

WHERE DO I BELONG?

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Greetings to all in love,

Just want to share some things that have been on my heart lately, as I seek to find where I fit in the body of Christ. And I fully believe that some reading this will be able to relate to what I am saying. Personally, I believe I know, at least in part, God's calling upon my life, but how & where I fit in in this time & place, locationally and ministerially, I am not sure. Bear with me if you will, no offense to anyone is intended.

For what I've begun to realize over the past few years - as I've shared the hope I have found in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God - is that much of what I have come to believe the Scripture declares is misinterpreted as the essays I write are often viewed in light of modern theology and eschatology. Honestly - and this is a struggle for me, really causing me to wonder where I belong sometimes - I see very little of what is currently taught & accepted as Gospel in the written Word. Doctrines that are the foundation in many denominations appear to be misunderstood or are a misapplication of what the Word seems to clearly state. And in some cases, I see current doctrine to be in direct opposition to the canon of Scripture. Likewise, when I hear popular Christian songs, a great many of the lyrics leave me wondering where the creeds they sing about came from; for they do not line up with what I see in the teaching of Christ and the Apostles.

Again, my purpose is not to bash anyone's belief, but rather to lay hold of Truth. For I want only Truth regardless of how hard or convicting or demanding it might be. For there is only One Truth, and His Name is Jesus. And it is Him I have been called to "come after." I do not want to be listening to the voice of another. I want not a "golden calf" to divert my focus away from the True Deliverer.

Through my own personal time in the Scripture and communion with the Spirit, I have come to see some things quite a bit differently than much of what I've heard in many of the churches I've visited around this country, listened to online, read in articles or seen in the Bible Book Store bestsellers

To just lay it out there... Many of the tenets of the current Christian religion - some of which I used to believe myself - I do not find in the canon of Scripture. The more I spend time in the Word, and open my ears to hear what the Spirit is saying, the more what I believe is the True picture of the plan and purpose of God takes shape. And no passages or chapters of the Bible need to be excluded or ignored or passed off onto the 'unbelievers.' Rather what used to seem contradictory now fits together and makes perfect sense. It truly is exciting!!

I no longer believe the spiritual heaven is my home or destiny. The Kingdom is coming to the earth; the spiritual & physical realms will converge in that Day. I believe we may enter that realm after death, as we await our resurrection when we will once again be clothed with a physical body; but it is not where we will dwell eternally.

I do not believe in the three-in-one Trinity teaching. Literally hundreds of verses in the Bible show the relationship between the Father and the Son, and They are not the same; not “co-equal”. For one thing, Jesus is something that God is not: flesh & bone. And we know the Bible states that God “made Jesus Lord and Christ” because of His obedience, and that His Name is “above every other name”; yet Jesus is and will always be “subject to God.”

And I honestly cringe at the various Rapture theories, especially any that would excuse the Elect from their absolutely necessary trials, tribulation & suffering that are the only way to bring to perfection Christ’s co-heirs. I know the rapture belief is a sacred cow and strongly held to by many, and preached in churches and even taught as fact in some Bible Schools now. But I truly wonder how it ended up being received by any who spend time in the Word, for I find nothing in Scripture that even remotely suggests it; and Jesus, Himself, taught the opposite, “I do not pray that You (Father) take them out of the world.” (John 17:15). In context, each of the verses used to argue a ‘secret snatching of church-goers to heaven to escape the devil & antichrist’ are easily seen to speak of the First Resurrection when Christ returns after a time of great tribulation to raise up His Elect, dethrone those dark rulers in the heavens, and set up His reign from Jerusalem.

1Thess 4:13-18 is clearly speaking of the First Resurrection: a coming of Christ & His Elect TO the earth, not a secret going of church-attenders FROM the earth. Multiple passages throughout the Scripture back this up. There is no U-turn taught in the Bible. A secret rapture would show our God is weak and unable to complete His plan, thwarted by a fallen god. No, ultimately Christ (Head & Body) is returning to remove God’s enemies from the earth and the heavens, and establish God’s Kingdom on the physical earth. I find this a much greater hope than existing as a disembodied soul in the spirit realm forever.

