The Little Church in the Pines

 Sunday, January 16, 2022

 “GOD IN CONFLICT? NEVER!”

 by; Pastor Tom Shanor

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. NO, I came to accomplish their purpose.”

The role of the prophets….is two-fold as God spoke through them, thereby communicating with His people, and it was a serious role. Not one word was to change, and often the people would complain and want to hear something other than what God was telling them.

1… To keep the people on the right path in how to live for Him and serve Him.

2… To keep fresh in their heart and minds the reality of the coming of the Messiah.

With Jesus, righteousness no longer consisted entirely of observances of the external legal code. Animal sacrifices were no longer sufficient to receive forgiveness… for the greatest sacrifice to come would take care of sin forever, for the whole human race, not just the Jews. A new element was presented and raised as a standard before and for the people. Thus came a deeper and excellent understanding and participation in the meaning of forgiveness and Grace.

He, Jesus Christ, sees us… you and I, as disciples or apprentices to Him. Learning from His teachings, His example, and empowered by His Spirit to come. Having learned and taken to heart these teachings… we were then and now to live them out as an example to the world of what great gift we were given….so that forgiveness and salvation did not come from external sacrifices, but an internal

acceptance of God’s very own Son. Works were now to come, not because of an established external Law, but because the Law of LOVE and GRACE was established in our HEARTS AND MIND In Christ Jesus.

I have said this on many occasions. When God looks at us, He looks at us through the GREAT SACRIFICE of His Son, by which we are then accepted, adopted into the family of God. Not by our blood, or that of animals, but the life-giving blood of Jesus Christ.

This is a high-calling we are called to, and one which we need to take seriously, first with understanding founded first in the Old Testament, and expanded upon by Jesus as He says to us, “Love the Lord you God with all your heart, and with all your and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS…HANGS ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS” THE BIG THREE.

THINK ABOUT THIS…. THE KEYWORD ON WHICH THESE COMMANDMENTS ARE FOUNDED IS THE KEYWORD THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE, AND WHICH IS ITS THEME. YES…THAT WORD IS “LOVE.”

John 10:30

Just as the Old and New Testaments are ONE…the Old, the foundation being laid for the New…Jesus further solidifies His ONENESS with God. “The Father and I are One.” God established this truth…when He answered Moses’ question, who are you? His answer was, “I AM THAT I AM!” Since the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are One…in understanding this statement, we must also know that they are in unity in every way. Every word spoken; every deed is done…in UNITY. The journey they have taken us on…all of humankind from the beginning, starting with Adam, then Abraham to today, is exactly as it is supposed to be, and beyond upon the return of Jesus Christ.

With the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding Jesus’ birth, life, death, resurrection, and coming again…the two Covenants became ONE… two words joins the Old and New Testaments.

The first is Jesus, and the second is Grace, therefore in word and deed…. please, if you remember nothing else from this message. GRACE TRUMPS THE LAW, AND LOVE TRUMPS THEN ALL.

Even all TEN COMMANDMENTS, WHICH ARE VALID TODAY, CAN ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED by LOVING THE FATHER, THROUGH HIS SON…. not by willful human obedience, but because we love God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We still have a portion of Christians who thunder the Old Testament as often as they can to enslave people to the Law, mainly because those who lead the groups desire to be seen as priests and almost kings with the bottom-line being CONTROL. They are to be obeyed…or those following them will be cast out unless they are obeyed. GRACE is not even considered.

For these people…it is still an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, their sole source, and version of what it means to be Christian.

These two approaches have resulted in wars, strife, confusion, chaos, religious powerhouses, the destruction of people groups, enslavement, etc. We…you and I are called to live like and be like Jesus Christ.

Remember, the Old Testament’s purpose was to lay the foundations for the New Testament….and therefore finds its fulfillment in the New. I started with this verse… “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law of Moses or the writings of the prophets, NO, I came to accomplish the purpose for their existence.”

Some say God is in Conflict with Himself…by offering such diverse teachings…. that is because they do not understand the purpose behind the Old….and another part of that purpose is this. To show humankind that we are incapable of making it on our own. Fraught with confusion, strife, war and all the things I spoke of earlier. Look at the condition of the world today….and our history.

WE NEED THE GUIDANCE AND A RELATIONSHIP WITH God through His Son….to make the world work the way it is supposed to.

THE EVIDENCE SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.