

Thoughts from Richard December 2014

In his essay "God in the Dock", C S Lewis wrote the following:

"The ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man the roles are reversed. Modern man is the Judge: God is in the dock (the enclosure in a court where the defendant is placed). He is quite a kindly judge: if God should have a reasonable defence for being the god who permits war, poverty and disease, he is ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that Man is on the [Judges] Bench and God in the Dock."

I think it is fair to say that this view developed formally over the last 150 years or so as our culture embraced the "isms" listed below (among others). But why it has developed is irrelevant - what is more important is that these world views have affected our thinking in the way Lewis described - and the most devastating effect has been the way we view the written Word of God, the Bible.

In his book "Law above the Law", Lawyer and author John Warwick Montgomery contends that our legal system is fast becoming the tool of public opinion and as the level of public virtue falls the interpretation of justice tends to go down. He insists that modern men must begin once again to judge their behaviour on the basis of "God's revelation of right and wrong" - because it is pure and constant.

If that's what happens when people's opinions guide the legal system, how much more so with regard to the eternal truths we find in the "living and enduring" word of God?

The great reformer Martin Luther said, "I know for certain that we theologians and jurists must stay, or all the rest will go down with us. When the theologians disappear, God's Word disappears and only heathen, aye, nothing but devils, remain."

Nowadays the word of God is 'disappearing' under the opinions of men (us) who rationalise it away. We're placing more credibility in what we feel than in God's word, and in the opinions of both Christian and non-christian 'experts' than in God's word. Should we expect any different outcome? that only heathen and devils will remain?

The end result is that we treat God (in the words of pastor Tim Keller) as more of a consultant to advise us than our King whose commands we obey.

So When the Lord says in 1 Cor 6/18,

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Instead of running for our lives as this great article advises

<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/f-l-e-e-a-strategy-for-pursuing-sexual-purity>

we start to rationalise. Instead of submitting to the will of God, we can start to make up scenarios that exempt our current situation or desire, we make our situation a special case that avoids God's command. We say, *"thanks for your advice consultant God, but I'm not taking it today, maybe tomorrow?"* We go our way instead of the King's way and our conscience is seared, making us less able to distinguish good from evil.

Although we do this in many areas of our lives, this is one of the most damaging and serious rationalisations we can make, because it affects every part of our being and many others around us.

Remember:

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. Gal 6/7-9

Let's sow to please the Spirit, our living and loving Father who gives us everything we need for life and godliness. 2 Peter 1/3

It is true that the wages of sin is death, but it is also true that the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. Rom 3/23

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1/9,

Father, please give us the courage obey you, and to confess our sin that we may be made whole again. Thank you for the living hope you have called us to, and that you shield us by faith until your purpose in us is complete.

Thank you for your faithfulness and the absolute trustworthiness of your word, in Jesus name. Amen

Your servant in Him
Richard