

Christ in Me

Has anyone ever said to you “Oh you look just like your...(mother, father, aunt, uncle, etc.)”. Women can turn out to be the feminine image of their fathers just as men can turn out to be the masculine image of their mothers. Isn't it interesting how we seem to carry some of the genetics of our parents when it comes to our physical attributes and or appearances? Other sayings like “you can tell who your daddy is” when referring to temperament are other ways in which we are associated with a parent. And many of those traits can be of such that maybe we don't want to emulate them, such as an ill temperament or even some physical characteristic that I won't mention here for the sake of not wanting to be politically incorrect. Of course there are lot of these non-physical “baggages” that once we become Christians we might need to leave behind. That is, if we truly want to emulate Christ in order for Him **not** to “declare to [us], ‘I never knew you’” (*Mat 7:23*). And what are some of the things that we might have done formerly that need to be abandoned to live “no longer for human passions but for the will of God” (*1 Pet 4:2*)? There are many but, according to Proverbs 6, we will be focusing on the...

Pro 6:16 ... six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to Him: 17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, 19 a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.

“Numerous body parts are listed to show that every part of the human body can be used to sin. A person does not need a complete, perfect, or even a physically healthy body to break God's laws.”
Brad Price on Rom 3:13-18

And just as in Jeremiah when he was told to speak to Israel concerning their transgressions, we need to understand humility and repentance if we wish to be a people who have Christ in us.

Jer 6:15 Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown," says the LORD.

1. Haughty Eyes

You can imagine, as some probably have had similar experiences, what it must have been like to have grown up in a three bedroom shack with an outhouse. The only indoor plumbing being a tub sink in the kitchen, with eight siblings (*besides myself*) and three adults, our house was located, “on the other side of the tracks” so to speak, in an alley. It was back when most of the housing in that part of town relied on cisterns for water supplies and for heat we had a kerosene stove in the kitchen. Most of what we wore came from rummage sales or were hand-me-downs that indeed looked it. That along with the smell of kerosene during the winter months exposed to others our social standing. But we didn't know any better. That is until we were in public where we were judged on appearance and not on the person inside the disheveled clothing we wore. And for some reason, it seemed, I was always the last to be picked when it came to being on whatever team. The “haughty eyes” of my peers truly taught me a lesson in humility. That said, this “abomination” (*Heb.8441- something disgusting, an abhorrence*) in the Lord's eyes truly hits home.

Jas 4:6 ... Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Of course the focus of this lesson is from an Old Testament passage which was aimed at the children of Israel and their attitude toward the down trodden among them. But as the N.T. "Israel of God" (*Gal 6:16*) are we any different when it comes to how we are to treat each other or for that matter, how we treat those of the world around us?

Jas 2:1 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which He has promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable Name by which you were called? 8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

How can we expect others to know Christ is in us if we have such "haughty eyes"?

2. A Lying Tongue

Rom 3:13 "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips."

"a tongue speaking falsehood, knowingly and willingly, with an intention to deceive others; to hurt the character of a neighbour, or to flatter a friend, is a most detestable evil; it ought to be so to men, it must be so to God, Who is a God of truth: nor is there anything in which a man more resembles the devil, who is the father of lies;" John Gill

Joh 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Along with "haughty eyes" this would include "gossip" (*2 Cor 12:20*), or as rendered in the KJV, "whisperings". According to Webster, a 'gossip' is "one who chatters idly about others". It shows no regard for the one being tattled about and in most cases, if not all, the one with the 'lying tongue' is attempting to belittle for the sake of comparing them to his own 'higher' status. As Gill states here, it "is a most detestable evil" and the one responsible for such cannot truly claim they have Christ in them.

Col 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him:

And concerning "the image of Him that created him", what about taking the lives of the innocent since all were created as spiritual beings? What about the...

3. Hands that Shed Innocent Blood

“that of persons who have not been guilty of any capital sin, for which they ought to die by the laws of God or men, and yet shed or poured out as common water; such hands must be defiled, and such men must be hateful to God, they destroying His image, and being like to the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning.” John Gill

We understand how the Bible speaks of capital punishment for those guilty of breaking certain laws since it has been sanctioned by God in both Old and New Testaments. Under the O.T. the “avenger” could have been any member of the family who lost someone due to the malicious act of murder.

Num 35:19 The avenger of blood shall himself put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death.

