

How Christians Condemn the World

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Text: Heb. 11:1-7

I. EXAMPLES

- A. Righteous people condemn the world merely by being righteous.
 - 1. Noah was such a man.
 - a. He was a man of unquestioned righteousness.
 - b. He lived by faith in God - Heb. 11:7.
 - c. He condemned the sinful world - Heb. 11:7.
 - 2. How did Noah condemn the world?
 - a. He preached, but others did not listen - 2Peter 2:5.
 - b. He worshiped God - Gen. 8:20.
 - c. Not by pointing the finger of scorn at others.
 - d. All he did was obey God in faith.
 - 3. This condemnation is defined:
 - a. If Noah was right, everyone else was wrong.
 - b. If he was right in building the ark, everyone who refused to help was condemned by his faith.
 - c. Noah's faith condemned their unbelief.
 - d. We can easily imagine their excuses:
 - 1. "What is a flood, Noah?"
 - 2. "It doesn't look like rain today, Noah!"
 - 3. "Are you saying you are the only one who is right?"
 - 4. "We believe in God too, but we don't believe the way you do, and we are still all right"
 - 5. "Who are you to tell us how we should live our lives?"
 - 6. "Leave us alone, we are too busy for such nonsense."
 - e. Condemnation: "katakrima - one's good example renders the wickedness of another more evident and censurable" (Thayers)
- B. Abel condemned Cain this way - Gen. 4:3-8; Heb. 11:4.
- C. Nineveh would condemn the cities in which Jesus preached.
 - 1. Matt. 12:41; Jonah 3:1-10
 - 2. They heeded Jonah from the king to the lowliest servant, and all were contrite and repented of their sins against God.
 - 3. By their repentance at Jonah's preaching, they condemned those who rejected Jesus' preaching
- D. The queen of Sheba would condemn the Jews of Jesus' day.
 - 1. Matt. 12:42; 1Kings 10:1-13
 - 2. She traveled a great distance to see the glory of Solomon's wisdom.
 - 3. They had the Son of God among them and had no interest in His glory and wisdom.

II. CHRISTIANS CONDEMN THE WORLD TODAY

- A. 1Peter 3:1-2 - Believing spouses may lead unbelieving mates to recognize and acknowledge condemnation for their sins and therefore want to obey the Gospel, all by means of the good example of the Christian spouse.

- B. Sometimes the non-Christians will not tolerate the condemnation of the faithful Christians' example - 1Cor. 7:12-16.
- C. The lives of faithful Christians are condemnatory examples to a lost world.
 - 1. 1Cor. 6:2-3 - Faithful Christians will even condemn unfaithful angels.
 - 2. Rom. 2:27 - A Gentile who fulfills the law condemns the Jew who does not obey it.
- D. If we live a faithful life before God, we will condemn those around us, both inside or outside the church, who do not follow our example of righteousness.
- E. We wonder why 75% of US citizens endorse conspiratorial, perjurious, greed driven, or adulterous political leaders.
 - 1. It is not so much that they like a conspirator, a perjurer, a thief, or a cheat, but rather that they dislike moral conservatives much more.
 - 2. They find it easier to identify with the first, because they can see themselves doing the same thing under similar circumstances, and thus dislike and distrust those who resist the same temptations.

III. WHY THE WORLD DISLIKES DEVOUT CHRISTIANS

- A. We protest: "But we're just trying to be Christians!"
 - 1. We want to be honest, upright, always truthful.
 - 2. We are trying hard to sincerely serve the God, Who we believe redeemed us from our sins, and Who will reward us in heaven.
 - 3. We are just trying our best to practice what we preach.
 - 4. We want to be responsible citizens, loyal spouses, reliable employees, moral influences for a fair and peaceful society.
 - 5. Why then would the world despise this?
- B. This manner of life, by its clear contrast, is a condemnation to the disobedient and unfaithful.
 - 1. Jesus had to explain this to his disciples - John 15:18-25.
 - 2. Though it seems hard to understand, it is still true today.
 - 3. Lost persons today say "you think you are the only right church."
 - 4. "Aren't you the ones who think you are the only ones going to Heaven and that everyone else is lost?"
 - 5. They may not appreciate a faithful example because:
 - a. The faithful don't party; but they party.
 - b. The faithful don't smoke; but they smoke.
 - c. The faithful don't lie; but they lie.
 - d. The faithful don't use filthy language; but they do.
 - e. The faithful are morally pure; but they are morally bankrupt in personal conduct.
 - f. The faithful worship God regularly; but they don't.
 - g. The faithful study the Bible; the world views it as a book of myths.
 - h. The faithful have an uncompromising faith; the world often compromises its beliefs and values.
 - i. The faithful are honest; the world cloaks its vileness with lies.
 - 6. The result is that:
 - a. The sinful are uncomfortable around the faithful. Christians are what they know they ought to be, but are unwilling to discipline themselves to become.

- b. The behavior of the faithful is a visible condemnation of the unbelievers' lack of faith and obedience. It is no wonder the righteous make sinners uncomfortable.

VI. HOW CAN FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS ENDURE IF THE WORLD HATES THEM?

- A. Jesus promised to be with those who follow Him - Matt. 28:20.
- B. A way of escape will be made available in temptation - 1Cor. 10:13.
- C. We will not in any way lose our reward if we remain faithful.
 - 1. Though we die - Rev. 2:10; Phil. 1:15-16, 21-24; 1Thes. 4:13-18.
 - 2. Though all enemies come against us - Rom. 8:31-39.
 - 3. As long as we remain steadfast - Heb. 10:34-39.
- D. We know to expect opposition and to be prepared for it.
 - 1. 2Tim. 3:12 - The godly will suffer persecution.
 - 2. Matt. 5:11-12 - We are blessed when we endure.
 - 3. Christ suffered before us as an example and an encouragement.
 - a. 1Peter 2:20-21
 - b. We know not what blessing will be conferred on others by our moral example.
- E. We put our trust in God through Christ - Phil. 4:13.

Conclusion:

- A. Despite setbacks and difficulties, a faithful Christian will continue to set a good example of faith and obedience to God.
- B. To the world, and to some professed Christians, this will be taken to be a "holier than thou" attitude.
- C. When one stands for the truth, solidly and without compromise, this will be seen by the world as "judging" unfairly or self-righteousness.
- D. In spite of all this, we must keep pressing on in service to God without compromise or negligence, for we must give account to God, not to the world.
- E. Our appeal to you today:
 - 1. If you had lived when Noah was building the ark, you would have had the same opportunity and same problem you have right now.
 - a. Most people were not listening to God then.
 - b. The few that were, had faith that God's promises were true.
 - c. When the flood came, they all wished they had listened when they could have obeyed; but, it was too late.
 - d. The same situation faces us today, but instead of a flood, it will be fire.
 - 2. How do you know you would have been saved from the flood?
 - a. Would you have listened to Noah's preaching then? If so, then you will listen today.
 - b. Would you have obeyed God then? Or would Noah's righteous living have condemned you then?
 - c. You stand condemned now if you are not obedient, not by what I have said, but by what you have not done - 2Peter 3:1-13