

Is God Blessing and Using New Evangelical Christians?

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

What is a New Evangelical Christian? The answer is obvious and can be supported from the historical purposes of New Evangelicalism which began to be promoted in the late 1940's. The New Evangelical philosophy promoted infiltration and adaptation to apostasy and the world system instead of separation. Therefore, many Christians have followed in this train, most without knowing of the origins of this philosophy. Those who compromised with liberalism, modernism, and eventually other types of worldliness within church life and ministry became known as the newer or New Evangelicals.

The New Evangelical is the type of Christian who tends to follow the road of compromise today with their manner of living and conduct. The New Evangelical (as opposed to the old evangelical of Bible separation) is a believer who seems flow with the tide of ecumenicalism and worldly compromise, which today has morphed into the promotion and acceptance of Christians Rock Music, the wearing of tattoos, excessive body piercings, social drinking, the promotion of tolerance toward liberal doctrine and teaching, and the imbibing of other carnal amusements. This type of Christian seems to be the accepted norm today within our Christian culture and society.

The Questions Fundamentalists Ask

As separatists (the old evangelicals) who are seeking to maintain the line of separation from worldliness, compromising positions, and practices, we often wonder how God can bless Christians who don't seem to have a heart to change and do what is right in connection with the clear commands of Biblical separation (2 Cor. 6:14-17). These questions are usually asked by practicing fundamentalists, "How can God use the lives of New Evangelical Christians when there are sinful activities and worldly compromises being promoted in their daily lives? Are they in fellowship with the Lord? Can they really experience the blessing of the Lord in their lives? Does God hear and answer their prayers? In the remainder of this study, we will try to address and answer these questions.

The Different Types of Sins

As we begin, we must remember that of us deal with various sins and spiritual struggles in our lives that we must overcome by God's grace in order to receive His greatest blessing upon our daily lives. What we are addressing in this study is when Christians continue to engage in various worldly sins practices without having conviction about them while at the same time they attend church and seek to live exemplary lives in other areas. In these cases, we must consider the Biblical concept of sins of ignorance. This type of sin is spoken about in the book of Leviticus.

Leviticus 4:2

“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD *concerning things* which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them.”

Leviticus 4:13

“And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *somewhat against* any of the commandments of the LORD *concerning things* which should not be done, and are guilty.”

These are sins that Christians can ignorantly commit because of their lack of understanding and grounding in the Bible. This means that a Christian can live in ignorance regarding certain violations of God's commands. Perhaps many New Evangelical Christians fall under this category of Christians who sin through ignorance. I think this might be the case since many have not been taught some of the important aspects of sanctification that relate to music and other worldly vices such as drinking alcohol, tobacco use, ecumenicalism, and other areas that apply to sanctified living.

A Christian might sin ignorantly because he is unaware of what the Bible says about certain actions. On the other hand, he might sin in willful ignorance by not wanting to find out or know what the Bible says concerning certain actions. In other cases, the Christian may know what the Bible says and still want to practice his own manner of wrong conduct and personal worldliness. This *principle* can be seen

in such a verse as Hebrews 10:26 which says: “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth....”

It's equally true that God's people can be ignorant about a certain sin because they have been deceived by it. A young Christian may not realize some of the characteristics of sin and be deceived into thinking that certain actions are okay, when in reality they are not. This is why they must be discipled and directed in the way of truth. We must remember that sin is very deceptive.

Hebrews 3:13 says:

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

Because sin is so deceptive, a Christian can sin ignorantly and deceive himself into thinking that his particular action and course in life is okay, when all along it is not right. In this case, 1 John 1:8 says: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Sin can give a false sense of security about a believer's life and manner of living. It can create a false sense of confidence about ourselves. Sin whispers in our ear and says that our living is okay and our manner of conduct and actions are acceptable before God. Sin can deceive us and say that we have no need of spiritual improvement in our actions and manner of conduct.

Revelation 3:16-17 speaks of the Laodicean Christians:

“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”

2 Peter 1:8-9 also speaks about this:

“For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

Yes, Christians can live with a kind of spiritual blindfold of deception, so that they do not recognize within their own lives various aspects of worldly living and certain actions of their conduct, which are unbefitting and unholy. Christians can sin in ignorance because of the blindfold that sin can bring upon their lives. This is a Biblical truth represented in Scripture. It's not the blindness of Satan (2 Cor. 4:3-4) but the deception that sin can place upon our minds and hearts when we imbibe it and yield to it without conviction.

