such a God as ours?! I am even so encouraged by the following words taken from Ellen G. White’s book Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, chapter 18, where she states, “Your part is to put your will to the side of Christ. When you yield your will to His, He immediately takes possession of you, and works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your nature is brought under the control of His Spirit. ... It is allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You have a strength from God that holds you fast to His strength; and a new life, even the life of faith, is possible to you.”

I have indeed learnt from my experience that we need to be prepared for our battles. Various developments in the world which point to the nearness of Jesus’ return would put God’s children in diverse trials. Persecution and fiery trials await us but we need not fear if we rest our lives in Jesus. It is in the fire that we will be purged and we shall come forth as pure gold.

NO TIME TO LOSE *Yahunlang Blah*

*No time to lose my brethren
dear,
The reason is because the time is
near.
Trust in the LORD with all your
heart,
And He shall surely direct your
path.
In Him you shall trust,
For who are you? but, only dust.*

*Take your weapon and armour
of faith,
Lord, in me a new heart create.
Seek and you shall find,
Ask and it shall be given,
For this is the promise of
Heaven.*

I urge every reader to take heed to pray for a closer walk with God and Jesus and for a deeper, more intimate relation with our Father and His Son. Let us be diligent in reading God’s word and not be lulled to sleep by Satan’s cunning devices for he will keep us from preparing for our battles and the day of our Lord by placing upon us the cares and burdens of this life so that our trials will catch us unaware and our faith would not match up to the afflictions that would arise. Let us not deceive ourselves that the world will continue as it always had for Christ Himself warned that all these signs like famines, pestilences, wars etc, are only ‘the beginning of sorrows’ (Matthew 24:8). Let us not spend the remainder of

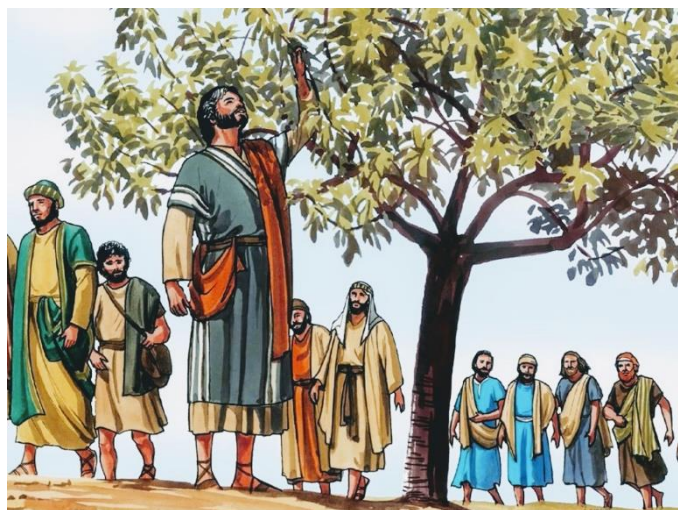
our lives striving towards our selfish, worldly goals. The scenes of earth's last days have begun; how vital it is for us to allow Christ to dwell in us that we may be vested with power from on high to endure the trials before us. A brother rightly stated that we are now in a battle running only with the foot soldiers.

Shortly, we shall have to run with the horses and how prepared will we be then?

Through all our fiery trials, let us heed the warnings of Jesus: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matthew 24:42).

GLIMPSES FROM THE PAST

JESUS' CURSE ON THE FIG TREE (Mark 11: 11-14,20,21) – E.G. WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, CH.64, PAGE 581-583



The entire night Jesus spent in prayer, and in the morning He came again to the temple. On the way He passed a fig orchard. He was hungry, "and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply He might find anything thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet."

It was not the season for ripe figs, except in certain localities; and on the highlands about Jerusalem it might truly be said, "The time of figs was not yet." But in the orchard to which Jesus came, one tree appeared to be in advance of all the others. It was already covered with

leaves. It is the nature of the fig tree that before the leaves open, the growing fruit appears. Therefore this tree in full leaf gave promise of well-developed fruit. But its appearance was deceptive. Upon searching its branches, from the lowest bough to the topmost twig, Jesus found "nothing but leaves." It was a mass of pretentious foliage, nothing more.

