

SOTM 13 - Christian Idolatry

Review of lesson 12: "The Savior On The Inside"

Remember Jesus cursed the fruitless fig tree and then entered the temple to cleanse it and to take up residence there as Lord. He was teaching about the change of covenant from the law to grace. He was teaching about the kingdom of God. To change the fruit on the outside of the tree, you must change what is on the inside of the tree.

God's grace is as though God said, *"You have not been able to keep the law because of your sin nature and the weakness of your flesh. I will come inside of you and give you My strength to live above sin and to mortify the deeds of the body. I will do this by imparting the life of my Son, Jesus Christ, to you. The Spirit of Christ will come on the inside of you and join with your spirit to create a new man made in My image. This new man will be created in righteousness and true holiness."*

God's grace has brought Christ to the inside of us to empower us to live as He lives. This is what it means to "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." [Eph 6:10] And "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." [Phil 4:13]

Today's Lesson: Christian Idolatry

We are still teaching on Mat 5:21-48 Changing the external fruit by changing the tree.

Modern day Christian idolaters are those who worship a "Jesus" they have created in their own image. They are the temple of God, yet they have erected an image of Jesus they themselves have created. It is a false Jesus who is not the image of God as seen in the Word of God. Such an idolater might say, as an example, *"I worship the Jesus who knows me even though I continue to live in iniquity."*

Matthew 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

This false Jesus they worship is very "real" to them. They "feel" tender affection toward this false Jesus they have created in their own imagination, and they "feel" emotions of love and affection when they spend time worshipping him. I have been with Christians who shed literal tears because of the emotions and affection they feel for the false Jesus

they have erected within their own temple. They talk about how they love him ... while they continue to abuse drugs, get drunk, live in fornication, and continue in a lifestyle of habitual sin. The false "Jesus" they worship is okay with that.

The true Jesus is not okay with it. Jesus gives everybody space to repent, but He is completely serious about those that follow Him no longer walking in darkness. He paid a terrible price to set us free from sin and He absolutely intends for us to walk in the light of that freedom.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: **he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**

Those who worship this false Jesus while they continue to walk in darkness "think" they are in fellowship with the true Jesus. The apostle John completely refutes that argument;

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, **we lie, and do not the truth:**

1 John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, **is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** [Jesus is the TRUTH. No TRUTH ... No JESUS! It is some other Jesus, a false Jesus, an idol of their own making.]

The real Jesus is "Christ in you," the Savior who comes on the inside of you at the new birth and joins with you to empower you to live above sin.

1 Corinthians 6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

Christ in you does not condone fornication, adultery, hatred (murder), thievery, lying, or any other works of the flesh. Are you the Lord's or are you not? Do you belong to Christ or do you not? Do you really know the true Jesus? Or do you only know the false Jesus, the idol you have created of Him in your imagination? If you don't know the true Jesus, He does not know you either.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, **The Lord knoweth them that are his.** And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ **depart from iniquity.**

Galatians 5:24 And they that are Christ's **have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.**

WHAT IS SIN? Sin is what the Word of God says it is. This is a kingdom, not a democracy. You have no vote in the matter. The following is not an exhaustive list. Here are three passages from the New King James bible that describe sin, iniquity, and the works of the flesh in modern language:

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, (10) nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. NKJV

Ephesians 5:5-7 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (6) Let no one deceive you with empty words, **for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.** (7) **Therefore do not be partakers with them.** NKJV

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, (20) idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, (21) envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; **of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** NKJV

If you habitually do these things and say you have fellowship with Jesus, you are fellowshiping with an idol, a false “Jesus” you have created on your own. You don’t know the real Jesus who IS TRUTH. That’s why when you stand before Him, He will say He does not know you.

Have you been taught “by Him?” Or have you only been taught “about Him?”

Ephesians 4:17-24 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, (18) Having the understanding darkened, **being alienated from the life of God** through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: (19) Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. (20) **But ye have not so learned Christ;** (21) **If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:** (22) That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be

renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

"You have heard Him. You have been taught by Him." What does that mean? The first level of being taught by Jesus is when the Savior comes on the inside of you at the new birth. He joins with your recreated spirit. Instantly His laws are written in your mind and in your heart. You know instantly that lying is wrong, stealing is wrong, fornication is wrong, and so forth. The new birth is when the following passage from Hebrews is activated in your life;

Hebrews 8:10-11 For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts**; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (11) And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for **all shall know me**, from the least to the greatest.

This is how you KNOW HIM ... the real Jesus ... by the new birth when the Savior joins with your spirit and you become one with the Lord. The Savior has come on the inside and joined with you. This is Christ in you. He teaches you. You learn directly from Him by the new nature. The only question that remains is, **will you obey Christ in you?** Will you worship and obey Christ in you? Or will you erect an idol, some other Jesus, to worship instead?

You are the temple of God. Be careful not to erect an idol of a false Jesus you have made on your own. When the real Christ comes in you, He begins teaching you righteousness from the instant you are born again. The Savior has joined with you at the new birth and you have become one spirit with the Lord.

Are you going to obey the gospel? Are you going to be obedient to the gospel? To obey the gospel means ... you obey the Savior who has come within you ... you obey "Christ in you."

OBEY

2Th 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, **and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**;

Heb 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation **unto all them that obey him**;

1Pe 4:17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of **them that obey not the gospel of God**?

OBEDIENT

Rom 15:18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, **to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,**

Tit 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, **and disobedient**, and unto every good work reprobate.

1Pe 1:14-16 **As obedient children,** not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: **15** But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; **16** Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

OBEDIENCE

Rom 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to **obey**, his servants ye are to whom ye **obey**; whether of sin unto death, or of **obedience unto righteousness?**

Rom 16:19 For your **obedience** is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

Rom 16:25-27 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, **26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations **for the obedience of faith:** **27** To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

2Co 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought **to the obedience of Christ;**

Eph 5:6-7 **Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**

1Pe 1:2 Who were chosen *and* foreknown by God the Father and consecrated (sanctified, made holy) by the Spirit **to be obedient to Jesus Christ** (the Messiah) and to be sprinkled with [*His*] blood: May grace (spiritual blessing) and peace be given you in increasing abundance [*that spiritual peace to be realized in and through Christ, freedom from fears, agitating passions, and moral conflicts*]. AMPLIFIED BIBLE

Summary:

Jesus is the image of God that is true. Man perverts the image of God in Christ and remakes Jesus in the image of man. An idol is an image of God that does not accurately represent Him. If you change “Christ in you” into an idol ... something different from who He really is ... then you remove His power to strengthen and deliver you from sin.

Many Christians live in daily violation of the second commandment:

Exodus 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Who is this false "Christ in you" who winks at sin? Who is this false "Christ in you" who is powerless to deliver you from sin? That Christ is an idol ... an image of God that does not really exist. You are worshipping an idol, a false "Christ in you" that does not exist. You have made an idol of Christ in your heart that is not the TRUTH ... and only the TRUTH can set you free from sin.

John 8:32 And ye shall **know the truth**, and the **truth** shall make you free.

John 14:6 ... I AM THE TRUTH

You "say" you know the truth but you "live" in habitual sin. That means you do not know the truth and you do not know Him.

**DO YOU KNOW THE TRUTH? JESUS IS THE TRUTH.
IF YOU KNOW HIM ... YOU OBEY HIM.
IF YOU DO NOT OBEY HIM ... YOU DO NOT KNOW HIM.**

1 John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

If you call yourself a Christian and are living in habitual sin, the "Jesus" you know ... is an idol of your own making. That is Christian idolatry.