Whenever a Christian directly violates a known Scriptural command and goes his own way, it's then that his sin is no longer an ignorant sin. Rather, it becomes a sin of commission. It becomes an open violation of the revealed will of God. At this point, the sin can become deceptive and keep the Christian in a type of spiritual blindness to the truth of sanctification.

Numbers 15:30-31 describe this type of known and willful sin:
"But the soul that doeth *ought* presumptuously ("with an open hand" or in open rebellion), *whether he be* born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity *shall be* upon him."

When a person sins in this manner, he cannot fellowship with the Lord, pray effectively to the Lord, and be blessed by the Lord in any true fashion. Known and open rebellion against God causes great conflict in the inner soul and breaks fellowship with the Lord (Psalm 51:1-12).

So, there is a difference between sinning presumptuously and sinning ignorantly. A believer's sins may be considered sins of ignorance when they are unlearned, misinformed, or deceived by these particular sins. I'm convinced that we can and do commit ignorant sins that need to be brought to our light, as our heart is open to the teaching ministry of the Word of God. These types of ignorant sins will become more apparent to Christians only as they grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Bible (John 17:17) and as their lives become tuned to God's holiness (1 Pet. 1:15). We must always

remember that each Christian is at different levels in their Christian living and at different stages of growth.

Many Christians will sin ignorantly because they are not really in tune with what the Bible says and their heart is not open to God's leading and inner conviction regarding sanctification (1 Thess. 4:4). But sins of ignorance will become more apparent as Christians grow in grace and realize sin's character and plot to deceive their lives and as they learn to apply God's holiness to every area of their lives in the process of sanctification (Titus 2:11-12). A right view of the grace of God will lead you away from all sin and those actions which are worldly and from which God has delivered you. Grace has a sanctifying effect upon our lives.

The Issue of God Using Worldly Christians

How does God use those Christians who sin ignorantly because of misinformation, lack of teaching or growth, or those who might even be deceived by sin? How does God use those who imbibe worldly music, who engage in vices that are unholy, and who associate with movements, men, ministries which are not separated in their practice? The point seems to be this, God uses what we give to Him on a daily basis through surrender (Rom. 12:1-2). The more we yield to truth and to God and give our lives and bodies to Him (Romans 6:11-13), the more He can use us and truly bless our lives. This is because obedience is what brings God's true blessing.

James 1:25 reminds us:

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

This means that true blessing always comes when we are obedient to what we know God wants us to do. God cannot use believers as He wants to when they are a forgetful hearer and go on living the same way. In fact, God never blesses disobedience, whether it is done ignorantly or presumptuously. Obedience to the truth is what brings blessing – not disobedience. The root of obedience results in the fruit of God's true blessing. So, God uses what we give Him through a

surrendered life. At the same time, what we give Him must be clean and pure or else God rejects it (Malachi 1:7-8).

The Issue of Carnality and Fellowship with God

We know that sin keeps Christians from fellowshiping with God (1 John 1:8-9). This is true in the lives of Christians who are fundamentalists and New Evangelical in practice. The fellowship issue is important to consider at this point of our discussion. It would be too rash to conclude that all New Evangelical Christians are carnal Christians even though they might commit certain acts of carnality. A carnal Christian is one who is dominated by the flesh more than the Spirit (1 Cor. 3:1-3). They live in the realm of the flesh more than the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Carnal Christians do not have the kind of fellowship with God as they should because they live in defeat more than on the victory side of life. The carnal Christian can develop a false sense of communion with the Lord that is not true fellowship with the Lord because of their lack of interest in committing their lives to God and doing His will. Of course, open disobedience and defiance against the truth takes a person away from experiencing sweet communion and fellowship with the Lord. Open scandal against truth is rebellious living which breaks communion and fellowship with the Lord. James calls all Christians to get cleaned up and then experience communion with Him.

James 4:8

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, ye sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double minded.”