Governments that do not “punish those who do evil and praise those who do good” (1 Pet 2:14) are not governing according to the will of God!

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not (*supposed to be*) a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

Capital punishment, when it fits the crime, cannot be considered murder as some believe and promote. The death penalty if not instituted through the government when the crime demands it, only shows a refusal to obey what God commands, it's unjust and the lawless get away with not having to pay what their penalty requires. Therefore the deterrent to commit such acts, when consequences are few or nonexistent, becomes of no value.

Ecc 8:11 Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil.

There are many convicted robbers, rapists, child molesters and murderers who never even thought to fear the consequences of their actions. How can capital punishment be a deterrent when so many have remained on death row for so long and have gone through so many appeals when it was proven beyond the shadow of a doubt they were guilty of the crime they were incarcerated for? What about their victims? Do they receive “three hots and a cot”? If government wishes to make things fairer to the common people it needs to lessen the burden of taxation its citizens pay into a system that houses the unjust criminal by doing what is just before God. And shedding “innocent blood” **must also** include taking the lives of the innocent unborn. They are not just fetal matter that has no worth!

Exo 21:22 "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 But if there is harm, then you shall pay **life** for **life**, (*Emp. added*)

Therefore Christ cannot be in us if we feel the abhor-able act of aborting the precious life of an unborn innocent human soul is acceptable, for whatever reason. And those who perform such acts, if not punished by man's now almost nonexistent laws against it, will be held accountable to God.

Gen 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image.

4. A Heart The Devises Wicked Plans

Heart: Heb.3820- the will and even the intellect: -understanding.

"Or, 'thoughts of wickedness'; which are framed and formed in the heart: and this being the source and fountain of all wickedness,..."
John Gill

Mat 15:19 For **out of the heart** come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (*Emp. added*)

Most, if not all, sin originates from within and produces the desire to either ponder it or carry it out. Either way, it is sin.

Mat 5:28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman **with lustful intent** has **already** committed adultery with her in his heart. (*Emp. added*)

To contemplate sin is to have committed sin. This fourth abomination is an act which involves premeditation. Whether seriously contemplating in the mind, a desire to commit an evil act or earnestly thinking about being involved with others who don't...

Tit 2:12 ... renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

...such planning cannot be evidence of Christ in me. As Paul stated...

Rom 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the **desire to do** what is **right**, but not the ability **to carry it out**. (*Emp. added*)

5. Feet that Make Haste to Run to Evil

It seems there are so many, some even in the church, who can't wait to 'run to the gossip fence' or that enjoy, whether admitting so or not, being part of anything lawless or controversial. Generally, newspapers don't sell when all is good in the news. Why? For what purpose other "than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin" (*Heb 11:25*) ?

"The sins of the heart and mouth are before described, and now the sins of action are taken notice of; for "the feet" are the instruments of motion and action: and when these are said to be "swift to shed blood" (as per Rom 3:15), it denotes the readiness and eagerness of men, to murder innocent creatures; which shows the dreadful malice and hatred that is in them."
John Gill

This is an act, not just of willingness but, of the "haste" to commit sin, especially when it concerns being committed against another person. It is an outward display of the hatred that exists within. Even if one person has no love (*Gk.25- in a social or moral sense*) for another then the opposite of love applies which is hate. It's either the one or the other, especially when it concerns Christians. John equated hate with murder so the Rom 3:15 passage applies here.

1Jn 3:15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

That, along with what Jesus said about Satan being “a murderer from the beginning [who] has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him”, and telling them “you are of your father the devil” (*Jn 8:44*), the one who participates in such willful acts of sin against others cannot have Christ in him.

6. A False Witness that Breathes Out Lies

Two of the seven things that God hates have to do with some sort of lying. The second of the sins God detests has to do with lying in general but this particular type of lie has more to do with “bearing false witness against one’s neighbor”. He “swears to them, to the damage of others.” (*Gill*) Whether or not it needs to be settled before a judge, the truth eventually comes out and either one or both will be found guilty of bearing false testimony against the other (*whether now or in the afterlife*).

1Co 6:5 I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, 6 but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? 7 To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? 8 But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!

