

Going Outside the Camp

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald emphasizes the necessity of following Christ outside the confines of earthly religious systems, embracing the reproach that comes with true obedience.

Scripture: Genesis 49:10, Psalm 50:5, Matthew 10:34-39, John 15:18-19, Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:1-2, 2 Timothy 3:5, Hebrews 13:13, 1 Peter 4:14

Topics: "Following Christ", "Reproach of Obedience"

Description

William MacDonald emphasizes that Christ is the sole gathering center for His people, urging believers to move away from earthly religious systems that dishonor Him. He explains that going to Christ outside the camp means leaving behind the prestige of traditional church associations and embracing the reproach that comes with true obedience. MacDonald challenges Christians to consider whether they are willing to bear this reproach for the sake of following Christ, who calls them out of the world and into a deeper relationship with Him.

Transcript

“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.” (Heb. 13:13)

We learn first from this verse that Christ is the gathering center for His people. We don’t gather to a denomination, a church, a building or a great preacher but Christ alone. “Unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. 49:10). “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice” (Psa. 50:5).

A second lesson is that we must go to Him outside the camp. The camp here has been defined as “the whole earthly religious system adapted to the natural man.” It is the religious sphere in which Christ is dishonored or downgraded. It is the pagan monstrosity that masquerades today as Christianity, “having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.” Christ is outside, and we must go out to Him.

We also learn that meeting to Christ alone outside the camp involves reproach. It seldom occurs to Christians that there is reproach connected with obedience to the Lord in the matter of church fellowship. More often church associations carry a measure of prestige and status. But the closer we get to the New Testament ideal, the more likely it is that we will have to share His reproach. Are we willing to pay that price?

He called me out, the Man with garments dyed,
I knew His voice--my Lord, the crucified;
He showed Himself, and oh, I could not stay,
I had to follow Him--had to obey.
It cast me out--this world when once it found
That I within this rebel heart had crowned
The Man it had rejected, spurned and slain,
Whom God in wondrous power had raised to reign.
And so we are without the camp, my Lord and I,
But oh, His presence sweeter is than any earthly tie
Which once I counted greater than His claim;
I'm out, not only from the world, but to His Name.

Selected

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