

Can't Pass Judgment off Traditions

I was pleased and surprised by the Rev. Barry Stechshulte's doctrinal "treasure" in the Sept. 17th paper. Although I do not agree, read Colossians chapters 2 & 3, I do believe Christ is truly my treasure (2:3) and through faith in Him (His death, burial and resurrection) I have been brought back to spiritual life, my sin debt has been forgiven and the claims against me have been nailed to His Cross (2:13-15).

What Christians and non-Christians need to watch out for are those who want to "pass judgment" on us based on traditions and teachings of men (2:8, 16-23). I call these, religious things which take up people's time and makes them feel good, giving them a sense of accomplishment, but these things are no good spiritually. Our complete and total righteousness before God comes from a personal faith in Christ's righteousness and His taking of our sins upon Himself on the Cross (1 Corinthians 2:4, 5).

The Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass takes away from what Christ accomplished for us on the Cross. The Eucharist, to which the Catholic faithful may add their good works and sufferings as a combined offering with Christ for sin, is a bloodless sacrifice (CC Catechism: 1367, 1368, 1370). On the Cross, Jesus shed all His blood and God's word states "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:28).

The Eucharist is offered over and over again. The Cross, Christ's sacrifice, only needed to be offered once or else, God says, Jesus would have to suffer many, many times (Hebrews 9:24-28).

The Eucharist requires the physical eating of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the drinking of His blood in order to receive the grace necessary for salvation from sin. The Cross requires a personal faith, a free will choice, in order to receive the grace necessary for salvation from sin: Jesus said to Thomas "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:27-29; see also Matthew 10:39).

Catholicism uses John chapter 6 in support of Jesus physical presence in the Eucharist and His physical consumption. From a truly Christian scriptural position Jesus' command to eat His flesh and drink His blood was a way to separate the false disciples from the true. The false were focusing on the physical and worldly aspects while the true were locked onto the heavenly and the spiritual aspects of Christ's ministry and teachings. When the false started to leave, Jesus asked His disciples if they wanted to leave also and Peter responded "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:66-71).

Peter also writes about the eternal importance of God's word in the new birth, calling it the "imperishable seed" (1 Peter 1:23, 18-25). Jesus when being tempted by Satan, quoting scripture, pointed to the living by "every word that comes forth from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:1-4).

Jesus is the Word of God made flesh so to believe or feed on Jesus is to eat and drink His word which is given to us in the Scriptures, the Bible (John 1:1-14; 6:26-48). It is through the feeding on or reading of God's Word that individuals come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ and a newness of life (Romans 10:1-17).

Some people like being religious. However, after a person comes to faith in Christ they are commanded to walk like Him. If the individual truly “treasures” Christ, the book of Colossians instructs them on what they should be doing, including: “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (3:5-16; see also 1 Peter 1:13-25).

Feed on God’s word and worship Christ, by faith, who is seated at the right hand of God and you too will be there with Him (Ephesians 2:1-6).

Check out the two greatest commandments in Matthew 22:36-40 and what I think is a parallel passage in 1 John 3:23.

Gary Westgerdes, Celina, Ohio

Letter to The Editor:

The Daily Standard 10-12-10 www.thekeysofheaven.com