

blood is pervasive and hard to change.” Imagine that! By reading the Bible, how would anyone ever get the wild and crazy notion “that we are redeemed by blood”? “In whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood” (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). “Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved” (Rom. 5:9). “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things...but with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). “The blood of Jesus Christ...cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jn. 1:7). Keller’s correct. The thinking “that we are redeemed by blood” is indeed “pervasive.” It pervades and permeates the prophets, and it is not simply “hard,” but it is impossible “to change,” for “without shedding of blood (there) is no remission” of sins (Heb. 9:22).

“Duane Ediger, a Dallas peace activist,” said, “Jesus did not die for our sins, but because of them” Did you catch that? “Jesus did not die for our sins.” Compare and contrast that with the following: “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). “Christ died for our sins” (1 Cor. 15:3). “Grace be to you...from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins” Gal. 1:3, 4). “Jesus our Lord...was delivered for our offences” (Rom. 4:24, 25). “Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). “I live by the faith of the Son of God...who gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). “Jesus Christ...is the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn. 2:1, 2).

It might be fair to say that because of our sins Jesus died for our sins, but it is not correct to say, as did Duane, a Dallas doctrinal deviant, that “Jesus did not die for our sins” Duane should spend more time reading the words of the Prince of Peace before he leads any more marches for peace. Any time he so violently misrepresents and perverts the truth of the Captain of our salvation, we shall declare war upon his peace (2 Cor. 10:3-5). Such spiritual warfare is not a pretty sight. The squeamish should close their eyes and hide in the basement with the children.

“Stop Using the Cross”

Lest any should find this article too harsh, let us close with the soft, kind, loving and totally inoffensive words of our peace professor, Delores Williams. “Theologian Williams insists that one of the strongest acts against violence Christians can make is to stop using the cross as a symbol of the religion....It’s destructive to use the cross as a symbol,” she said. “I don’t think that’s what Jesus is about.” Are words strong enough to condemn such arrogant audacity and brazen blasphemy?

Jesus used “the cross as a symbol of religion.” “If any man will come after me, let him...take up his cross daily” (Lk. 9:23). Delores, was Jesus guilty of “destructive” behavior? The Spirit used the cross “as a symbol” of religion” when he said that worldly people “are the enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3:18). Paul used the cross “as the symbol” for the gospel itself when he said, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness (that includes you, Miss Williams); but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18). Furthermore, like Paul, “God forbid” that we should glory in anything, except “the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:14).

These pseudo-purveyors of peace are wolves wrapped in fleece. They are mutant “ministers of righteousness,” angels in the army of our Adversary. Christ “made peace (not violence) through the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20). Paul was not “ashamed” of that gospel, of that bloody, yes, violent “testimony,” and neither must we be (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:8)! With their feigned words of “peace” they will deceive the hearts of silly, sensual, sentimental simpletons (Rom. 16:18). However, Enoch warns against all such people. Through the prophet, Jude, he said that God would “execute judgment upon all,” for all their ungodly words and deeds. Duane, Delores, and Keller are “mockers,” walking “after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit” (Jude 14-19). These are the very folks and the very philosophies Paul was talking about when he said, “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Col. 2:8).

There is a spirit afoot today that would apologize for such people, contending that they are “well meaning” but merely “misguided.” Therefore, it is urged, “We should not ‘come down’ too strongly against them.” If so, I read about some people in Matthew 15 who were also “well meaning” and who were “misguided”. Jesus said, “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matt. 15:8, 9, 13-15). That is harsh language, but when men and women spout doctrines and philosophies that lead men to hell, is it not time to “cry aloud, and spare not” (Isa. 58:1)? “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?”

Some Thoughts about Offering Criticism

William Barclay

“I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first” (Revelation 2:19).

There is something very interesting about this verse. The letter to the church at Thyatira is to be a letter of warning and of criticism, and yet it begins with a verse of undiluted praise. Here is something which every preacher and teacher, indeed every Christian, must learn. Real criticism must always encourage and never discourage. When we have reason to rebuke or to criticize anyone, we must make it clear that we are doing so, not because we dislike him, but because

we like him; not because we hate him, but because we love him; not because we think that he is useless, but because we think that he has it in him to be useful; not because we wish to hurt him, but because we wish to help him. That is why criticism will often be most effective when it begins with praise. It is wise to point out that which is good before we begin to seek to eradicate that which is evil.

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:3-4