

*Letter received from someone who had been to Indy, but didn't LIVE in Indy.*

Dear (me),

Hi! You don't know me, but I think my sister, (sister), has mentioned that she might be forwarding some of your letters on to me. She has done that, so I've been able to read some of what you've been sharing with her. I just wanted to write and say that I don't claim to be a miracle worker by any means, but I'd be happy to write back and forth and try and work some things through, if you are interested in any outside thoughts. I have had personal experience with Mike Peters and all that was going on in Indy, but I think we stayed far enough away from it that my perspective is fairly objective.

I think that one of the first things you have to realize is that a lot of what Mike was doing was his own crusade rather than true CHRISTianity. At the bottom of all of Mike's teaching, judgment on others, criticism of error in the church, etc. was the foundational motive that he wanted everybody to see that all the others were wrong, and He was right. I'm not saying that he didn't put out some good teaching, and that much of what was going on was biblical and Christ-like, but there was definitely a large degree of mixed motives.

There are two aspects of what was/is happening in Indy that are extremely detrimental to a person's life with Christ. First, almost everything is determined by exteriors--what do they do?, what do they say?, how do they view this?, etc., etc. Christ, on the other hand, always looked at the heart. "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight: (Luke 16:15). Mike focused on exteriors, because it always gave him ground for criticizing, and ultimately proving himself to be superior to, all other "movements," teachers, denominations, etc. This is the nature of a personal crusade, but not the spiritual discernment of Christ.

Second, a consistent diet of always looking to see what everybody else is doing, and then pronouncing judgment upon it or them will almost inevitably lead to an attitude of pride, arrogance, and superiority. It's nothing to be condemned about, because anybody that is given a steady diet of such thinking will almost unconsciously develop a similar attitude, such is human nature. But I do think I would agree with your (person) when (person) mentioned that you are still (whether you realize it or not) viewing things with a "Mike Peters perspective." That is probably something you need to give to the Lord and let Him nail it to the cross.

This brings me to my next point. My concern is not so much regarding your judgment of others as your judgment of yourself. I fear that you are still trying to find justification for yourself through your attitudes, "striving for perfection," not compromising with sin, etc. I think that this is also a carry--over from Indy days. One thing that continually bothered me about the whole Indy thing was that nobody seemed to know the rest that is found in

seeing Christ as their “righteousness, holiness and redemption” (1Cor. 1:30) He and HE alone is the basis of our standing before God.

One interesting thing that I have noticed in studying the sacrifices of Leviticus 1-7 (and they all in some way point to the fullness of the sacrificial work of Christ) is that in every single sacrifice, God NEVER looked at the acceptability of the person bringing the sacrifice. He only looked at the perfection of the sacrifice--was IT acceptable? CHRIST is our sacrifice, and when God looks at your efforts to walk with Him, He sees a finished work at the cross -- not based on your “no compromise” stance or your pursuit of perfection. No, James warns us that such an attitude is dangerous and ultimately damning.

“If you really keep the total law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself; you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law-breakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker” (James 2:8-11)

The point is, which of us who knows our own hearts can say that we have any reason to be justified before God? For all of us are law-breakers. We don't handle situations with our kids correctly every time; we react wrongly to someone's comments or attitude; we don't respond to questions concerning our hope in Christ in the right way every time we are able. The list goes on indefinitely. If we are pursuing Christ through our own efforts, and we are daily working ourselves into total spiritual anxiety attacks of “Am I still uncompromising? Have I worn proper clothing? Am I letting down my guard? Is this the swing of the pendulum? Etc.,” We'll forever be wondering where we are with God, or if we are with God at all. This elevates our own works and negates the Cross. God forbid that such a thing should rule us and leave us in bondage, doubt, and worry. Again, I believe this is one of the grievous errors of Mike's teaching and practice. As I said, it resembles a crusade more than life with Christ.

I would remind you of Paul's words to the church in Colossae who seemed to be getting increasingly wrapped up in similar questions and pursuits: (Forgive me for sticking so much Bible in here, but the Holy Spirit says it much better than I do.)

“Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 2:20-3:4).

I believe that more than anything else you need to have a fresh awakening to the reality of all that Christ has done for you. I am praying that the Holy Spirit will quicken your heart to the unending love of the Father for you, and that you will find true rest and peace in the finished work of the Cross. When Jesus declared, "It is finished," that included all that was necessary for (me) as well. What was needed to satisfy God, Christ has already accomplished. It's a done deal. Now our life is to be one of loving union with Him--not based on striving and forever wondering if we're in or out, accepted or rejected. That's the basis and result of legalistic bondage and man-made rules and regulations. No, Christ calls us to walk with Him on the basis of all that He has done. He is the perfect sacrifice. All we do is come to the Cross, and in gratitude, realize, that God has provided everything we need to have total union and communion with Him.

I don't want to make this too long, and I don't want to throw too many things at you, because I am fully aware that, for the most part, I'm kind of shooting in the dark here. But based on the few letters (sister) has sent me, I feel like the basis of your confusion and uncertainty concerning your view of yourself, and others, is that you have not really allowed Christ to make his love and acceptance a reality in your heart. As I said before, the whole Indy thing was one of continuously trying to please some person--be it one of the women, or Mike, or whoever--and gaining approval from the "group," instead of realizing the grace and love and mercy and patience and gentleness and long-suffering and kindness and joy of the eternally loving heavenly Father. God wants to remove all that extra baggage you're still carrying around so that He can show you're the blessed joy and peace that comes in walking with Christ because of WHO He is and not because of what you may or may not do.

I would be glad to hear back from you. Please feel totally free to disagree with me, or correct any misconceptions I may have. I'm not here to establish my "correctness" or ability to discern. I just want to help if I can. I won't hit back if you feel like I'm wrong in some area.

As I said, we're praying for you and (person), and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Every blessing in Christ Jesus,

(person)