

THE DEADLINESS OF SIN



Carter Conlon February 7, 2015

“Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved” (2 Corinthians 12:14-15).

These are the words of Paul, a man whose heart and life were an embodiment of Jesus Christ. Paul’s life was given for the people of God, as is the case with every true servant of God. He was willing to travel through storm, flood and fire; to endure personal longing and want; to be pressed above measure to the point where he even despaired of living—all in order that he might come to the people of God with a message of His love. However, Paul found that the more love he would express, the more certain people would pull away. Why would that be the case?

I believe we find the answer in the next chapter: “This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare” (2 Corinthians 13:1-2).

Remember, the Corinthian church was coming out of what could be considered an immoral abyss. In the middle of their city stood a major temple with more than a thousand prostitutes—prostitution was actually considered an act of worship in that society. Clearly, wrong had become right, and right had become wrong.

Paul was an apostle and pastor, so he was aware of the deadliness of sin. He understood the peril of those who fall into the trap of continually justifying wrong. That is the dilemma of the human condition—the longer we do something the Word of God defines as sin, the more our fallen nature rises to the fore and begins to determine what is wrong and what is right. Paul knew that if the people continued to willfully do wrong, making peace with those things from which Christ died to set them free, the victory of the cross could not be rightfully claimed as their own.

After all, those who do so would be left with only an illusion; in other words, they would have knowledge with no power behind it. And so, as a true spiritual father to the Corinthian church, Paul was attempting to bring them into a right way of thinking and living. That is why he said, “I will not spare.” Sadly, that is the point where many chose to draw back.

Carter Conlon joined the pastoral staff of Times Square Church in 1994 at the invitation of the founding pastor, David Wilkerson, and was appointed Senior Pastor in 2001. A strong, compassionate leader, he is a frequent speaker at the Expect Church Leadership Conferences conducted by World Challenge throughout the world.

Links

[1] <https://worldchallenge.org/printpdf/9645/>