Two people going to court over any matter, for the most part, is to have a judge decide which party is in the right and which is in the wrong. In most cases both can’t be right but both can be wrong. If two brethren can’t make a decision between them than one of at least two things is clear and Christ cannot possibly be in them. Either pride is involved or there’s animosity that stands in the way of their fellowship. So if it takes lying to save one’s pride of giving in to the other, than it is evident to others that Christ doesn’t abide within. Such so very often leads to the apex, the seventh of the six things that God hates...

7. One Who Sows Discord Among Brothers

This absolutely has to break God’s heart just as it would any parents’ hearts who love their children and want nothing more for them than to get along. The six prior detestable things might not exist were it not for this one. It is with this mindset, within certain brethren, that has split many congregations out of selfish pride, arrogance and the “Diotrephes syndrome” (*3 Jn 9*).

3Jn 9 I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. 10 So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us (*sowing discord*). And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. 11 Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

It is hard to believe that there are those who go about attempting to interrupt the very fragile harmony that exists within congregations, which only displays a lack of humility or knowledge when it comes to authority. And mostly, if not all, out of selfish pride. If the church is the only hope the world has to share the message of the Gospel, than those who try to interfere in the

progress of such, are guilty of the loss of so many souls, whether in the church of those who are led astray by such arrogance, or those who haven't been saved because of it.

Jas 4:1 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

This detestable act involves arrogance, warped beliefs to the point of proclaiming them, devising wicked plans to accomplish what they've convinced themselves as being right, doing so with such misguided conviction that they are hasty about it, murmuring and telling lies about others in order to get people on board with them. And we all need to be aware that each of us personally aren't taking even a small part in sowing such discord within the very fragile fellowship we enjoy here. Don't we want to emulate Christ and His love so that others will be convinced that He is in us? How else will we convince the world that we have what it needs in order to stand righteous before God at the judgment?

Mat 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in Heaven.

Obviously this list of the seven things God finds deplorable in the Proverbs is not a complete list of the "iniquities [that] have separated between you and your God" as Isaiah told Israel "and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He will not hear" (*Isa 59:3*). There really is no **single** list in the Bible of all the multitude of ways we can disobey God's laws or Paul wouldn't have added "and such like" to the one he made when writing to the Galatians (*Gal 5:21*). In writing to the Romans concerning Gentiles living during the time when Israel was under the Old Mosaic Law he said...

Rom 2:15 ... that they show the work of the Law **written in their hearts**, their **conscience** bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing *them*); (*Emp. added*)

"By using their instincts, the Gentiles were able to fulfill the moral obligations which had been imposed upon the Jews. The Gentiles also had a sense of what was proper because the Jews were a recognized people, and many moral laws had existed since the time of Adam and Eve."
Brad Price

Knowing right and wrong can't be based on our upbringing, what we've been taught or on life's experiences. And just as the Gentiles based right and wrong on something, a good conscience needs to be based on truth or it won't be an acceptable excuse at the judgment for having lived a lifetime in sin. And such a conscience can be obtained through baptism, which Peter said "now saves you" since it is "an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (*1 Pet 3:21*). Morality can only exist when a conscience is based on understanding right and wrong according to divine truth. As Paul stated...

Act 24:16 So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.

How can we "take pains to have a clear conscience"? Once we've had our sins washed in obedience to baptism and have been granted our "appeal to God for a good conscience" (*1 Pet 3:21*) the way we continue to "walk in newness of life" (*Rom 6:4*) becomes easier with our "examining the Scriptures daily" as did the brethren of Berea (*Act 17:11*). After all, our

conscience has to be established on something. Feeding our minds with anything other than material either penned by the inspired writings of scripture or sound doctrine taught by godly saints cannot produce “a clear conscience”! And the more we are in the word the more it is evident in our speech and manner of living.

2Co 3:2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. 3 And you **show that you are a letter from Christ** delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (*Emp. added*)

How can we “show that [we] are a letter from Christ” but to be able to prove...

1Ti 1:5 The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Others will see Christ in us when we “deny [ourselves] and take up [our] cross and follow [Him]” (*Mat 16:24*). As Paul stated...

Gal 2:20 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 (*the gospel*), Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

“not that faith which Christ, as man, had, but that of which He is the author and object, by which the just man lives;”
John Gill

Have you been crucified with Christ? Have you been...

Rom 6:4 ... buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him.

If you wish to have Christ abiding in you and in your life, please answer the Gospel call by repenting of those sins that separate you from God, confess that Jesus is His Son and be immersed for the forgiveness of your sins. It is that simple.

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Revised 1/25/24

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