

You're Satisfied?

So what?

The rich man was satisfied, but God called him a fool and took his life and condemned his soul. (Luke 12:20)

The whole church at Laodicea was satisfied, but Jesus said they did not know that they were actually wretched, and miserable and poor and blind and naked (Revelation 3:16-22).

That's about how wrong a "satisfied" person can be.

Satisfied? Are you, now? The Pharisee that went into the temple to pray was satisfied with himself, and even glad he was not as the Publican (Luke 18:10-14). But Jesus said that the satisfied Pharisee was not justified like the sin-conscious Publican was!

The wise man warned: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12).

- by Jere E. Frost

You, Me, and The Bible

- You may understand the Bible and I may misunderstand it.
- I may understand it and you may misunderstand it.
- We may both misunderstand it – but differently.
- We may misunderstand it alike.
- However, we cannot both understand it – but differently.
- What kind of book would the Bible be if it said something to you that it didn't say to me?

- by Eugene Britnell

Love or Legalism?

When we insist men must adhere strictly to the commandments of God, is it love or legalism?

Men say it is legalism. They say, "We should obey a Savior, not a system." Or, "Give me the man, not a plan." Their idea is that to admit the existence of a law by which man must live in order to be right with God, is legalism.

God, however, calls this love. The Spirit said, "*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome*" (1 John 5:3). Jesus said, "*If you love Me, keep My commandments*" (John 14:15). Keeping the commandments of God is an expression of love, not legalism. To insist others do the same is love for God and man, not legalism in a system or plan.

The Holy Spirit was sent to reveal all truth (John 16:13). Why would anyone think the truth was revealed so men could be cavalier toward it? It was revealed so men could obey it and be set free (John 8:32). Paul wrote, "*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered*" (Romans 6:17). This does not destroy a relationship with the Savior, for it is His system -- the gospel (Hebrews 5:9).

- by Steven F. Deaton

What Do Ye More Than Others?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus asked a penetrating question: *"If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"* (Matthew 5:46-47). The immediate context discusses our treatment of others. It specifically instructs us to do good, even to those who have shown themselves to be our enemies. This is a difficult challenge for us all.

The principle of **'what do ye more than others'** has wide application to all of our service for the Lord. Consider:

1) Bible study: If the only time you open your Bible is an occasional flipping of the pages during the Sunday morning worship service, then we would suggest that you aren't doing anything more than most other people do in our Biblically illiterate society. A regular habit of genuine Bible reading and study is rare in our day and time. Are you such a student, or are you only doing what most other folks do?

2) Attendance: All the statistics indicate that church attendance is way down in our culture. Few people attend services on a regular weekly basis. Other activities (mostly recreational) keep people away. What about you? Are you different from the majority? Do you conscientiously adjust your schedule so that you can be present all the time?

3) Giving: It is common for folks to contribute a few dollars on any given Sunday. Typically this is money that is 'left over' after personal wants and wishes have been fulfilled – it's not a high priority budget matter – it's sort of an after thought. The Scriptures teach that our giving ought to be carefully planned and sacrificially offered (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:6,7), Are you doing more than others in regards to your giving?

4) Evangelism: We've all heard that no one should discuss politics or religion. But in reality almost everyone these days will discuss politics – while religion remains seriously 'off limits'. Do you agree with this common approach? Do you keep your faith to yourself? Or, are you willing to let others know where you stand and what you believe?

5) Purity of life: Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"* (Matthew 5:8). But the world promotes an entirely different lifestyle. Filthy movies and dirty TV shows, immoral content and pornography on the Internet, sexual sins, drinking alcohol, dancing, gambling – all these are typical among those in the world, and unfortunately among many who call themselves Christians. Are you just following the crowd, doing no more and no different from others? Or, are you striving to live the pure moral life that the Lord desires?

"What do ye more than others?" That's a worthy question for us all to consider. What about your life, your example, your devotion to the Lord? Think!