



"From Where I Sit ..."

The Duality of Discipleship!

When I began writing this series of articles in April of 2011, I was urged to only write about my department and the promotion of its programs, and for the greater part I have done so. But every now and then, it behooves me, as a minister, to speak to some of the issues of the day! Hence, this title, "The Duality of Discipleship!"

The path of a Christian is filled with choices: To accept Christ ... or not? To accept a particular office of service ... or not? To seek formal training in Christian Education ... or not? Choices that determine our paths in life and choices that secure our salvation in eternity. But most of all, choices that influence the lives of others.

As I write this article, there has been a riot in Charlottesville, VA that has resulted in the death of three with 19 others hospitalized. I'm sure this occasion reminds many of my generation of the civil rights eras of the 50's and 60's. However, with the amendments to the US Constitution that guaranteed our right against discrimination and our right to vote, the intervening 50 years has given us a false sense of security regarding the status of racial tolerance in America. In short, we thought we were FREE!



Charlottesville and perhaps many other places are powerful reminders that freedom is not free and that we, the Church, must ever be on guard. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, we must "... be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." This is what brings us to the "duality" of Christianity and where we must be prepared to make choices. As the Church, we are called (and times like these mandate) to speak truth to power, and yet, we are also called to protect the least of these. Dual roles that some believe require a choice between the two. One far more dangerous than the other. How do we choose? Perhaps the answer is simpler than we know. Perhaps the answer is that the dual roles are in fact two sides of the same coin and therefore our answer to both is yes.



And if this is the case, and the church is called to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering ..." and yet to do all that it can to protect the least of these, then we, the church, are also called to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" by planning the strategies that insure the success of this duality.

As a people of Color, we have come a long way; but the events of today remind us that we still have a long way to go so that our children and our children's children may come to know true freedom in this country. And if we can secure freedom in this country, then perhaps there is real hope for freedom and peace in the world. So, if we stay on guard, and remain instant in season and out of season, and our actions are wise as serpents and as harmless as doves, then our victory for peace and freedom may yet be achieved. *Or at least that's the way it looks to me...*

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(Copies of earlier articles may be found on the

Personnel Services Webpage of the CME Website at www.thecmechurch.org)