

Clothed in Sackcloth and Ashes: Living in the End Times

Witness 2

I have been to SO MANY churches, and I always feel like I'm an outcast, and that there is no way to get into the cliques. I can talk more about my experiences at modern churches in another writing (and I will), but the purpose of this post is to focus on one thing: [petty, stupid, and unnecessary quarrels](#).

A House Divided Cannot Stand

[Matthew 12 reads](#), "But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?"

Petty Quarrel #1 - Denying Paul

There is no unity in the modern church, and it is only getting worse. I want to start with the denial of Paul's words because I am seeing more and more deny Paul. Please see our *In Defense of the Apostle Paul* writing for more on this.

Last night, I was thinking about the attack on Paul, and why Satan wants his words removed from the Bible. I think I came upon some answers:

1.) Paul offers us a great hope! Paul was originally Saul who went from murderer to saint, [transforming human history](#). If you were Satan and wanted to attack the credibility of the Bible, you would want to pick apart one of the figures that gives us great hope in our sins and iniquity. I don't know about you, but knowing that Paul, a murderer and persecutor of Christians, was saved by Jesus Christ gives me tremendous hope. If a murderer can be saved, then so can me and you.

If I were Satan, I'd attack a figure in the Bible who wrote 14 books with prominent messages, like:

2.) [All can come to Christ](#). There are many movements out there which try to paint the Bible as racist or a book for "whites only." This is a division tactic and extremely dangerous. The Biblical truth is that *all humans* can come to Christ. I can see why Satan would want this particular verse removed, as it offers tremendous hope for the entire world. Remember, [God does not look at our outward appearance but our hearts](#).

3.) [Paul emphasizes faith - not the law](#). It is strange that many in the modern church are STILL fighting over this. Paul talked immensely about this, and I can see why Satan would want to remove this part of the Bible. Satan wants people to focus on the old law, and not their salvation through faith in Christ.

While I could write about this all day, the point is that this is one of the new quarrels that exists in the modern church. [Peter warns about people twisting scripture, and specifically denying Paul, because of their unstable minds](#), and this is something we need to know as Christians. Those who do not have the whole, complete Word of God as their foundation will fall into the devil's traps eventually.

Petty Quarrel #2 - Food and Self-Righteousness

The other day, I was browsing YouTube, and I found a 45-minute video from a Christian about Starbucks. In my heart I thought, "couldn't this woman have spent more time on something else?" I didn't bother listening to it all, but I've been thinking a lot about food and its idolization.

Food is written about consistently throughout the Bible, as it is an important matter. Of course, we should strive to eat healthy and [take care of ourselves](#).

However, you will find in the New Testament (since we no longer follow the old law), there are different commandments about food. [Jesus says it is not what you put in your mouth that defiles you, but rather, the words that come out of your mouth](#).

Yet, I see so much time spent from "Christians" on what we should or should not eat. Again, I am not claiming we should eat pure junk food all day or be gluttonous. I also believe that one can pray with God independently and form decisions about what to eat or not eat. However, nobody really needs to know whether you eat pork or not, or how you are abstaining from shrimp. In other words, we should **keep quiet** about our works for God, whether that is [giving to the poor](#), [fasting](#), or [praying](#).

Furthermore, views of food changed in the New Testament, where God explains that what was once [impure can be made clean by Him](#).

Now, I am not saying we should eat something sacrificed to idols or destroy our bodies with food. Rather, I am asking readers to consider some things:

1.) Just about everything in this world is corrupted now, including food. If you think any of the food you are eating is pure, [you might want to think again](#). Nearly everything we eat, [even when labeled organic](#), has been tainted in some way, and God only knows what they are doing to food behind the scenes. I see so many Christians who have made an idol out of food, judging what others eat or do not eat with contempt. They are the ones who must shout from the rooftops that they eat this, or they don't eat that, causing contention and division in the church.

2.) Not everyone has the wealth or money to eat "healthy". This may be shocking to American Christians, but there are many poor people around the world who may not have a choice in what they eat. They may rely on food banks, churches, or other means, and their food may not be the purest or healthiest. Are they defiled because they ate pork? No, I don't think so, but I believe anyone who judges them is defiled in their judgment.

Recently I was having this conversation with someone in an online telegram group. She announced proudly to everyone that she didn't eat pork anymore. I asked her, in a time of great famine, would she eat pork? She said, "No, I will eat some potatoes I am growing."

I laughed quietly, knowing that many Christians are not prepared for the suffering and [famine](#) to come. I wasn't rude to her, but I told her in a coming state of desperation that many of us might experience soon, we probably won't throw out any food, no matter what we ate or didn't eat in the past.

When I became Christian, I was surprised by the LACK of bible verses about staying in shape and eating perfectly healthy, as that is what our modern culture talks constantly about. I have come to understand that when my heart is set on Jesus, then everything I do, and everything I eat and drink, starts with my thoughts of Jesus first. I don't have to worry about food or drink when I have Jesus on my mind, as He guides me all my decisions.