Many New Evangelical believers, who love the Lord, want to fellowship with God and do commune with Him in spite of their flawed conduct and unseparated stance and manner of living. This is because they do many things out of ignorance but they also confess their sins, in both a specific and general manner, as all sensitive Christians will do, who have the desire to fellowship with God and worship Him. In other words, when we come to confess our sins, we name the ones we know we have committed against the Lord, but also ask God’s forgiveness for those we might have missed! After all, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin whether they are

sins of *commission* (Ps. 19:13), *omission* (James 4:17), and *ignorance* (Lev. 4:2).

1 John 1:7

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Here is the point. A Christian’s failure to recognize certain worldly compromises or sins in their present position of Christian growth does not necessarily disqualify them from fellowship with the Lord. This is because they can confess their sins and keep walking in the light. On the other hand, there are those Christians who seem to be dominated and controlled by sinful lusts and amusements, which keep them from loving and communing with the Lord. Eventually these types of Christians find themselves drifting further from the Lord as sin overtakes their lives and they no longer possess any real spiritual fellowship with God. Sin eventually drives Christians away from the Lord and Christians can live in a state of spiritual dormancy if they do not confess their sins before God.

Isaiah 59:2 says:

“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.”

Many Christians are dead in their Christian lives even while they are alive physically.

1 Timothy 5:6 speaks to this issue when Paul says:

“But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.”

So the issue of fellowship is very important. Fellowship is broken when Christians, in any stage of their growth process, sin in open rebellion against what they know is the revealed will of God. Separation precedes fellowship for the Bible says, “touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you, And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17). This means we must be clean to fellowship with God. This is why many Christians are not walking with God and why they are living in defeat. They have knowingly sinned against the light of truth

and quenched the Spirit's ministry in their lives (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The New Evangelical spirit of compromise and worldly living can very easily take a Christian down a path where they are controlled and dominated by sin. This kind of alleged free lifestyle can cause a Christian to become carnal in his overall walk and lead to backsliding and broken fellowship before the Lord.

The Issue of Obedience and God's Blessing

We must also remember that God blesses believers in proportion to their commitment and obedience to Him. We also know that God does not bless any actions of willful disobedience in any measure.

Deuteronomy 11:27-28 brings out this principle:

"A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."

A blessing if you obey! This is the enduring principle we find in God's Word. Only when we obey do we receive God's true blessing. Only when we do what is right can we receive God's blessing for our specific actions and living. When we refuse to obey and openly rebel against the Lord, then we lose His blessing and cannot be rewarded for the way we have lived. 1 Samuel 15:23 also reminds of what God said through the prophet Samuel: "For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being king.*"

We know from these Scriptures that God never blesses people when they openly and knowingly rebel and disobey the revealed will of God for their lives. They only reap a harvest of pain and God's displeasure (Gal. 6:8). Scripture bears this out time and time again. Only as we learn to obey the truth that we already know can we experience the greatest spiritual blessing and satisfaction from the Lord. The point is this, God only blesses obedient actions. He is never pleased with actions that run contrary to His revealed will and pattern for Christian living. Conduct that is worldly does not receive God's blessings. This

reminds us that not all that is said to be a blessing from God is God's blessing. Blessing cannot be linked with direct acts of errant teaching and disobedient actions that are not holy or in accordance with God's eternal truth. There is such a thing as pseudo revival and a false sense of blessing which is not the true blessing that comes from God and following His truth (Rev. 3:17-19).

On the other hand, God will use what we give to Him as we honestly seek to live righteously and do His will (Malachi 3:10). God blesses those actions which are righteous and holy before Him but not our unrighteous and unholy actions. Once again, James 1:25 reminds us that only when we hear and obey God's truth can we experience God's true blessing "this man shall be blessed in his deed." Only as we seek to live a righteous and godly life to the best of our knowledge, however limited that knowledge may be, can we expect God's blessing to fall on our lives both now and in the future. In other words, God uses and chooses to bless and reward those good and virtuous things that we do for Him in spite of our ignorance and other spiritual pitfalls that might relate to our lives.

