

## Show the Mark

Gary Post - July 29/30, 2017

### I. The Current State of Incivility and Our Response

#### A. The rise of incivility and violence

#### B. The Church of Jesus Christ--the Hope of the World

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life..." Phil. 2:15-16

### II. How Christ is Our Life--and the Difference It Makes (Col. 3:1-4)

#### A. Hidden with Christ in God (Romans 6:1-4)

#### B. We are dead to sin and alive to God (Romans 6:5-14)

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:11

"Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin, they cannot live victoriously, because in their innermost being, they do not think it is possible." John MacArthur

#### C. We have Christ in us, empowered to live out His character

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. II Corinthians 5:17

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Gal. 2:20

### III. Putting Our Old Sinful Habits to Death (Col. 3:5-11)

#### A. Because of what Christ has done, we can change sinful patterns

"To put to death the misdeeds of the body, then, is to destroy the strength and vitality of sin as it tries to reign in our bodies."

Jerry Bridges, The Pursuit of Holiness

#### B. Steps in putting sinful habits to death

- Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit--not just your own effort

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Romans 8:13

- Immerse yourself in the Word of God

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Eph. 6:17

"Obedience is the pathway to holiness, but it is only as we have His commands that we can obey them. God's Word must be so strongly fixed in our minds that it becomes the dominant influence in our thoughts, our attitudes and our actions.:" Jerry Bridges, The Pursuit of Holiness

- Break past sinful habits by choosing to resist temptation to sin

"So we see that God has made provision for our holiness. Through Christ He has delivered us from sin's reign so that we now can resist sin. But the responsibility for resisting is ours. God does not do that for us. To confuse the *potential* for resisting (which God provided) with the *responsibility* for resisting (which is ours) is to court disaster in our pursuit of holiness."

Jerry Bridges, The Pursuit of Holiness

- Engage in regular confession of sin as the Holy Spirit reveals it to you (sanctification)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9

#### C. Put off the old/put on the new/renewing our minds

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity. Romans 12:2 (Phillips)

### IV. Putting on the Character of Christ in This World (Col. 3:12-17)

#### A. If you belong to Jesus--dress the part

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Col 3:12-14

#### B. The importance of demonstrating Christ's love to the world:

"Love is the most important moral quality in the believer's life, for it is the very glue that produces unity in the church. Believers will never enjoy mutual fellowship through compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, or patience; they will not bear with each other or forgive each other unless they love one another." John MacArthur, Colossians NT Commentary

### V. Why Demonstrating the Love of Christ Matters for Eternity

#### A. Love is the identifying Mark of the Christian

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

#### B. Two judgments that the world makes based on The Mark

"This passage reveals the mark that Jesus gives to label a Christian not just in one era or in one locality but at all times and all places until Jesus returns. The point is that it is possible to be a Christian without showing the mark, but if we expect non-Christians to know that we are Christians, we must show the mark." Frances Schaeffer, The Mark of the Christian

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.  
John 17:20-21

"Here Jesus is stating something else which is much more cutting, much more profound: We cannot expect the world to believe that the Father sent the Son, that Jesus' claims are true, and that Christianity is true, unless the world sees some reality of the oneness of true Christians."

Francis Schaeffer, The Mark of the Christian

### C. To whom must we show The Mark?

And he said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.  
Matthew 22:37-39

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? Matt. 5:43-46

### D. Showing The Mark makes the Gospel real and credible

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Ephesians 6:10

"And if the world does not observe this among true Christians, the world has a right to make the two awful judgments which these verses indicate: That we are not Christians and that Christ was not sent by the Father."

Francis Schaeffer, The Mark of the Christian

## VI. Kindness: The Outward Face of Christ's Love

### A. Why kindness is so powerful

1. Kindness is the outward, visible expression of Christ's love
2. Kindness is attractive--it draws people like a magnet

He saw the crowds and had compassion on them Matt. 9:36

3. Kindness leads people to faith in Jesus Christ

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 2:4 (NIV)

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matt. 5:16

4. Kindness transforms relationships--and it changes us

"Obedience precedes emotions."

Shaunti Feldhahn, The Kindness Challenge

### B. Putting it to the test: Three Steps in The Kindness Challenge

1. Say nothing negative about your person, either to them or about them to someone else for 30 days.
2. Every day, find one positive thing that you can sincerely praise or affirm about your person and tell them, and then tell someone else. ("Praise is the catalyst of kindness.")
3. Every day, do a small act of kindness or generosity for your person.
4. Alternative Element #1 for husbands: Don't be distracted and don't withdraw. Give your wife your full attention in conversation for at least fifteen minutes a day. (And when you are upset with each other, stay in the game five minutes past when you want to escape.)

### C. Results of implementing the Kindness Challenge:

1. Three simple acts of kindness practiced 30 days--improved 89% of relationships with spouses, children, stepchildren, bosses, co-workers, any relationship
2. Among those with "room for improvement" in their relationship with a spouse, who did the Challenge for at least two weeks, 67 percent reported that enjoyment in their relationship improved, with 72 percent of that group declaring they were now happy in their marriages!
3. Among those with any "room for improvement," fully two-thirds felt more loved and appreciated after doing the full 30 Day Kindness Challenge!
4. 74 percent said their partners changed for the better. Where they moved from little or no praise to daily praise, the number rose to 92 percent! (In most cases only 1 partner took KC)

D. **Homework:** Take the Kindness Challenge for 30 Days in a relationship you want to improve and see what God does.

## VII. "Christos" -- Showing the Mark

### Recommended Reading

The Kindness Challenge

The Mark of the Christian

The Pursuit of Holiness

Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages

Shaunti Feldhahn

Francis Schaeffer

Jerry Bridges

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