

Many years ago we had a member who was President of a small “Black” college in this state.

He told me about their science facilities and I found that most of the High Schools in this state had facilities that were superior to his college. I was appalled as I always thought that states would invest more in their “colleges” than they did in their “high schools.” He said the problem was it was a “Black” college and the legislature did not spend money equally.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

When I was in Grade School, our nation supposedly did away with such distinctions, but people and States move more slowly.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

I had been taught from a child that God loved everyone – “red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.” And yet it took a long time – some say that time is not yet over – for religious people in this country to get the word that God loves all of us.

I'm not so amazed about that prejudice now that I realize that the church was racially divided from its founding through its first 9 or so years. (Acts 2 to Acts 10)

I've even learned that it continued to be divided over whether one had to become a Jew or not for another 2 or so years (until Acts 15), when a different law was established for Jew and Gentile.

Acts 15:28 "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: 29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell. "

That situation of a difference between Jew and Gentile continued through the end of Acts (AD 62) – the first 29-30 years of the church's existence.

Acts 21:24 ... and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law. 25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

We can only imagine how individuals dealt with this problem.

Gal 2:11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

This occasion probably occurred at AD58, 14 years (Gal 2.1) after the meeting over circumcision in Acts 15.

35 years after the church was established.

Luke 18:11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. 12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

In modern day terms, we might think – The Christian stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this crooked IRS agent . I attend three times a week; I give as God has prospered me.

Luke 17:10 So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"

Our service begins with these things – not being – swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this crooked IRS agent. I attend three times a week; I give as God has prospered me.

When we “go into all the world” to whom do we
go.

Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and
drinking; and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man,
and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and
sinners!

Jesus associated with everyone – not just those
who were “good.”

Luke 14:15 "Blessed is everyone who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" 16 But He said to him, ... 21 ... and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' ... 23 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24'For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.' "

And thus we learn an important spiritual principle
– “The gospel is for all.”

We must not be like the Pharisee and want only people like us in the Kingdom. God wants those who are looked down on by the “righteous” to be a part of his kingdom.

How are we going to meet them if we are not among them?

If you do not help others, have you brought the spiritual principle of equality into the world? Or have you, like the Pharisee, looked down in pity on those less fortunate and been thankful – and then left them there?

Jesus teaches a spiritual lesson in Lk 14 and we must learn it well. All men are to be drawn to the Lord.

Acts 2:39 "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

Those who are called are to look upon one another
as Jesus would look upon them.

Philem 12 And I have sent him back to you in person,
that is, sending my very heart, 13 whom I wished to
keep with me, that in your behalf he might minister
to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; 14 but
without your consent I did not want to do anything,
that your goodness should not be as it were by
compulsion, but of your own free will. 15 For
perhaps he was for this reason parted from you for a
while, that you should have him back forever, 16 no
longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved
brother, especially to me, but how much more to
you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

Paul asks Philemon (the slave owner) to treat Onesimus (the slave) equally as Philemon would have treated Paul.

As you think about those who are less fortunate than you – in physical appearance, athletic ability, intellectual capacity or ethnic origin, make certain that you apply this spiritual principle in the physical world.

Eph 4:28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.

1 Tim 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

You are all rich in this present world – some more than others – don't be conceited, God gave it to you, you didn't get it on your own. Be generous and share. Be rich in good works. What you do for others here will determine whether you get into heaven.

Perhaps you haven't started down the road of service to others never realizing that to love means saving someone from sin.

Php 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Have you been fully obedient to God?

If not, you don't love Him!

Act 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'