Furthermore, I find no Scriptural support for the modern, popular Eternal Security, or “once saved, always saved’ doctrine. A great misunderstanding of what “salvation” means in the Bible has led to all sorts of confusion, and has caused God’s people to ignore a great many passages in His Word. I’m hoping to delve into this on the website soon. Actually, we are touching on it in our study from 1Cor 10 ([To Him Who Overcomes Bible Study](#)) for any who might be interested.

Oh, and this... I seriously cannot figure out how we ever came up with the idea that “accepting Jesus” means we go to heaven and not “accepting” Him means we go to hell. I have never found a single verse which supports this widely accepted yet unscriptural hypothesis. I know I would never survive attending a modern Bible School, as this doctrine is one of the strongest evangelical tools used to try to “get people saved.” I don’t serve a God who is going to cast billions of people into everlasting torment because they never said the Name of Jesus. And besides, what about the countless people who have “accepted” a Jesus that isn’t the True Son of God?

Friends, God has called some, by His own sovereign will, to become One with Christ and serve as priests to Him over all Creation, including over the majority of people from the beginning of life on earth. These He has called to repent, be transformed and come to "maturity." We often preach that the purpose of

the church is to 'save a lost & dying world' and get them to 'accept Christ' and be saved from hell. Yet God's purpose is for His Church to be "conformed into the image of His Son", and walk in the gifts He has given for the building up of the Body "until we come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." (from Eph 4). For only then "will the world believe."

I suspect that some have stopped reading by this time, aghast at what I'm saying here. Again, my point is not to trample anyone's belief; but it gets harder sometimes to keep silent, especially when I see true seekers of God floundering because they themselves cannot reconcile what they are being taught in church with what they are reading in their personal time of study.

In another area which I have often been rebuked... I sincerely do not believe God has called everyone to be a part of the Body of Christ. I DO believe, as the Word declares, He desires all to repent, be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth; but from the parables of Jesus and much teaching found in both Testaments, we learn that much of this will take place AFTER Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom on the earth. Being "saved" from bondage to sin and being called to become "one" with Jesus as He is "One" with the Father are not the same thing. From Jesus's teaching in John 6, His prayer in John 17 & elsewhere, we find there is a calling of some (an Elect of God) to that "royal priesthood", that "kingdom of priests" that will minister Life to the nations. This is by His choosing alone. As the Word declares, "no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God." (Heb 5:4) And to shrink back from such a calling as to not appear 'better than anyone else' is actually to claim we know more than God Himself, thus exalting ourselves above even Him. "Let no man steal your crown" is addressed to a select few. These God (not man) has predestined to sit with Christ Jesus on His throne, ruling over and bringing Life to creation in the Kingdom. If one is ordained by God to this, the position must still be attained to: by repentance, obedience and yes, by works. It may be a greater calling, but comes with a much greater price and responsibility. The Bible is absolutely clear on this. "Predestination" is not about 'being saved' or 'lost', but concerns those God alone has desired to be "co-heirs" with Christ, the "wife of the Lamb."

The Scripture says directly that God chose some to be "a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth." We can't handle that Truth in the First World nations, where we insist to the point of bloodshed that everybody is equal. And that may be in our Declaration of Independence, but it's not in the Bible. Again, and I stress this... this does NOT mean God loves some more than others, but it DOES mean that by His own choosing, He picks some above others to be a part of Christ, for the purpose of ministering Life, peace, happiness and joy to those He didn't call in this life.

