

God's Word hasn't become less true just because it has become less popular

Matt Walsh Jul 7, 2017

Of course I wasn't surprised yesterday when I passed by a church with a rainbow flag hanging off of it. And I wasn't surprised that it had the words "God is still speaking" written across. That has been the motto of the United Church of Christ for sometime. And the United Church of Christ has long been an apostate cult that celebrates abortion and sodomy and all manner of other evils. It is less a church than it is a giant ecclesiastical Slip 'n Slide plunging its congregants happily into Hell.

There are many such churches in existence. They are considerably worse than the Church of Satan — and considerably better at carrying out its mission — because they promote depravity and death under the guise of Christian theology. The flock is fooled, but, sadly, I don't think that will be an effective excuse when they stand before the Throne of Judgment. Anyone who is fooled into adopting a theology that condones all that Our Lord has clearly condemned, wants to be fooled. They are complicit dupes. Perhaps one day when someone writes the history of western Christianity in the 21st century, "Complicit Dupes" should be the title of the book.

Still, even if we are all quite used to this sort of thing from these sorts of churches, there are three points worth making about them:

(1) It's very important for us to realize that these churches, which have made sacraments of heresy and blasphemy, are not in any sense Christian. We are sometimes led to believe that we should have a "big tent" approach to the faith — and we should, but here is the important point: we are not the ones who decide the size or scope of the tent. Our Lord has already set up the tent, and only those who choose to live under it can be called Christian.

A Christian, according to Christ, is anyone who lives as though He is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). To be Christ's disciple, He says, means that we must "deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him" (Matthew 16:24). Most Christians would say that John 3:16 basically sums up the Christian faith in one sentence, and it does, but these other verses tell us more about what it means to "believe in Him."

Can we believe in Him but not His precepts? Can we believe in Him yet make no attempt to follow Him? Can we believe in Him if we refuse to pick up our cross? Can we accept Him without denying ourselves? The Lord God has already answered these questions with a resounding "no." And that "no" exposes and condemns much of what we consider Christianity in this culture. It is not that we must be morally perfect to be Christian, but that we must acknowledge the validity of the eternal moral law and strive, at least, to follow it.

Imagine two types of Christians: One accepts what Christ has said about sexual morality, but stumbles constantly and finds himself always having to return to God in prayerful repentance, asking for the strength and grace to follow His law more closely. The other has decided that Christ didn't mean what He said, or that He didn't really say it, or that, you know, whatever, it's fine, and so he carries on looking at pornography, having premarital sex, and all the rest of it, and never repents or even tries to change because he has told himself — and perhaps his church has taught him — that obedience to Christ is a fundamentally unnecessary aspect of the Christian life. Even if these two types of Christians behave very similarly, only one is actually Christian. The one who completely rejects the notion that Christ has any authority over his life is not even in the ballpark of Christianity. Indeed, he's less Christian than an atheist. And the churches that preach this sort of Gospel are not preaching the Gospel at all.

(2) The church I happened across yesterday would get around much of what I just said by repeating that nifty little slogan they scrawled across their gay flag: God is still speaking. The obvious implication is that God may have defined marriage as between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4-5), condemned the homosexual act (1 Cor 6:9), forbidden divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:6-9), affirmed the humanity of the unborn (Jeremiah 1:5), outlawed the killing of the innocent (Exodus

20:13), and decreed many other things that are rather inconvenient in modern times, but that doesn't mean He still feels that way. He's still speaking, after all. Maybe His positions have evolved. Maybe He saw all of these people ignoring His commandments and realized that He was being unreasonable. Maybe if He could do it all over again, the Bible would just be two sentences long: "Have fun, guys. See you in Heaven." How do we know all of those icky rules still apply to us?

Well, we know they still apply because God's will is unchanging and eternal (Numbers 23, Hebrews 6, Psalm 33). If God has decreed a certain moral truth, then it stands forever, as He stands forever. And if He has defined something as having a certain nature, then it will have that nature for eternity, as His nature is eternal. We are no longer bound by the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, but the moral laws hold forever, no matter when they were first recorded and set down on paper. To believe otherwise is to believe in a fallible and fickle God. It is to believe in a God who is not all wise or all powerful. It is to believe in a God who is not God.

Yes, God still speaks to us. He hasn't abandoned us. We are still in the New Testament, after all. The ending of the New Testament — Revelation — takes place some time in the future. God is with us, guiding us, and acting upon our world. But nothing that He says or does will ever or can ever contradict what He has already said and done. Period. So, if "God" has spoken to you and told you that it's cool to divorce your wife and marry the secretary, or engage in a homosexual relationship, or abort your child because his conception was inconveniently timed, that is not God you're hearing.

(3) But I think there are many of us who would agree with everything I've said thus far, yet somewhere in the back of our minds we still harbor the idea that we are not as bound by some of these laws as the Christians of the past may have been. I think we are often tempted to look at the Christian life prescribed by Christ and kind of shrug it off as something far too sparse and severe for modern times. We may not preach or defend the proposition explicitly, but we still live as though many of God's laws have been voted down and disqualified.

Someone recently told me that he knows what the Bible says about keeping sex inside marriage, but (I'm paraphrasing) he believes that God will give him some leeway on the issue because it's "just not very realistic anymore." This attitude is extremely common. We are not outright heretics, but we have some idea about which virtues are "realistic" in our day and which are not, and we have confidence that God will not be too strict about it. We would not say out loud that God's Word is less true today because it's less popular, but, at some level, that's what we have told ourselves. And, because of this, we may even be in a more dangerous position than the apostate Christians I described in point 1.

The danger is that we begin to consider ourselves chaste because we are realistically chaste, and courageous because we are realistically courageous, and charitable because we are realistically charitable, and faithful because we are realistically faithful, and obedient because we are realistically obedient. We have followed Christ more closely than the average person in our culture, but only to the extent that we deemed reasonable. We have gone right up to the edge of where the Christian life may actually start to cause us some real pain and suffering, and we have set up camp there at the threshold, making sure not to cross through it.

We know that we cannot call ourselves devout, but we settle for being realistic. We have considered the standards of the world on one hand, and the standards of Heaven on the other, and we have found a spot somewhere in the middle. And of course that middle ground continues to slide ever further from God as the world's standards become ever more wicked and debauched. But we are safe here, we think, because at least we're better than most.

No, we are not safe. The world may look at us and think we're faithful Christians, but the Christians of a thousand years ago would look at us and think we're heathens. The Christians of a thousand years ago would be closer to the truth in this case. If we only try to live slightly above the standards of the world, we're making the same mistake as the Christians who only try to live by them. Both groups are operating as if our Christian duties can be calibrated according to the modern sensibility.

We both are living with the confidence that there is strength in numbers. God can't damn us all, we say to ourselves.
Oh, but He can.

Few are chosen. The gate is narrow. We know that Heaven is not a place for worldly people, but neither is it a place for realistic people. Only those who are Christian to an unrealistic extent can enter into it. That is what Christ expects and demands of us: to be unrealistically Christian. It was not realistic when He preached it 2,000 years ago, and it's not realistic today. But it is as true today as it was 2,000 years ago, and we are just as bound by it.

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