

Dear Friend,

When Peter delivered his first sermon after the day of Pentecost, the Bible tells us that about three thousand people were born again that day. That's quite an altar call! Three thousand brand new Christians in a single day. But what do you do with them now? Are we to just lead people to Jesus and then leave them on their own? No, the bible tells us that these new converts were taught daily the apostle's doctrine.

Acts 2:41-42 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

We don't have to guess what the "apostle's doctrine" was. Jesus was very precise when He gave them instruction right before He ascended into heaven.

Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The apostle's taught new converts precisely the same things Jesus had taught them. The apostle's never waivered in this assignment. I recently taught a series on the epistle of 1st John. I believe the twenty one lessons the Holy Spirit gave me to teach from that epistle are the most important teachings of my life so far. The subtitle to the teaching series is, "Removing the Gray From Your Gospel." It does exactly that. Line upon line, precept upon precept, the apostle John lays out the most fundamental teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ that are so straightforward and simple, it removes the watered down, compromised, opinions of man from the pure gospel delivered straight from the lips of Jesus Christ.

Here is the reason I am writing this letter. These fundamental truths that I am rediscovering after a quarter century of line upon line, precept upon precept teaching through meditation of the Word and by the Holy Spirit ... were delivered to new converts in the first century after Christ almost immediately through the apostle's doctrine. John is only declaring what he "heard and saw" of Jesus over fifty years prior to his writing the epistle of 1st John. It is nothing new. It is what Jesus taught the apostles from the very beginning. Then Jesus commanded the apostles to teach new converts to observe everything He had taught them. John is still doing that ... more than fifty years later.

As a case in point, first John declares that he who habitually practices sin is of the devil. John says such a person is not a Christian at all. That flies in the face of most modern day preaching. Most people are taught that if they believe in Jesus and confess Him as their Lord, they are okay and ... even if they continue to habitually live in a state of fornication with their girlfriend ... they are still Christians, just having trouble with their flesh. No, that is not what John says. That is not what Jesus says. They are not Christians at all. If they continue in that state of deception until they physically die, they will certainly be surprised when they wake up in hell. I now fear for the multitudes who are in such condition today.

When I was born again and became a new convert, I should have been taught from the very first day that sin had no more dominion over me. I should have been taught that those who follow Jesus do not

continue to walk in darkness. I should have been taught to be extremely hard on my flesh from the very beginning to mortify the deeds of the body. New converts today should not have to meditate the Word and pray for twenty five years to learn those fundamental truths. This truth should not be something that has to be rediscovered by every new generation. This is truth we should have had at the very beginning of our walk with Christ. Where are the mentors? Where are the fathers of the faith? Where are those who hold fast to the words of Jesus and allow no compromise from the reasonings of man?

Again, I thank God for pastor Dave Roberson who taught me how to turn myself over to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Thank God for the Holy Spirit removing the rubble of religion again in this generation to expose these precious foundation stones of truth laid down by Jesus and His apostles. I would rather have them late in my life than to never have had them at all.

But for the love of God, every generation should not have to rediscover these fundamental truths again by the same process. We need prophets and teachers whose lips have been touched with a coal from the Refiner's fire to speak these truths without fear to every generation so they can BEGIN their walk in these truths rather than have to rediscover them a lifetime later.

These truths must not be lost again. They must become the foundation upon which every new generation of believers begin their journey. God help us remove all of the gray from our understanding of Christ's pure gospel. (If you have access to the internet, you can find the 1st John teaching series at:
<http://www.garycarpenter.org/1st-JohnTeachingSeries.html>)

Your friend and co-laborer,

GARY