

AN OLD FRIEND by George L. Faull



Yesterday I called an old friend of mine. His wife answered the phone. She told me, "He went home to the Lord." I never got to say Good-bye. He was a denominational preacher whom I had a close friendship with for 40 years.

I offered my condolences and hung up the phone. The tears came and I thought my heart would explode. He had meant so much to me. He had taught me so much. We had shared many a good time and we had argued and debated while eating many a fine meal together. It did not seem possible that he was gone. Oh, how the mind has a hard time accepting the reality of death!

Last night I retreated to my motor home down on the Eel River where I enjoy sleeping on some summer nights. Thunder woke me and the rain fell gently on the roof and the evening breeze blew through the window. It should have been easy sleeping but I was thinking of my friend.

Again, the tears came, the lump in my throat grew large and my face contorted as I tried not to cry. It was no use to try. The floodgates opened and I wept. I thought to myself, "Why am I weeping?" I never cried at the other 40 preacher friends that I've lost in the last 22 months!

Then I knew! The others I had no doubts of their salvation. I doubted my friend's salvation! I had no positive hope. Instead there was doubt and apprehension.

Now I am fully aware that what I am writing will anger some and cause others to belittle me. That's o.k. My convictions are my convictions and denying them won't make them either true or false. My saying he was saved will not save him. My fearing he was lost won't damn him. God won't save him just because he was my good friend.

I do not doubt that he loved the Lord as much as I do, nor that he was as sincere as I am. He called Jesus, "Lord", and did many wonderful works in Jesus' name. He sacrificed for his ministry, as I do mine. His sons were both preachers and teachers in their denomination. I spent time with all of them and loved each of them. They were happy people.

Many times I stayed overnight in his home and was on my knees praying with him and his wife at morning devotions. He loved me as a son. He introduced me to his friends that we had dinner with from time to time. Many of them were famous in their own circles.

My friend was liked and admired by men of all walks of life. One would be hard pressed to find a more likeable and loveable personality.

So what's the problem? He believed in the One God and His Son, Jesus Christ. He believed the Bible was God's Word. He was a moral man. He was a doer of good works. But he would be the first to admit there's many a hypocrite that believes and does all that. He was no hypocrite.

The thing that troubled me was that he believed and taught things that were untrue. He was a false teacher. I know that Carl Ketcherside says a man is not a false teacher unless he knows he is preaching something that is false. Frankly, I think that is just plain silly.

If I preach something that is false, I am a false teacher. Now granted, not all facts are of equal importance. If I teach that Methuselah lived to be 999 years old instead of 969 years old, I am saying something that is not true but it does not have the ramifications of saying that Jesus was not born of a Virgin or never arose from the dead!

One is an interesting fact, the other is essential to the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the resurrection is essential to my salvation. My friend taught things that were not true and denied things that were true. Let me explain:

FIRST:

He believes that all men are sinners BUT only because he believes that every man born inherited the sin, guilt, and nature of Adam.

ANSWER:

We did inherit the consequences of Adam's sin but not his guilt or sinful nature. In Adam we die. This is not because something inherently changed in his being. He died because he was put out of the garden away from the tree of life. After he sinned the Lord says that he was put out of the garden "lest he would eat of the tree of life and live forever". The reason men die is because they do not get to eat of the tree of life.

So we share in the consequence of his sin, but we do not have his guilt. God wanted His people to stop saying "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." We are not responsible for our father's sins. "The soul that sins it shall die, the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."

We do often suffer the consequence of someone else's sin but not their guilt. I was not born away from the fold. I went astray. I was not born away from the Father but like the prodigal I left the Father to do my own will. The Bible says we go astray after we are born. This idea of Adam's guilt passing to all men is a great misunderstanding. If one is born a sinner simply because he was born of a woman, I would remind you that Jesus was born of woman. If He was born a sinner He cannot be our Savior.

SECOND:

He believed that God chose to save men BUT only certain men that He chose. The remainder of men would be damned.

This election of individuals was said to be done before we were born and in fact before the foundation of the world. Those He chose to save are elected individually and they cannot

be lost. That elect group can neither be added to or subtracted from in number.

ANSWER:

This denies John 3:16 which plainly says that "...whosoever believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life".

If I believed that only the elect could be saved and that they could not be lost because they were chosen, and the non elect could not be saved because they were not chosen, I would never preach another sermon in my life. There would be no need to do so.

The elect would be saved regardless if I preached or not and the lost would be damned regardless of whether I preached. The chosen could not be lost if they wanted to be and the lost could not be saved if they tried to be. What a ludicrous doctrine this is!

