

Always Follow Our Lord Jesus

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Attached you'll find **Spot On 16, *Your Way Of Life Must Revolve Around The Ever-Present, Indwelling Lordship of Jesus***. This is the first of a series to encourage you to align your life with the biblical mandate of Jesus being your Lord, the only Head of your way of life. For many centuries the centrality of Jesus as the only Head of His own has been obscured to the point of erasure by misguided and often opposing theologians ensnared in Anti-Semitism, Hellenism, Cosmic Dualism, Romanism, Nicolaitanism, Syncretism and Revisionism. Paul chastised the Corinthians for filtering the Good News of Jesus according to their particular teacher and his views, producing quarrels and division among each other (1Corinthians 1:10-13). Yet even today so many Christians derive their understanding of God's Word according to the interpretation of their principal teacher:

"I follow Martin Luther!"

"I follow Augustine!" "I follow John Calvin!"

"I follow John Knox!" "I follow Ellen White!"

"I follow John & Charles Wesley!"

"I follow Jacobus Arminius!"

The term 'theology' comes from two Greek words, *Theos* (God) and *logos* (word). Theology is the study of the nature of God and the religious beliefs which have been systematically developed about Him. The problem for us today is which one of the myriad of theologies about our God should you believe. Our goal in these Spot Ons is to encourage you to develop a far more dependent trust in the indwelling Holy Spirit to confirm your way of life as it revolves around Jesus. Placing your confidence in a **rationally concocted theology** that's been filtered through human agency and the wisdom of this world obscures the trustworthiness of the Spirit of Christ to breathe spiritual power and wise understanding into Christ's own people.

Over the centuries theologians who ignored or even discredited the Hebraic foundations have made theology an idol that focuses on knowing about God without personally knowing Him. Too often theologians suppressed an essential biblical truth: the vital importance of the indwelling Holy Spirit at work within each authentic follower of Jesus. Fearing that the "uneducated and unsophisticated" would go astray if they depended on the Holy Spirit to guide and empower them, theologians demanded trust in the creedal treatises they concocted and the council decisions they enforced. This continues to be an evil trap with eternal consequences.

Your Personal Identity Matters To Our Lord Jesus!

When you and others around you belong to our Lord Jesus, there are six identities involved which deeply affect how these relationships are worked out:

1. Who I think I am.
2. Who they think I am

3. Who they think they are.
4. Who I think they are.
5. Our Lord Jesus' view of me.
6. Our Lord Jesus' view of them.

The first four identities can be distorted when the individuals focus too heavily on their own personal weaknesses and failures and/or target the weaknesses and failures of the others in their mutual relationships. But the perfect and compassionate perspective of our Lord Jesus sees each person through the willing sacrifice He paid for them. His view is positive and redemptive, a frame of reference He wants each of His own to develop regarding themselves and others. This huge change in identity viewpoint can only occur when your life revolves around the Lordship of Jesus in all that you think, say and do. As you allow Him to “see” others through your eyes, you’ll see yourself differently and you’ll see others from His view more and more too.

It’s often hard when you belong to Jesus as the Lord you love and serve to take firm hold of His compassionate view of you when you still see so much in yourself that isn’t like Him. But a heart’s desire to turn from anything unlike Him is a good thing! It brings us humbly to our knees in grateful submission so we can receive His cleansing and be fully available to be used by Him. We may still find ourselves tempted and needing to resist, BUT we need to stop being our own worst critics. Paul understood the ongoing nature of battling unChristlike ways — and kept His grateful focus on his Lord:

"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24,25).

When we confess our sins our heavenly Father not only forgives us, but of His own volition He forgets our sins. It's **pride disguised as false humility** to allow ourselves to be emotionally plagued by sins He has forgiven. Nor can we give way to allowing others to use our forgiven sins against us to try to instill guilt trips. Followers of Jesus who give in to this tactic may find themselves doubting that they are headed for their salvation.

It's vital that we who belong to our Lord Jesus and live repentantly as we press on with hope and confidence in Him view ourselves through His view of us. His view overflows with grace! And in doing this for ourselves we need to be the encouragement He wants us to be in the lives of our brothers and sisters in union with Him:

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called 'Today,' so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Hebrews 3:13).

Please keep these realities at the core of your relationship with others who are abiding in Jesus through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Mike & Sue