

FAITH CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

13820 Seal Beach Blvd

PO Box 3444

Seal Beach, Ca 90740

Rev. Gwyn & Ginny Vaughn, Lead Pastors

Rev. Sheri Leming, Executive Pastor – Gary Leming, Business Administrator

Church Phone 562-598-9010

GV2fca@aol.com

www.fcachurch.net

Vol. 27 No 4

“From the Pastor’s Desk”

April 2019

IS TODAY’S CHURCH READY TO JUDGE ANGELS

Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! 1 Cor. 6:3

In preparation for a series of lessons from the Book of Daniel for this month of April, a question has arisen in my heart as to whether today’s church is as qualified as Daniel was in his day to deal with the questions and issues in which our generation is asking someone to address. Controversy is something that most of us like to avoid. We prefer to keep the peace, maintain friendships, and converse on subjects that most people can agree upon.

However, there are times when events create questions which Christians cannot ignore. There are people in our life who trust us as to having certain established beliefs because of our identification with Christ and His church. The Bible is out there in the open and people who read it do often times object to what they think it says. When they are aware of our beliefs in the Holy Scriptures, will, as a result, seek out our opinion as to how we interpret what they are reading. Of course, I find that such people often draw a wrong conclusion on a verse simply because they fail to understand the **context** in which the Scripture was written.

So we, who make the claim that we believe the Bible, are expected by those in the world to give an answer to their questions. Some people will at times press the issue for some kind of response either for the purpose of debate, or justification as to why they do not believe as we do. Others, may even seek to press the case in order to intimidate or embarrass one who may tend to hesitate or is cautious in how best to answer their particular questions. Naturally as true believers we are protective of our faith and prefer to defend it properly when possible. But it stands to reason there will be times when we either lack the answer or lack the wisdom to know how best to answer their questions, especially in a public setting.

However, as believers I believe that it is not always wise to answer some questions without first doing some homework on the subject in question. When Daniel was pressed to deal with some questions in his day, as to its proper interpretation, requested for time before he gave the king an answer (Daniel 2:13-16).

CHRISTIANS MAKING PROPER JUDGMENT

The Apostle Paul, in dealing with the Corinthian church over lawsuits which raised the question as to whether they were qualified to **“judge angels”** since they seemed to lack wisdom in finding anyone in their church who could handle the disputes among themselves. In fact he even referred to as a “shame.” He said, *“I speak to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers?”* (1 Cor. 6:5,7)

We are told to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. (1 Peter 3:15) And we are also told how to do this: we are to do this with gentleness and respect.

In Paul’s day, apparently some Christians were having a problem with the word gentleness and respect, because the *‘Christian brethren’* were going to the civil courts to settle the disputes between themselves. In Paul’s view it was a foolhardy defiance of Christian duties to seek from the heathen the justice due from brother to brother. He felt, by this time, as Christians, they should have been spiritually mature enough, through their knowledge of God’s Word to handle any issue that may arise or at least been willing to suffer loss than to make it a matter of a “worldly court” to settle the issue. *“To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?”* 1Cor. 6:7 Why take the risk of being an embarrassment to the very community that they were called to be a testimony and witness regarding a better way of life?

AS CHRISTIANS, ARE WE DEALING WITH THE ISSUES PROPERLY

Today, as Christians, we find ourselves caught up in several controversial and contentious issues: Abortion, euthanasia, global warming, same-sex marriage, President Trump, taxes, immigration, and health care, etc. Some of these issues are a matter of life and death. The question that the church must ask itself is: **How best should we respond? Or should we respond?**

It is evident that the church finds itself on the opposite side of the world. Those who seek the world's acceptance, favor, and prestige will eventually fail just as the world is failing from their opinions and beliefs today. We need to decide on which side we are going to stand. We need to adopt the old chorus we use to sing: *"I have decided to follow Jesus...no turning back, no turning back."* This is the reason for this month's question: Is today's Church ready to judge angels. Now, the word "angels" is not one easily explained away. Some bible scholars (Tertullian and Chrysostom) feel that question is applied to "fallen angels."

Others think it is applied to Christians which will join Christ in condemning the wicked on Judgment Day, (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30) when Christ says they which follow Him should "sit on the thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Others say that it means that Christians are to judge others by their example and shall serve as magistrates. But I personally agree with *Albert Barnes Commentary* when he felt that it implied that Christians shall be exalted to the right hand of the Judge (Christ), and shall encompass His throne; and "they shall assent to, and approve of His judgment, and that they shall be elevated to a post of honor and favor, as they are associated with Him in judgment."

Our identification with Christ is vital at this present time however, not just on the Day of Judgment. We as Christians must always be willing to accept the consequences that come with our identification with Him. Jesus has already told those that follow Him that the world hated Him and therefore they will hate us. This will be determined whether we are qualified to "judge angels". Do we agree both in principle and in practice what our Lord has taught in His Word. Peter, the man that failed the test at first, when afterward when he had recovered later wrote:

"But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be shaken." But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give a defense to everyone who asks you the reason for the hope you possess. But respond with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who slander you will be put to shame by your good behavior in Christ..." (1 Peter 3:13,14) Berean Bible Study Bible

In our series of lessons in April we will walk through the three periods in Daniel's life in which he lived. We will see a display of courage in his younger years, then we will see a period of time when he was not on display as he had been in his youth. It is the later stage of his life in which I and some of you will identify in which it was necessary for him to display the same courage that was expected of him in his youth...even with the threat of being eaten by lions. Yet this man in all the three periods of his life, as an exile of homeland, was able to arise to the challenge of his age. If Daniel could do this in such "Old Testament times" surely with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can as well.

If there was ever a time that the Church needs to arise to the challenge of their time it is now. While many of us Americans are mourning the passage of New York's brutal abortion law allowing for the killing of pre-born babies up to full term, it is little known that there are actually seven states that similarly have no "gestational limits" on abortion; Alaska, Colorado, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, and Vermont, along with Washington D.C. All allow women to kill their pre-born babies at any time up to full term. These policies have been on the books in those states for a number of years.

But there are other issues. Such as a call for the removal of crosses; the allegations of so many clergy which have been allowed to remain in their post in spite of moral indiscretion, some over 20 years; the rise of people who claim the title Christian while maintaining a lifestyle identified with LGBT. Now I am not calling for hatred toward any of the above, but rather for prayer for them that they find cleanings and redemption through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. And that the true believers know not only what is right and wrong, but have the courage and freedom to speak of that which is right and wrong. Because after all we "will judge angels" with the same judgment by which Christ so judges. We do want to be on the right side of judgment do we not? Amen.