It makes God a respecter of persons. No amount of talk about the sovereignty of God can remove the fact this is respect of persons. God is a sovereign God but He is not unrighteous. He is just.

The Bible teaches that the elect are those who choose to believe. Some will not repent that they may believe. God can choose vessels for His service by His sovereignty without respect of persons. He did so with Jacob instead of Esau but that is a far cry from choosing specific persons to go to heaven and others to go to hell. John 1:12, "12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

THIRD:

He believed Jesus died for sin BUT only for the elect and not for the sins of the whole world. This is called the "limited atonement".

ANSWER:

This is in flat contradiction of I John 2:2 "and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."

FOURTH:

He believed that Jesus was sinless BUT only because He was born of a virgin and the stain of sin only comes through the man's blood. Since God was His Father, no sin passed to Him from Adam.

ANSWER:

This is really strange since when a man child was born the mother was only unclean for 7 days then continued in her purifying 33 days while if it was a female child, the mother was unclean for two weeks then continued in the blood of her purifying 66 days. It would appear from this rational that girls were worse than boys!!

The truth is, sin does not pass from father to child any more than a man's righteousness does. Remember a child may be born drunk, on drugs, or with blindness due to VD and so forth but the guilt is not passed on. It is just the consequences of the parent's sin that affects the child.

The child may be born in poverty because of the habits and lifestyle of the parents but the child is not a sinner because of their sin.

If we were born sinners and Christ was not, then how can it be said that He was "made like unto his brethren in all things"?

If I was born with a sinful nature and He was not, then did He not have a big advantage over me? We, nor Christ, were born sinners.

We were born as innocent as Adam at his creation. He was made in God's image and so are we. Adam marred that image and so did I. Jesus did not.

FIFTH:

He believed that faith was essential to come to God BUT he believed that faith was a gift that God gives only to the elect whom He chose before the world began.

He would quote, "for by grace are you saved by faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast".

ANSWER:

It is not faith that is the gift of God. It is salvation that is the gift of God, as any Greek student will tell you. Faith is not the gift of God. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. The Scriptures were written that we might believe and believing we might have life in His name.

The word of God is the semen of God. We were begotten, not of corruptible seed, but by the incorruptible word of God. Without faith you can not please God because he that comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. If faith is a gift of God that only He can give, then whose fault would it be if a man did not have it? It would be God's fault. What dangerous and slanderous doctrine this is!

SIXTH:

He believed that the Church is the body of Christ BUT that it was established as a substitute for the Jewish Kingdom. Since the Jews killed Him, the Church was kind of like an afterthought that would be temporary until He came back and established His earthly kingdom.

ANSWER:

The Church is the eternal purpose of God, and not an afterthought to fill in until the Jews decided to accept Christ. Nations do not accept Christ, individuals do so, and we as His Church have His Words and must speak His Words faithfully.

Jesus said that He would build His Church even before they killed Him. Jesus used the word "Church" and "Kingdom" synonymously. He said, "I will build My Church. I will give unto you the keys to the Kingdom". The Jews did not postpone the Kingdom, they established it, for Peter preached on Pentecost that David was a prophet who foresaw Christ's resurrection to sit on His Throne.

If they had not killed Him, He could not have been raised from the dead to sit on the throne until His enemies were His footstool. Acts 2:30-34

If the Jews postponed the work of Christ by rejecting Him the first time, what is to say they will not postpone it again the second time? Daniel foresaw the Kingdom established in the days of the fourth kingdom on earth, that is, the days of the Roman Empire. He said the "interpretation was sure".

Any future day that the Kingdom would be established would not be in the days of the fourth kingdom that existed in Jesus' lifetime. It has been almost 2,000 years and any kingdom now would not be the fourth kingdom on earth. We have already been translated out of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

SEVENTH:

He believed in Baptism BUT that it was an outward sign of an inward act, he did not believe it was essential to salvation. He believed "he that believeth and is saved should be baptized."

ANSWER:

Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The Bible teaches that baptism precedes the remission of sins and the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 Of the conversions in Acts, the baptism of the converts are mentioned. Their faith and repentance and confession are not mentioned in every account. What is mentioned is their baptism. Yet the thing that is always mentioned is the one thing that my friend believed you did not have to do to be saved.

One cannot be saved if he is not IN Christ, nor is he a new creature unless he is IN Christ, nor is he without condemnation unless he is IN Christ. One gets into Christ by being baptized INTO Him. When my friend told people they were saved without being baptized he was making promises Jesus never made and was usurping the authority of Jesus and His apostles.