Christ uttered against it a withering curse. "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever," He said. The next morning, as the Saviour and His disciples were again on their way to the city, the blasted branches and drooping leaves attracted their attention. "Master," said Peter, "behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

Christ's act in cursing the fig tree had astonished the disciples. It seemed to them unlike His ways and works. Often they had heard Him declare that He came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. They remembered His words, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke 9:56. His wonderful

works had been done to restore, never to destroy. The disciples had known Him only as the Restorer, the Healer. This act stood alone. What was its purpose? they questioned.

God “delighteth in mercy.” “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.” Micah 7:18; Ezekiel 33:11. To Him the work of destruction and the denunciation of judgment is a “strange work.” Isaiah 28:21. But it is in mercy and love that He lifts the veil from the future, and reveals to men the results of a course of sin.

The cursing of the fig tree was an acted parable. That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ, was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Saviour desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and the certainty of Israel’s doom. For this purpose He invested the tree with moral qualities, and made it the expositor of divine truth. The Jews stood forth distinct from all other nations, professing allegiance to God. They had been specially favored by Him, and they laid claim to righteousness above every other people. But they were corrupted by the love of the world and the greed of gain. They boasted of their knowledge, but they were ignorant of the requirements of God, and were full of hypocrisy. Like the barren tree, they spread their pretentious branches aloft, luxuriant in appearance, and beautiful to the eye, but they yielded “nothing but leaves.” The Jewish religion, with its magnificent temple, its sacred altars, its mitered priests and impressive ceremonies, was indeed fair in outward appearance, but humility, love, and benevolence were lacking.

All the trees in the fig orchard were destitute of fruit; but the leafless trees raised no expectation, and caused no disappointment. By these trees the Gentiles were represented. They were as destitute as were the Jews of godliness; but they had not professed to serve God. They made no boastful pretensions to goodness. They were blind to the works and ways of God. With them the time of figs was not yet. They were still waiting for a day which would bring them light and hope. The Jews, who had received greater blessings from God, were held accountable for their abuse of these gifts. The privileges of which they boasted only increased their guilt.

Jesus had come to the fig tree hungry, to find food. So He had come to Israel, hungering to find in them the fruits of righteousness. He had lavished on them His gifts, that they might bear fruit for the blessing of the world. Every opportunity and privilege had been granted them, and in return He sought their sympathy and co-operation in His work of grace. He longed to see in them self-sacrifice and compassion, zeal for God, and a deep yearning of soul for the salvation of their fellow men. Had they kept the law of God, they would have done the same unselfish work that Christ did. But love to God and man was eclipsed by pride and self-sufficiency. They brought ruin upon themselves by refusing to minister to others. The treasures of truth which God had committed to them, they did not give to the world. In the barren tree they might read both their sin and its punishment. Withered beneath the Saviour’s curse, standing forth sere and blasted, dried up by the roots, the fig tree showed what the Jewish people would be when the grace of God was removed from them. Refusing

to impart blessing, they would no longer receive it. "O Israel," the Lord says, "thou hast destroyed thyself." Hosea 13:9.

The warning is for all time. Christ's act in cursing the tree which His own power had created stands as a warning to all churches and to all Christians. No one can live the law of God without ministering to others. But there are many who do not live out Christ's merciful, unselfish life. Some who think themselves excellent Christians do not understand what constitutes service for God. They plan and study to please themselves. They act only in reference to self. Time is of value to them only as they can gather for themselves. In all the affairs of life this is their object. Not for others but for themselves do they

minister. God created them to live in a world where unselfish service must be performed. He designed them to help their fellow men in every possible way. But self is so large that they cannot see anything else. They are not in touch with humanity. Those who thus live for self are like the fig tree, which made every pretension but was fruitless. They observe the forms of worship, but without repentance or faith. In profession they honor the law of God, but obedience is lacking. They say, but do not. In the sentence pronounced on the fig tree Christ demonstrates how hateful in His eyes is this vain pretense. He declares that the open sinner is less guilty than is he who professes to serve God, but who bears no fruit to His glory.

Notes

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Notes

The Heralds of Truth is one of Christ In You Ministries' endeavours to restore the truths that have been lost and trampled to the ground. We hope that by this avenue, we can motivate our readers to search for truth as for hidden treasures. This newsletter is published on a monthly basis and it is free of cost for anyone who desires to acquire it.

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