In yet another area, I struggle with the notion that if we've said a 'sinner's prayer' or 'accepted the Lord' at some point in our life God is now obligated to reward us with heaven when we die. In addition to my belief that heaven is not our home, I agree with Jesus' teaching in Matt 25, John 5 and elsewhere that our eternal destination – whether we are called to the First Resurrection or not, whether we are a "Christian" or not - is based upon our works. Not once in the Bible are we told that the King will render

to anyone according to their belief, or statement of faith. It is always and only “according to our deeds, or works” that we will be judged and rewarded in that Day. Understanding that “salvation” (here the free gift) is an opportunity, not an end, has unveiled so much of the Truth of the Scripture, and given me a True hope that the ‘forgiveness & belief alone’ type preaching does not. The Eternal dwelling place for the Father will not consist of a single ‘sinner saved by grace’, but by those who have been transformed body, soul and spirit into “children of God”; truly “conformed to the image of His Son.” The “nations” of those who are “saved”, the “sheep” who were welcomed into the Kingdom because of their good works, are the inheritance of the overcoming First Resurrection saints. Indeed, this Truth becomes clearer to me each day, every time I read God’s Word. Thank You Jesus!

I do not expect anyone reading this to agree with me, at least not on all points. And I am always ready to be corrected if I am believing anything in error, if a doctrine can be proven solely from the Scripture. I love being in the Word, and am always ready to discuss the deep things of God with anyone who can have an honest and open-minded discussion. ☺ Many of doctrines above - that I’ve mentioned I don’t believe in - are held to firmly by some of the major denominations of the Christian faith, including the one to which I currently belong. But I ultimately belong to a King, not a denomination or organization. And sadly, so much in the churches today has become a business with a bottom line, often – though not purposely - to the neglect of sound doctrine that is needed to bring God’s Elect to maturity.

Truthfully, I am in the assembly I regularly attend at this time because of the people: the good, solid, genuine folk who love Jesus, and strive to please God and live a righteous and holy life. They are warm, loving people who are a pleasure to be around. And I believe that God is pleased with most of them. All He asks is that we walk by the light that we have and live by the measure of faith He apportions us. Remember, not all are given the same understanding, not all receive the same gift or equal amount of talents. The Spirit distributes to each as He determines. God will judge each of us according to what He has entrusted to us individually. I must be faithful to God’s calling on my life; and so must we all. We cannot compare ourselves to another in this regard. Let us be faithful to do what God has called us to do, those “good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.” I am fully convinced God has called me to something deeper, and, as Paul, I want to “know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings by becoming like Him in His death,¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection out from among the dead”, that First Resurrection of those who will minister Life to the saved nations in the new world. And honestly, I pray for opportunity to share this type of teaching wherever the Lord might lead. And while I love my current church family, I don’t feel like I fully fit in, especially as I see so many things, as I’ve been writing here, from such a different perspective.

All this I shared here only to perhaps shed a little light on why the things I write and teach might often seem so different from what many others preach. And the burden I have to teach I believe comes from the Lord. When I read of Jesus interaction with His followers in John 6, and see that the great bulk of His disciples turned their backs on Him when He began to teach them Truth that was convicting and demanding, and remembering as well that none of the Apostles or OT Prophets were popular, I don’t

feel so bad that many, including in my own family, dismiss my views of God's Word. But it is God that I must please, not man. And I must be obedient to His charge upon my life, regardless of others opinions of me. I am responsible for "working out my salvation", and "putting off my old man." The "talents" He has entrusted to me I must multiply, and I must "remain in the vine" if I am to see my appointed end. So, I spend as much time in the Word each day as I can, seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, listening to the voice of the Spirit, and desiring to know the Man Jesus.

I sense a new chapter on the horizon, yet have no clear direction at the moment. Rushing into something is not wise; nor do I want to become stagnant. The Lord has not given me insight on these things for me alone, and I am striving to live by these things I believe, for myself, to lead my family, and to perhaps exhort those God brings into my life who have had similar questions regarding doctrine, and the dilemma faced when comparing the written Word to much of what is presently preached.

I pray to truly "have the mind of Christ", and to "Always be ready to give an answer to every man who asks me for a reason for the hope that I have, with gentleness and fear." (1Pet 3:15)

Peace & Blessings to all, as you walk your personal journey with Jesus. May all of God's desire for each of our lives be fulfilled. Truly there is a time and world coming in which righteousness, peace and joy reign. Whatever our calling in this life, may each of us be found there, basking in the Light and love of God, when all is said & done. Amen.

God's wisdom & understanding to all,
Michael

[To Him Who Overcomes](#)