

November 13, 2008
Are You REALLY in Fellowship With Our Father and His Son Jesus?
Sadly, So Many Are Deluded...

If you've read our last e-mail and Lifebyte 58. Will You Be Among Those Our Lord Chastises? (Part 1), then you're aware that our Lord has commanded us to help followers of Jesus live repentantly. As we've earnestly sought His heart in prayer, the seriousness of the revelations the Spirit of Jesus has been giving us are overwhelming. That's why we must begin this e-mail with this sober warning:

Few who are reading this e-mail are in fellowship with the Father and Jesus according to the parameters of His Word.

Our Lord is grieved far more than an unrepentant heart can understand. You may be of the understanding that our God is above "feelings". Yet how He mourned when His beloved people of Jerusalem and Judea chose to compromise their faith with spiritual adultery and intentional sin:

"I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations" (Ezekiel 6:9). Our Lord's heart was broken that His people had deliberately chosen other gods and other priorities instead of Him as their chief and foremost love. They pursued their own strange religion by adapting pagan beliefs and customs that violated God and His ways and commands. As well, their eyes yearned with covetousness for that which was so desired by the evil nations around them.

COMPROMISE with the world is an abomination to our Great God and King! And don't be deceived with complacent thoughts that YOU'LL never depart from Jesus as Lord of your life if your own heart and eyes stray. The writer to the Hebrews addressed throughout his letter those whom he called "holy brothers, partakers of the heavenly calling" (3:1). Yet this man is all too aware that walking in Jesus as Lord and High Priest is a lifelong pressing on in the hope and confidence that He avails His "house", His people (3:6). Three exhortations jump out in this very important chapter to encourage each person and each faith family to help one another stay on His path to avoid the "deceitfulness of sin" (3:13): 1) Christ is a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end (3:6). 2) Beware, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (3:12). 3) For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end (3:14).

Would you say that you have even a glimmer of love for Lord Jesus? If so, please don't take lightly what our Lord is giving us to share with you. Most of it concerns your relationship with Him! As the most recent series of Lifebytes the Lord is giving us to share with you will testify, HE IS HURT. HE GRIEVES FOR HIS PEOPLE! It's not so much over what this nation has done as how you as His purported child defame Him by tolerating sin in your life. Are you among those who are bringing down the name of Lord Jesus? Are YOU a factor in why chastisement will be coming on this whole nation? So very few contemporary congregations address the tragedy of sin among those who bear His Name. At our Lord's prompting, future Lifebytes will reveal the range of

tolerated sin that has become so acceptable within western Christendom — and within perhaps YOUR life in particular. But for now, please realize that where you misplace your trust and confidence and how you align with the world's values and goals are the sins that the vast majority of "Christians" in this nation have in common.

Have you positioned yourself as one of His own based on something you agreed with or did years ago? Yet are you currently unwilling (or unable) to live as one of His "called-out ones" — the true meaning of the word "church"? To be His church, inhabited and empowered by His wondrous Spirit, means this:

**You have accepted our Lord's call and power
to live with such love-grounded, trusting obedience
and with such separation from the world's ways
that the world system hates you.**

Didn't our Lord guarantee this parameter to ALL His called-out ones? "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you" (John 15:19). Does those who are controlled by Satan hate you? Do you hate the ways of the world?

As our Lord begins to increasingly chastise this nation, please be careful and alert that you haven't given way to two misplaced confidences:

(1) In government programs and policies rather than pursuing a path of repentance.

(2) That you feel affirmed because you sit in a pew alongside others who are unrepentant—those who have no regard for communal righteousness.

If your confidence lies in either of these arenas, then your identity as the family of Jesus is nonexistent. Your decision for personal and communal unrighteousness is why chastisement is coming. And, worse is yet to come. Our Lord is combating the 'god-likeness' with which many self-acclaimed "Christians" treat their government in times of trouble, desperately hoping that answers to their distress will come forth from elected officials. And, our Lord wars against Satan's counterfeit Christianity, a man-made and man-centered religion that condones and excuses unrepentance among Christians.

Have you chosen to live apart from the holy and righteous ways that our God has made clear in His Word to bring Him honor and praise? Then you have categorized yourself with the "lawless": **"The man of lawlessness... will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God"** (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4). Consider that "God's temple" may likely be you and the collective body of those who have departed from authentic relationship with Lord Jesus, the One Who built His "house"! He is against the lawless spiritual adultery of those who bring His name down and those among clergy leadership who indulge the sins of people rather than bringing forth God's perspective on their iniquity.

Note how determined this body of called-out followers of Jesus was to have a clear conscience. They yearned to enjoy continued fellowship with Lord Jesus as well as live in such a way that others would respond to His Spirit: **"For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter"** (2 Corinthians 7:11).

- Do you have this same intensity to walk free of sin through ongoing confession and repentance?
- If you aren't this intense, please get on your knees and cry out to the Living God for a heart that beats in time with His and grieves over disrupted fellowship with Him.
- Do those with whom you fellowship yearn with intensity to walk in His holiness, wholly available to respond to His Spirit within?
- If those with whom you "fellowship" turn against you for your loving joy and eagerness to delight our Lord in your obedient trust, don't stick around! They don't yet have "ears to hear" or hearts ready to understand. Pursue communal righteousness within your family and extended spiritual family no matter what it costs you. The responsive joy of your heavenly Father will be worth it!

Before You Buy A Christmas Present...

Please, before you doing anything in preparation for the worldly, self-focused, paganized holiday called "Christmas" in this country; before you join hosts of others in the greed-bent, sinful example you're setting for both your children and those who have yet to encounter Jesus as Lord; please consider what we have to say.

Be certain through His Spirit and His Word that you and those you love truly belong to our Lord. As fast as you can, we encourage you to read the novel **"*Safely Home*"** by Randy Alcorn. Prayerfully scrutinize your own life in light of this bold contrast between those who practice Christian religion and those who are clinging in love to their wondrous King in spite of the ultimate cost.

At the same time, you may find yourself convicted that much of what has been considered acceptable in American Christendom has little to do with a love of and for Christ Jesus that propels His authentic followers to risk all for His Name's sake. You can purchase a copy online by going to: <http://stores.epmstore.org/Detail.bok?no=144> . NOW is the time to be absolutely sure you're not deceived into thinking that compromise with the world's ways is okay with God. He's eager and delighted to forgive you when you truly repent, but do you really know what you need to repent of? He's made clear to a number of people, including the two of us, that which is abhorrent in those who call themselves by His Name. We'll be sharing these insights in forthcoming Lifebytes.

Before You Purchase Your 'Wants', Give To Someone Else's Needs

Around the world, family members of those who've been martyred for their loving trust in Lord Jesus live in dreadful persecution. Most are not able to gain or keep jobs because of that trust. Some are sold into slavery, abused and violated. Voice of the Martyrs has set up **"*Families of the Martyrs Fund*"** to provide greatly needed daily goods, Bibles, job training equipment such as sewing machines — that which will encourage and strengthen and comfort our faithful family in Jesus. Today, before you even think of indulging yourself or those who have so little need for what you'd normally buy, call VOM at **1-800-747-0085** and ask how to share a gift with the Families of Martyrs. Please, help someone who is in need as if you yourself or a beloved family member was suffering for His Name.

[As we've done previously, we are offering as many free copies of our pamphlet *Prodigal Church* to you for making any size gift to Voice of the Martyrs. Just e-

mail us your snail mail address and tell us how many copies you would like and can use].

"For by the grace given us we say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Romans 12:3).

Your servants that we may all live repentantly,
Mike & Sue