The Issue of Disobedience and Judgment Seat of Christ

So, it's true that God will bless us for the good and righteous things we do. However, at the same time any ignorance or blindness that comes from misinformation or neglect of learning and growth in holiness will keep us from receiving a full reward at the Bema Seat of Christ. Disobedience to doctrinal teaching or any Biblical revelation is set in the context of losing reward in the future day when Christians stand before the Lord.

2 John 1:7-8

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought (the truth and teachings of Scripture), but that we receive a full reward."

We should not look at ignorance or deception concerning Christian living as something that is insignificant in light of eternity. Obedience is better than anything else we could possibly do in life. God honors

obedience and right living. God blesses right actions and righteous decisions. Obedience is at the top of God's list.

1 Samuel 15:22

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as *great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams."

1 Peter 1:14

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."

God wants us to be obedient in "all things" (2 Cor. 2:9) and in "word and deed" (Romans 15:18). God places a premium on obedience and we can be sure that eternal reward will be ours in the future, as we yield to God and practice obedience, which is free from unholy actions (Romans 6:22). The Lord will honor obedience to the truth of His word and practicing obedience will bring reward. Acts of disobedience done in ignorance or willful neglect will not be rewarded.

2 Corinthians 5:10 is a solemn verse:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."

God promises to bless our commitment to the truth of His Word. Any action that deviates from God's truth will not result in any blessing or future reward. The error of our ways or any deviation from truth and righteousness will not be rewarded. These fleshly and worldly actions will go up in smoke since they were deeds done in the flesh and out of disobedience.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 reminds us of the details:

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

God will have the final say on all of our actions and works. Only those works that are not tainted with worldliness and which are genuine will stand the final test. Everything else will be eliminated as believers pass through the fire of God's omniscience. The Bema Seat will bring out the effectiveness of Christian living as it pertains to sins of ignorance, sins of omission, and sins that have never been confessed. All of our ignorance and unwillingness to surrender to God's plan of separation or holiness will cause us to lose reward that we otherwise could have had. Following error and connecting our lives with wrong things and sinful patterns will certainly effect our eternal reward. This is why we must practice complete obedience and have an open and teachable heart to all of God's known will for our lives. In the end, it will pay. God does not settle all of His accounts in this life.

The Issue of Confession and Carnality

Confession of sin within the framework of the Christian life is something that we once again need to address in light of our present study. Any Christian, whether they are separated or unseparated in their overall pattern of living, can confess their sins before God and ask for a clean slate and fresh start before God. In a general way, Christians at all levels of the growth process can ask for a new start before the Lord. When doing this, the believer receives forgiveness for his sins and can once again be a clean vessel for the Lord to use (1 John 1:9). I often pray that I might be a clean vessel fit for the Master use before I preach and start a new day (2 Timothy 2:21). As God's people approach Him with this kind of prayerful attitude and heart of confession, they can become spiritually prepared for service and used by God. This is true of any Christian no matter where they are at in their stage of growth and walk with the Lord.

Nevertheless, if believers engage in worldly activities of lust and various aspects of worldly living and compromise, they soil their lives once again and are in need of confession, if they want to receive God's spiritual blessing. But the fact must be made known once again that a continual course and steady diet of fleshly living and worldly activity will eventually lead to backsliding and a broken life of fellowship before the Lord (Hosea 11:7). It will lead to a life of carnality. This transition takes place when the believer experiences

more defeats than victories and little fellowship with the Lord. Carnal living in the Christian life occurs when the believer becomes deeply entrenched in sin and known disobedience and continually suffers defeat instead of victory.

1 Corinthians 3:3

“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”

Carnal Christians find themselves continually walking like the unsaved and living in the flesh more than living in the Spirit. I believe this is the case with various New Evangelical believers today as they seek to conform to the world’s standards instead of God’s standards of holiness. Worldly living causes them to develop a pattern of lustful living and begins to mold them into the fashion of this world system (Romans 12:2). As a result of this molding process to the world, they can very easily become carnal in their overall actions and begin to walk in the flesh more than in the power and victory of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25 reminds us:

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

The Issue of Outward Conformity versus Loving Obedience

The writer is aware that mere outward obedience is not always a sign of spirituality or holiness (Matt. 23:27). And yet, we cannot emphasize the inward heart (1 Sam. 16:7) at the expense of outward obedience. God does not only look at the heart but also what we are doing without bodies (! Cor. 6:19-20). I am also aware that God blesses in spite of my own failures and imperfections. Thank the Lord! We all know that God uses imperfect people. This is something that all of us can attest to if we are honest. In fact, I am amazed that God uses me at all! But we must not use this kind of sentiment as a crutch or some kind of scapegoat to prove that God is not concerned with our obedience and a non-worldly and committed Christian walk. God does not use perfect people since there are none of these. But God still uses clean people!

