

Thinking Outside of the Box

Richard “Rick” Lemons

God chooses who He may. It’s up to us as individuals to study and prove all things to show ourselves approved – approved only to God. Whether we do or not won’t change our position in Him. I am chosen in Christ and could be stuck in the cauldron of religious dogma, but still be His chosen child.

I’m relating this to my own past experiences as a child. At the age of 7 I felt the urge, call, leading (whatever it was) to be with God, to get close with God. Yet I never had any good direction from others, and received a lot of misdirection. I stayed in the church of my family until the age of 16, not receiving any real spiritual food for growth.

We know from life in general, that if something doesn’t get fed it doesn’t grow, but remains stunted. I was so fed up with this type of religious activity that I never wanted anything else to do with it. However, I continued to want to know God and who He was and what it was He was doing. I kept Him close in my heart, but wasn’t willing to allow myself to become another church’s patsy.

It wasn’t until I was almost 24, through several close friends (my wife being one of them) whom God “suddenly” brought into my life, when I really started to acknowledge the things of Scripture. These friends worked and prayed with me and for me, that I may receive understanding. I have grown a lot over the years; changing this understanding and my convictions as I received more light on the Scriptures.

Now, knowing the things that have been revealed to me, I would not want to spend a lot of time in fellowship with my old self, knowing how argumentative I would be when someone challenged a conviction that I had for something. However, this is but one reason why we as believers need to be tolerant and patient with others: that your speech may be by Grace seasoned with salt, not to shun the person. You don’t have to accept his convictions. His Sin can be overlooked; but love and believe in the person, knowing that God one day will shower grace on him also.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832) said it well with this statement:

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

I need to learn this attitude.

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