EIGHTH:

He believed Jesus was coming again BUT he was not touching down on the earth but catching the believer up to heaven for a while. Later in the second phase of the Second Coming He would come back to set up a literal physical kingdom on earth for a thousand years. While He was gone he believed people could still be saved. They would have to go through great tribulation but they would have a second chance.

ANSWER:

The Bible knows nothing of two parts to the Second Coming, a rapture, or a second chance. This doctrine did not originate till the mid-1700's. When Jesus comes again, that is the end of the world. He is coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on those who know not God and those who have not obeyed the Gospel. Unto those who look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin. The saints will be glorified and the wicked will be cast out of His presence. There is no second chance.

NINTH:

He believed that the Church will be raptured BUT the Holy Spirit will also be taken out of this

world. When that occurs 144,000 converted Jewish evangelists will go out and preach and win more souls to Christ (without the Holy Spirit) than the Spirit empowered church did for over 2000 years!!!

ANSWER:

Surely you can see the 144,000 people are figurative. It is from the book of Revelation. When interpreted in this manner, it is an insult to the Holy Spirit. God's Church is His evangelizers and with the help of the Holy Spirit many who were offered Salvation find Him.

TENTH:

He believed that one was made Holy at Conversion BUT he believed one could have a second work of grace and from that time on one could live without sin and never sin.

ANSWER:

He that says he has no sin, is a liar and "the truth is not in him". In many things we all offend. Paul calls himself, even after his conversion, the chief of sinners. He who controls his tongue is a perfect man but the tongue can no man tame. Therefore it follows that no one is perfect since no man can tame his tongue. There will never ever be a time that Jesus can just "ring off of the clock" because we no longer sin and do not need His intercession to help us at the throne of Grace.

ELEVENTH:

He believed that there is not anything you can do to be saved BUT once you are saved there is not anything you can do to be lost. Once a son always a son.

ANSWER:

Why then do we say, "I was a child of the devil? If the Proverb "once a son you are always a son" is true how then can I say "I am no longer a child of the devil." If once a son always a son applied to God's children, then why not the devil's? We are told we must make our calling and election sure. We need to take heed lest we depart from the living God.

TWELFTH:

He believed in taking Communion to remember our Lord but did not see the need of following the apostolic example of doing so on the first day of the week.

ANSWER:

Why would one follow the apostolic example as to when to meet (first day of the week) and not follow the apostolic example as to why they met? The verse that says when they met tells us why they met. Acts 20:7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." Apostolic example is needful for obedience to Christ and for Christian unity. Jesus led them into all truth and told them to teach all the things whatsoever He commanded. Matthew 28:28

CONCLUSION:

These are but a few things that my friend believed and practiced. No, he did not deny the deity, nor the Messiahship of Christ but look at what he did teach. He denied many of the

cardinal things that Jesus taught in His ministry.
When you tell people:

Only certain ones that God chose before creation can be saved

That the Church is a substitute for a Jewish physical Kingdom

That baptism is not essential to salvation and the Lord's Supper is not mandatory.

That faith is only available as a Gift from God

That once you are saved, you cannot be lost

That He never died for the sins of the whole world, but only the elect few

That the lost will get a second chance after a secret rapture

That men can be saved simply by inviting Jesus into their hearts.

Then I think you can understand why I weep for my friend. No wonder the Bible says "Be not many teachers knowing you're going to receive heavier judgment"

If I am wrong in what I teach, I expect His judgment to come upon me. How can I believe that my friend will hear "Well done thou good and faithful servant"?

Oh Lord God, help me to "study to show myself approved unto God a worker that needs not to be ashamed, having rightfully divided the word of Truth." I know you are a merciful God. I want to be merciful too. I therefore believe I best serve my Lord and the memory of my friend by trying to correct those things he taught as truth by showing them to be in error. May my friends serve me likewise, not only when I am dead, but now while I live.

P.S. Obviously there are many other arguments that could be given against my friend's assumptions. If you wish to have further arguments against any one of these ideas, please let me know and I will recommend Scriptures that may be of further help.

Original Article from [Summit Theological Seminary](#)

From Bro Kelly Lawson

While I was in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, KS Brother George Faull, as director of Treaty Institute of Evangelism, gave me a free Christian education when no one else would. By 1974 I received the diploma of Biblical studies. Although I could not take the Liberal Arts classes necessary to graduate, by 1978 I had completed the 160 hours Bachelor of Theology program when I was transferred to the Texas Prison System. He started me on

the right path to everything I ever learned in the Church of Christ.

Thank you Brother George, for I was in prison and you came to me. Kelly