2 Corinthians 7:1

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

The fact still remains that greater obedience and yielding to the Lord means greater blessing and eternal reward. This is why we should see to live lives that seek to glorify God in every area of our lives (1 Cor. 10:31). New Evangelical Christians with their broad spectrum of compromise and worldly activity must remember this today. As Christians seek to live a holy life unto the Lord, as they seek to yield to Him and not identify with error, it will pay off for them in the long run when they stand before God. It will pay eternal dividends! Obedience always pays! In the mean time, I am thankful that God takes what I have personally given to Him over the years and that He has been pleased to use it for His glory. And any Christian can come to this conclusion today.

The Main Points

- God only uses those acts of obedience that we give to Him.
- God does not honor or use disobedient actions in any fashion (James 1:25).
- God only blesses and rewards that which is good and holy.
- God does not grant reward for disobedience and ignorant sins.
- God’s withholding of future reward is the result of present carnality, neglect and ignorance.
- Ignorance is not bliss!
- God breaks His fellowship with us when we openly and knowingly sin against Him.
- God expects Christians to confess all known sin and in a general way ask for cleansing from unknown sins.
- Sins of commission, omission, and ignorance need to be brought under the blood of Jesus Christ.
- None of us are perfect, at the same time, God wants us to continually seek to live a pure and clean life before Him.
- Being imperfect is not an excuse for disobedience and clear violations of God’s Word.

Answering the Question

Yes, God is using New Evangelical Christians in His work. I would be so naive to say that He is not. God is using these Christians because many of them do have a heart for God and are willing to conform to the known will of God in some measure as they have searched the Scriptures. God will reward them for the good and righteous things that they accomplish but not the acts of compromise or their actions of worldliness that they commit against the Lord, either knowingly or unknowingly. On a passing note, Christians can embrace the truth and doctrine of sanctification but lose their heart and love for the Lord at the same time (Rev. 2:4). So, all of us must “watch and prayer” (Mark 14:38).

Like all of us, God uses what we give Him, which reflects His righteous and holy character. Yes, many New Evangelical Christians do love the Lord and many want to serve the Lord even though they might take a position of compromise in certain areas and involve themselves in specific worldly amusements and practices that they ought not to participate with as a Christian. We must remember that our degree of love for the Lord can be measured by our obedience to what we know is true.

John 14:23

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (fellowship).”

Many New Evangelicals believe that their way of living is acceptable to God and out of love they seek to obey certain commands and principles related to holiness, which they *know* and have *learned*, even though these commands and principles are somewhat limited in their coverage and scope. Yes, there are those New Evangelical Christians who do have a desire to live holy before the Lord even though they seem to engage in various questionable activities. How can this be possible? It's possible because, like any Christian, they *confess known sin* in their lives and want to live clean before the Lord as they launch out and serve Him. It's possible because many Christians *sin ignorantly* since they were never taught the sound

doctrine (Titus 2:1) of holiness (1 Tim. 6:3) in respect to important separatist principles and practices.

Their desire for holiness can be genuine even while practicing questionable activities because of the *level of growth* that they are at in their Christian lives. There are New Evangelical believers of today who have never been introduced to any clear teaching on separation. There are many Christians who have never been challenged with strong pleas related to sanctification. As a result, they can only gauge their conduct by what they know to be true through their limited teaching and sometimes skewed understanding about holy living. Consequently, their limited teaching and knowledge about manners of holy conduct causes these Christians to not follow various separatist commands for holy living, worldly association, and ecumenical compromise. And without knowing these important principles they cannot apply them to their manner of conduct and living. This results in worldly living and compromising actions that God is not pleased with in regards to outward Christian conduct. It can also result in nominal and carnal Christians (1 Cor. 3:1-2; Heb. 5:12-13).

