

Jesus Christ the Lord... plus nothing!
I John 2:18-24

It is one thing to sit new believers down and tell them there are lying voices in the world, ever ready to take them captive to their deceitful ways. It's another thing to sit them down and tell them there are lying voices in the church with the same agenda... to take them captive to their deceitful ways! But, tell them we must.

The Apostle John called these lying voices "anti-Christ" - teachers in the church who (shockingly!) are opposed or hostile to Christ, who offer counterfeits or substitutes for His fully sufficient, fully saving Life. False teachers inspired by ungodly spirits who proclaim multiple variations on the same theme: JESUS CHRIST IS NOT ENOUGH! Not enough to fully justify you, not enough to completely sanctify you, not enough to perfectly glorify you... not enough _____ (you fill in the blank).

Most anti-Christ voices claim to have some special anointing, some secret revelation, some Jesus plus "add on" that you failed to receive in your salvation experience. If the evil one cannot keep you from Christ altogether, he will certainly try to keep you from Christ-likeness by shifting your focus from "what you heard from the beginning" - that the life fully pleasing to God is the justifying, sanctifying, glorifying and fully sufficient life of Christ - onto some novel idea that there is something other you can do, something more you can learn, something additional you can embrace that will take you beyond Christ for you, Christ in you, Christ through you. All anti-Christ "doctrine", all anti-Christ "righteousness", all anti-Christ "discipleship" is rooted in the same lie - a denial of the full and perfect sufficiency of the full and perfect salvation of the full and perfect Messiah - Jesus Christ the Lord - fully and perfectly at home in you.

This spirit of anti-Christ is a religious spirit. He (it!) is thoroughly "spiritual", often quite "moral", and usually very "Biblical"... he (it!) is just not Christian! He is not offering the Truth of the Gospel. He does not speak for God. Don't listen to anyone who tries to talk you out of Who made you righteous and keeps you righteous, Who sanctified you and keeps you sanctified, Who glorified you and keeps you glorified. All true Christian teaching is an exponent of the Truth of the Gospel - Christ is always the Center and Subject... His grace is always the means to all things Christian... the result is always the liberty of His fully saving life to be expressed in and through us. True Christian maturity is never experienced by trying to add anything to His Saving Life - only by trusting Him to be ever more of Himself in and through us.

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Greetings

I know a lot of us are bored of being bored. Tired of being tired. Some of us are sad, some are mad. Many have had their lives and schedules turned upside down. A few, perhaps, have barely noticed any change at all.

The Scriptures teach us it is more important "how" we walk through such times than "where" we are walking. In fact, we are instructed to "redeem", or make the most of whatever "time" in which we happen to be. To buy it up - boredom, fatigue, sadness, anger (which left unchecked can turn into a "liability" in a hurry) - and by the grace of God turn it into an "asset". (Eph 5:15-16)

It's one of the few times where humans are told to "redeem" something. In other words, this redemption is not God's responsibility, but ours! The Holy Spirit can teach us how to do so, but the "doing" is on us. Now I don't have any formulas or methods, but I'm compelled to bear witness to a few suggestions and trust the Holy Spirit to lead you on.

How about praying instead of pouting? Worship instead of whining? Intercession instead of introspection? Gratefulness instead of grumbling? Rejoicing instead of resenting? I think you get the idea. I'm not recommending repression or denial as a coping mechanism. I am endorsing allowing your honest soulful reactions regarding things "below" to be escorts into God's things "above". I have no more power to change these times than you do. But, we both have the same God-graced ability to redeem these times in order to walk through them in a God-honoring, God-glorifying fashion - so we can be about our Father's business!

CALENDAR

Once again, no hard fast dates. So, as not to be misleading, we believe it prudent not to post them.

We have "soft" commitments from January through October, but each will be evaluated as they arise and determination will be made then.

As you can also tell, we are not planning our Florida Retreat this year. Too many "unknowns" to reserve rooms, caterers, etc.

Hopefully, we'll be able to start that again in late 2021 or early 2022.

We'll keep you posted.

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