

Servants Retreat 9.2014

# DUALITY IN THE LIFE OF A SERVANT

# INTRODUCTION

- ✘ Theme: Life of Thanksgiving
- ✘ “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.” (1 Tim 1:12-13)

# INTRODUCTION

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- ✘ Along with God's grace and mercy comes responsibility
- ✘ "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4:11-13)
- ✘ "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28)



# INTRODUCTION

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- ✘ Part of this responsibility is to present Christ to the best of my ability
- ✘ “...put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 13:14)



# WHAT IS DUALITY?

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- ✗ Quality or state of having two part
- ✗ Dichotomy
  - + A difference between two opposing things; a division into two opposing groups
  - + EX: Separation of Church and State
  - + Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptist Association
- ✗ Problem is much deeper than separating Church and State – separation of my “faith” and my “life”



# WHAT IS DUALITY?

- ✗ Bible warns us against this
- ✗ “For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.” (Rom. 2:13)
- ✗ “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. 26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” (Jam. 1:21-27)

# CAN WE LIVE UP TO WHAT WE PREACH?

- ✘ Our teaching should be perfected with the perfection of Christ
- ✘ There is a natural gap
  - + We should be trying to decrease this gap
  - + I should not be known for something contrary to biblical standards (e.g. yelling, cursing, wearing tight or revealing clothing)
- ✘ How would you answer a question about a virtue or discipline that you have not attained?
  - + With the perfection of Christ
  - + Our conscience should rebuke us



# WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

1. Desiring the honor and gifts of serving the Lord but not wanting to bear the yoke of service

- + Ex: Judas

- × Desired the offerings

- × Could not bear the loss of the costly ointment

2. Wanting to live on both sides of the fence

- + Why?

- + Form an idea that living godly is: boring, unhappy, “can’t do things that everyone else does,” etc.

- + At the same time we acknowledge the necessity and benefit of living godly lives



# WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

- ✗ We are called to put on Christ and live in the world with Christ in me and I in Him.
  - + “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16)
  - + Work, classes, sports activities, amusement parks, parties, driving, etc.
- 3. Desensitization to what is sinful
  - + Sin produces fear, shame, and guilt
  - + The issue is that we sin, but rather that sin is no longer shameful

# HOW DOES DUALITY EFFECT SERVICE?

1. Communicates that faith is just something we talk about – a philosophy
  - + Ghandi was asked, “What is the greatest hindrance to Christianity in India?”
    - × “Christians”



“I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.”  
~Mohandas Gandhi



# HOW DOES DUALITY EFFECT SERVICE?

1. Communicates that faith is just something we talk about (cont.)
  - + “For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”



# HOW DOES DUALITY EFFECT SERVICE?

2. The burden will fall upon the service
  - + What we do or say can effect a person's perception of service in general.
  - + Ex: Inappropriately dressed servant
    - × Would you trust your child to a servant who is inappropriately dressed?
  - + Some have the idea that I need to do whatever it takes to be their "friend"
    - × A spiritual servant of the Lord is needed



# HOW DOES DUALITY EFFECT SERVICE?

3. It can discredit everything we taught
  - + Love
  - + Forgiveness
4. Teaches that some commandments are optional
  - + Are there exceptions?
    - × Wedding banquets
    - × Henna, graduation, or even church feasts

# WHAT CAN WE DO TO SHORTEN THE GAP?

- ✕ Be a learner not a teacher
  - + Every lesson is a person message
  - + “Am I living my word?”
  - + If you do not benefit from your words how will your listeners?
  - + “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” (Jam. 3:1)
  - + “And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.” (Matt. 23:10)



# WHAT CAN WE DO TO SHORTEN THE GAP?

- ✕ Put on the life of Christ without words
  - + Consider the weekday readings
  - + Ex: Lazarus declared Christ without speaking
    - ✕ “Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.” (Jn. 11:45)
    - ✕ He accepted life from Christ after his death
  - + Those who rose from the depths of sin can lead many to salvation
    - ✕ Ex: St. Moses the Strong, St. Augustine, St. Mary of Egypt

# WHAT CAN WE DO TO SHORTEN THE GAP?

- ✘ Put on the life of Christ without words
  - + Our clothing should be appropriate for serving
  - + Ex: Mission to poor villages
  - + Ex: Joseph going to serve his brothers with his robe





# 1 TIMOTHY 4:12

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- ✗ “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
- ✗ Word
- ✗ Conduct
  - + “Demetrius has a good testimony from all, and from the truth itself.” (3 Jn. 1:12)
- ✗ Spirit
- ✗ Faith
- ✗ Purity

## JOHN 17:18-19

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“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.”



**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS**