

### 329 *Fear and domination – the problem*

(Gross oversimplification, I know, but I'm resolving the world's problems in 500 words.)

If you think that, basically, the church has got it right and that the gospel is 'going forth', then please don't waste your time reading this. We're preaching the gospel, and if people are not responding then that's their own fault – they've turned away from God!

Personally, I think there is something fundamentally wrong, and in all my writing I've been struggling to see why the church is so unattractive to people 'out there' and I think I might have spotted a pattern.

'The gospel' – as we know it – is very individualistic: 'How can I get saved?' So what if God's main concern is not about saving individuals but about restoring the whole world to how it should be – how it was pre-Fall? Thy kingdom come?

From caveman days, life has mainly revolved around fear and domination, so what if God wants us to live in love and cooperation (F+D vs. L+C)? It's a long road, but God sees the big picture and isn't willing to give up on us.

I've often pointed us back to Abraham, and how God tried to teach him that God was *not* an F+D deity. Yet throughout the OT, we see how people worked in F+D mode, while God desperately tried to show us a better way. Within the OT writings, God seeded all the pointers towards L+C, which came to a blindingly beautiful focus in Jesus, opening the way to lives dominated by self-sacrificing L+C, which is why the early church exploded.

'Job done!' said God, and sat back to watch the world become a better and better place? Sadly, no: humans can't get out of the habit of thinking they are 'right', that the others are 'wrong', and that it's our job (the church's job) to set them straight – back to F+D.

I'm no historian, but isn't this what, for example, European Christians have done all over the world? South and North America, Africa, India, etc, etc? They called it 'preaching the gospel', but maybe there were other agendas mixed in there, e.g. slavery?! (F+D)

Isn't it what Catholic Christians have done to Protestants?

What Protestants Christians have done to Catholics?

What Christian men have done to women?

What Christian heterosexuals have done to gay Christians? 'We know what's right and, despite your deepest feelings, you're wrong: either remain celibate or live in constant sin!'

Maybe you think that liberal democracy can bring L+C? It's about cooperation, after all. Theoretically, maybe, but how much L+C is there in, say, American foreign policy?!

Not solved, I agree, but I've analysed the problem in under 500 words; come back for the gospel solution – or read Irwin's children's book: *The Story of King Jesus*. Brilliant!

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