He has helped me stop drinking, but I don't bother a Christian who has a glass of wine or two. He has helped me fast, but I don't openly share my fasting practices with people who do not ask. He has helped me lose weight, but that wasn't for vanity, but rather, it happened because I was more aware of self-sacrifice through fasting.

You see, when we have Jesus as the law, then the petty laws become less important. As [Matthew 6: 25 - 34](#) states:

Do Not Worry

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

Petty Quarrel #3: Women and Beauty

Can a Christian women wear makeup? Should she have a head covering when she prays? I have seen YouTube evangelists tell women they are going to hell for wearing makeup, for example.

I (Witness 2) am a woman and I have prayed immensely on these topics. I think, again, we must go back to Jesus first before making these decisions. Like anything else, these become decisions between us and God, and we should not try to dictate the actions of those around us. When it comes to makeup, the [Bible states that women should be modest, with their outward appearances](#) - not lavish or lascivious in their choices.

However, there is no specific verse that says a woman cannot wear eye shadow or earrings. Rather, when we are getting ready in the morning, we must ensure that what we wear *glorifies God*. Again, this goes back to petty quarrels that I believe many want to create. If a woman wears light makeup and looks lovely, but in a modest sense, is that against God? I don't think so. However, if a woman is clearly dressed in a sexual way to get attention, that is a different story.

Being a woman is difficult, as we have constant pressure based on appearance no matter where we are in life. Personally, I have really tried to limit makeup, dress more modestly, and please God with my heart, not my looks. However, I still think that 'beauty' is a feminine aspect we cannot deny, and I look to Queen Esther as a guide. She was beautiful, yes, and likely wore make-up and adornments. However, she was set apart through her kindness and grace - [that was her secret](#).

So, I am not done writing about make-up or beauty, but I will say this. This is not a topic that should make us stir up petty quarrels in the church. One woman may choose to wear pants and no make-up, and another may choose to wear a head-covering and a dress. I really don't believe any of these decisions should create division in the church, and as women with grace and kindness, we should focus more on our decisions and our relationship with God, and not so much on the decisions of others, as we cannot control them. At the same time, as we grow close with other sisters in Christ, we may encourage each other to embrace our natural beauty and work toward pleasing God and not men.

Petty Quarrel #4: Halloween and Holidays

Anyone reading this knows the truth of Halloween as an occult holiday, and I recommend not celebrating it. However, I choose not to get into a petty quarrel with anyone who dresses up their kid in an innocent costume or eats candy from a colleague.

When it comes to holidays, I really believe it is a heart matter, and your decision is between you and God. No, I do NOT think any Christian *should* participate in most Halloween festivities, but I also believe that there are Christians out there who have found ways to honor God and celebrate Halloween in a different way.

Now, here is what I do want to say. If you do not celebrate Halloween and judge others for it, then you certainly should not celebrate Christmas, [as it is just as pagan](#). Let's not forget the immense consumerism, gluttony, and materialism embraced during the Christmas season. So, when Christmas comes around, I am going to remind all my lawful Christians that they should not be celebrating it!

"But, but... I am doing it out of love!"

Look, I do not really care if people celebrate Christmas, and I am only making a point. I know that many truly honor Christ on this day and observe practices that are not of pagan origin. With that being said, it is not my place to judge, and that is exactly what I am going to say about any holiday at this moment. If you are one of those people calling out Christians for participating in Halloween, I better not see you participating in Christmas, Easter, or even Valentine's Day!

Love Over the Law

I was praying over this all, and God reminded me that *Love is the law*. The more we follow Christ, the less we must worry about petty quarrels, as Jesus will guide us. I am not going to pass out candy this year on Halloween, and I am not going to decorate my house. However, if another Christian brother or sister finds joy in those things without making it about Satan, then it is not something I will focus on. I don't really participate in Christmas like I used to, but I am not going to take away from the joy and love I see from others on that day. I cut down on eyeliner, but I am not going to be cruel to a Christian sister who chooses to wear it. You get the point.

You see, [love fulfills the law](#), so if we do every single thing out of love for Christ, then we are obeying the law. [That is why there are times Jesus broke the rules out of love](#). For those who need a reminder about the way of love:

The Way of Love

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Conclusion

There is a reason for rules in a church, and there is a reason for the law. Rules and laws of man have their place, but they are NOT [the ultimate Law of Jesus Christ](#). The law of Love through Jesus Christ should always trump the laws and rules of men. If you follow Jesus Christ with all your heart and soul, then you will walk in righteousness. Following Jesus never fails us. Remember, rules and laws of men can be flawed, too.

So many online, who are *without love*, cannot comprehend this. I will get replies, "BUT YOU CAN'T EAT PORK!! AHFFFH!" or "YOU CAN'T EAT CANDY ON HALLOWEEN! AHH!!!", and honestly, I won't even reply to them.

May God bless anyone reading.