

I sat in a discussion group. The topic was death and dying, and the pain associated with it.

Are Christians Really Different?

It was a Christian group. As the session moved along, I was struck with the extent to which the treatment of the subject was so like the way Christless people who had no hope of heaven might treat it.

It was as though they needed to prove that they were humans, too. . . . As though they needed to prove that they were in touch with reality by showing that they suffer the same way Christless people suffer.

Do We Really Have to Respond as Do the Ungodly?

This is by no means the first time I have been struck by the way Christians try to deal with suffering on the same basis as do the unconverted.

I remember one particular book. It seemed to be written, not only as the story of one person's effort to deal with the threat and ultimate reality of a parent's death, but also to help others who go through the same agony.

While there were ways and times that God gave the author special help, the basic perception of how to deal with pain seemed to me at least to be very much on the human level.

I know many people will already be wanting to warn me against the danger of not dealing realistically and thoroughly with death and dying and other forms of human agony.

Spiritual Christians Are First of All Realists!

It is folly indeed to pretend that one does not experience fear, anxiety, hurt, pain, separation, loneliness, deprivation, guilt, suffering, and agony much as do those who do not know Christ.

Hundreds of situations breed these in the human heart and life. They are very real, one may perhaps even say inescapable.

Has Christianity Nothing More?

But, unless we have something more than this to say about threatening, hurting, and painful situations, we admit that our Christianity has no practical help for its adherents. It claims more than it can actually produce.

This is the distressing truth of the matter for those content with a carnal Christianity that has in it little of the divine, little of the life of the Spirit.

But this is not the New Testament Christianity that impinges upon every detail of life with a vibrancy that is inescapable. . . . that changes absolutely everything it is allowed to impact freely. . . . that replaces unrest, anxiety, pain, and human misery with a "peace that passeth all understanding."

How we react in every difficult life-situation is determined in large measure by where our heart and spirit are in the everyday before we are faced with the dreadful circumstance.

But, it is true also that our response in each particular circumstance is significantly effected by how our minds have been pre-trained to think about the circumstance. . . . What we think is expected of us. . . . What is appropriate and what is inappropriate.

Be Careful What You Buy Into.

If we have come to believe more of what the psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, and great minds of this world tell us than we believe what the Word of God enlivened by His Spirit tells us, we will deal with the difficult circumstances of this life as humans do.

If, against all human wisdom, we accept in our hearts and spirits what the divinely enlivened Word of God shows us to be true, we will benefit wonderfully from the release, joy, and freedom that is brought to those who think, live, and enjoy the freedom of spiritual reality.

Know the Limitlessly Magnificent Difference.

We will benefit from a perception of reality that is not limited to the human but opened to the infinite and eternal. Oh, what a limitlessly magnificent difference!

We can choose to live in the dimension of the human or that of the Spirit and suffer or enjoy accordingly!!

Yes, It Does Work in Real Life.

The day after the discussion group I referred to at the beginning met, I got this letter: "Thank you so much for the pamphlet, *Let Go & Let God*. I was having trouble with our son and

the pamphlet, **Let Go & Let God**. I was having trouble with our son and was all upset. Its message put my mind at ease and helped my husband greatly too. Then, last week I lost my dear friend to cancer. It helped me to focus on God's will, not mine, and brought peace to my heart that God has taken her to a much better place."

One of our dearest friends faxed me, "My husband didn't understand my pain, and I almost 'lost it.' So I came into my closet and used the Golden Key again that you spoke about in your book. It is so profound: Withdraw from things outward to rest in Him."

Just moments ago, I told the Lord, "I feel uncomfortable. Help me, in spite of all the reasons I have to be ill at ease, to be at peace in You." I worshiped Him, repeating many of His characteristics to Him. In minutes the tears began to flow and His peace settled on my heart. Then, He immediately removed two of the causes of discomfort. Praise Him.

We Don't Have to Suffer as Those Who Have No Hope Unless We Choose to.

For us the divine, eternal, infinite, spiritual realities can far exceed the human realities no matter how overwhelmingly inescapable they at first seem to be.

As we turn from ourselves and our pain to God and His infinite supply, the hurting find comfort, the lonely friendship and fellowship, the unhappy joy, the fearful confidence, the

friendship and fellowship, the unhappy joy, the fearful confidence, the weary rest, the anxious and overburdened peace.

Let us not respond to the trials and difficulties, pains and sorrows of this life as do the unconverted. Let us not approach either life or death as they do, but as He does.

The difference will be incredibly blessed. All glory to God!

"I would not have ye to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. . . Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

-1 Thess. 4:13,18

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made know unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

-Phil. 4:4,6,7

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am to be content . . . how to be abased, and . . . how to abound . . . to be full and to be hungry . . . to abound and to suffer need. -Phil. 4:11,12

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