



From the Pastor's heart

"FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT!"



Familiarity breeds contempt

1Ti 5:11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; **1Ti 5:12** Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. **1Ti 5:13** And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

Apostle Paul, though unmarried, had a lot to say about marriage and relationships. He understood through revelation the things he wrote about and wanted his readers to understand spiritual principles based on human responses to them when faced with situations in life. In the verses above, he likens the unfortunate situation of young widows who will seek to marry again to that of one who will lose sight of Christ eventually because they have become familiar with their Christ relationship. Though there is a spiritual marriage between Christ and His church, there isn't a physical relationship of marriage in it. That is because a Christ relationship cannot act as a substitute to the requirements of the flesh. The flesh and the Spirit are so vastly different that one really has nothing to do with the other. **Gal 5:17** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are **contrary** the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

When people get tired with Christ out of familiarity they seek other areas in life to satisfy their needs. One preacher said; "you can be friendly with God but whatever you do, don't become familiar with Him". Christians get familiar with Christ and the Church and as a result they judge the Church and Christ. This often results in them not coming to church out of contempt. It has also been reported that people become familiar with healing and miracles and lose sight of both the power of God and the word of God out of familiarity and go their own way doing things that are outside of the context of the word of God. In today's Christian society I do not see a healthy fear of the Lord. What I see are teachers and preachers telling the people that they can be familiar with God's word and practices of the faith while not adhering to it themselves **Mat 23:3** All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.* **Mat 23:4** For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. That is; not doing the will of God but being able to expound the gospel effectually; like motivational speaking.

One aspect of the function of the familiar spirit is to get us to become familiar with things that will draw us away from Christ. In the instruction to Timothy, Paul writes of these young widows becoming tools of satan. They begin to go around gossiping and conducting idle chatter to gainsay the people they interact with. So he writes about how satan uses them and others in these verses. **2Ti 3:1** This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. **2Ti 3:2** For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, **2Ti 3:3** Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, **2Ti 3:4** Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; **2Ti 3:5** **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.** **2Ti 3:6** For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

We live in the last of the last days since Paul wrote this to Timothy. Paul was writing about believers to believers who will become like the categories of people he described above because of familiarity with the word of God. We see these categories of people more and more in everyday life as we minister the true gospel. We can recognise them like they are described below:

1. Those whom the world has gripped through the familiarity of the word of God teaching all manner of things that do not edify rather than being sober through the fear of the Lord and waiting patiently for the return of the Lord.
2. Those who begin well in Church and become familiar with how things work in the Church and soon they are vying for position or telling people what to do as soon as they are given opportunity from the pulpit to do so. These have become victims of the jezebel spirit.

3. Those who become familiar with ministry and attempt to carry their ministry out with familiarity (doing things the same way) rather than learn fresh stuff from the Holy Spirit. Soon, they fall into error.
4. Those who become familiar with the Holy Spirit and then go back to the law like the foolish Galatians who preferred legalism to liberty in Christ.

There is something to be said about familiarity or even repetition. It breeds contempt in all forms of relationships because of the close physical proximity and knowledge that we think we have of another in those relationships. Marriage is a classic relationship type that breeds more contempt than love as the years go by in marriage. Familiarity is the cause. To battle this contempt, one must maintain friendship in marriage more than the legal requirements of the marriage. The use of the law in marriage is based on following rules and regulations rather than liberating each other. The only way to liberate anybody is through trust and faith. There must be knowledge of the common good and goal of the marriage in all decision making rather than selfish motivations. This promotes reliability in each partner when each partner sees the other working toward the common goal. This promotes admiration rather than contempt.

When the Jews went through the desert for 40 years, they had got fed up with familiar food, which was manna from heaven. They failed to see the miracle of God's provision through their own deceitful ways. They began to become contemptible of God's provision and started seeking what they had been familiar with in Egypt and even wanted to go back to Egypt, like a dog to its vomit. The Bible records the reaction of God for their contempt of His provision. *Psa 106:13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: Psa 106:14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. Psa 106:15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul. Psa 106:43 Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.*

Even God's continuous grace through Jesus is often taken for granted and a familiarity sets in. I see so many people who sin openly and just say God's grace will take care of it. What they do not understand is the limit of His grace. *Gal 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. Gal 5:5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Heb 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

I am constantly reminded in relationships to keep boundaries, for, without them, one is lost into the world of familiarity. This brings wrongful expectations of each other in relationships and contempt becomes the order of the day rather than a realisation of another's goodness. In my early days of friends and friendships, I used to do well till I grew older and began to have stronger expectations of my friends and relatives. When those expectations were not met, I became offended and formed contempt for many of them. Over the years of many lost relationships, I realised that my expectations were not justified. I began a new journey of ending familiarity as a ground for my expectation and instead sought to love and forgive as a ground for strengthening that relationship. It was not easy because of the mistakes of others and maybe even a contempt of others of me that they may have viewed as my weakness. Little did they realise that I had set myself free through the precepts of God which were love, mercy, compassion, meekness and the like. I cannot say I practised all of them effectually but I certainly had learnt that this was the better way, especially when I began to see the value of each person, as a soul worth saving.

When we have no respect for another, we cannot save them. I pray that God will take away disdain and contempt from us as children of God as we practise love and mercy. The negatives always seek to take advantage through what is right in our own sight. However, we must see to walk in the righteousness of God. My hope is, we will cease from familiar ways and thoughts and be open to the word of God and the leading of the Spirit so that we do not stray into familiar enemy territory which will work against us.

The familiarity with the blood of Jesus brings contempt on the part of the believer but judgement on the part of God. *Heb 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?* In the overall scheme of our relationship with God, we must realise that God seeks worshippers, friends and children. He is not seeking those who can do great things or show off their God given talents and gifts which only produces familiarity with them which eventually make those gifts idols.

Let us seek God' reverentially with fear and walk in a way that avoids familiarity with God and man. That way, we can be assured of love and respect and not contempt.

Lots of love

Pastor Noble

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