It's also true that some Christians want to pick and choose what they want to hear and obey. There is a degree of known rebellion and willful ignorance to many clear commands of Scripture that can occur in the lives of believers. I would be naive if I thought this were not true. Many Christians have heard the truth but have still decided to live like the majority. They have forgotten about their need to join the minority (Luke 12:32) and stand up for all truth and righteousness in manners of conduct and association with error and apostasy. Some have chosen not to avoid and forsake specific worldly practices and vices that feed the flesh, which God is not pleased with, and which dampen their Christian testimony and walk with the Lord (1 Tim. 4:12). They want to pick and personalize certain aspects of God's sanctified plan to fit their lives but ignore others.

At this point of our study, we must remember that the hallmark of love for God is obedience to all the known commands of the Lord. Yes, it's love to obey what we *know* is true. In fact, a manifestation of greater love abounds when we willingly open our hearts to all that God wants us to do and practice. A deeper love for the Lord exists when we are

ready to search out what we do not know and then become obedient to all the will of the Lord in every area concerning the doctrine of sanctification or separation. Greater love for the Lord will cause a Christian to go deeper in his search for holiness so that God can reveal those areas in his life that need to be worked upon and changed. Greater love for the Lord will not cause a Christian to sidestep those areas of Biblical separation or sanctification that need to be addressed and applied to his life.

Deuteronomy 5:29

“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”

Jesus is looking for a type of wholehearted, sanctified living that is willing to obey and abide by all that is taught in the Word of God. This inescapable truth was taught by Jesus in John 14:15 when He said: “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

We may be obedient to some *known* commands and find ourselves in love with the Lord. But as we grow in our desire for holiness and seek to obey all of His commands, it's then that our love for God will increase and our lives will be richly rewarded. When we love the Lord we will hate all manifestations of evil (Psalm 97:10). The measure of our obedience to all of God's Word always demonstrates the highest measure of our love and commitment to the Lord. Obedience will also result in greater blessing in this life and the life to come in the form of eternal reward. Knowing more truth and obeying this truth will always bring the greater blessing and reward. Not knowing truth and neglecting it, for whatever reason, will result in loss of reward, which we otherwise could have had when we stand before the Lord. Beloved, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus!

Discipleship involves putting everything on the table and turning it over to Jesus Christ. It involves full surrender, obedience, and commitment to all that is true and right.

Luke 9:23

“And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”

Jesus wants you to surrender everything to Him. He wants you to surrender and sacrifice your life totally and unreservedly for Him. This surrender and sacrifice involves forsaking worldly practices and unholy associations that keep us from pressing on to higher ground. It involves a radical commitment and obedience to all that God's Word tells us to do. Indeed, the Lord Jesus will reward every Christian for all the acceptable service rendered unto Him – New Evangelical and fundamentalist Christians alike. But He will never reward Christians for actions of unholiness and compromise.

Jesus said in Revelation 2:23: "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." My fundamentalist comrade who may be reading this, don't abandon the ship. Remain holy in your doctrine, associations, and own personal living, as God reveals to your heart and life His unchanging separatist principles. Remember that compromise will never pay. Obedience will reap great eternal dividends.

Galatians 6:8-9

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting (the future reward and blessing associated with eternal life). And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Sowing to the flesh does not bring the blessing of God upon our lives. If we want the true reaping, we must keep blowing the trumpet of sanctification and remain alert to God's holy purpose for our lives (Joel 2:15-18).

In closing, I must repeat once again that the greatest wonder is that God chooses to bless me! We must remember that all Christians, regardless of the camp they are associated with or where they are at in their Christian life, are on the same road of progressive sanctification. Some are further along than others!

2 Corinthians 3:18

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Here is the simple fact. All Christians, whether older or newer evangelicals are being changed progressively into the likeness of Jesus Christ, as they seek to obey the truth of God's Word, honor God with their lives, and reflect truth and righteousness in their daily conduct and hearts. In reality, all of us are a work in progress!

“He's still working on me
To make me what I need to be
It took him just a week to make the moon and stars
The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars
How loving and patient He must be
'Cause He's still workin' on me!”