

BLACK AND WHITE CUP OF TEA

It was a wet and rainy day and I have just made it to King's Cross train station. My next train was not due till an hour's time, so I



decided to get a cup of tea. Responding to my request for a cup of tea, the lady at the counter asked, 'Do you want a black and white tea?' At this point, the two other ladies at the counter roared out in laughter. Looking perplexed, the lady serving me wondered what has gone wrong until her colleague repeated 'black and white tea!' It then dawned on her. She had said 'black and white tea' instead of 'black or white tea'. She joined in the laughter.

At one time or another we have found ourselves in similar situations. We were sincere in our efforts but have got it wrong! This reminded me of 14 year old Joe, who after lunch one afternoon mistakenly put some dirty dishes in the fridge together with the salad cream and cheese. When his mum later discovered, his siblings burst out in laughter. Indeed it is only human to err.

Our very best efforts seem to be dogged by our human weakness. In addition, we often allow our weaknesses to develop to self indulgence in some areas. We say to ourselves, 'I know I should not be doing this', but we go ahead to do it anyway. Our continual self indulgence gradually dulls our conscience and things we once hated, we begin to accept as norm. This leads to all sorts of compromises, under the excuse of 'it is only human to err' or 'everyone else does it anyway.' We become self deluded and this gradually erodes our inner peace and creates a sense of moral degradation. To some degree, we become a shadow of our true self as we cannot look straight into the eyes of those we have cheated or lied to.

A fundamental point which many of us may not realise is that God has made provision for self indulgencies. This is how it is put in Psalm 103:10 & 14. 'God does not punish us for all our shortcomings; He does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For He knows how

weak we are; He remembers we are only dust.’ God responds to our situation with great love. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth; He was tempted just as we have been and therefore able to sympathise with us. Above all, He died to secure our freedom. ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life’ (John 3:16). God is not holding our failures against us but offers us forgiveness and life through His Son. This life fills us with inner strength to begin to overcome our self indulgencies.

This places a serious responsibility upon us. We have the option to be sincere, acknowledge our self indulgencies before God and accept His offer of forgiveness. The other option is for us to continue in our self deceit, refuse to face up to our self indulgencies. This is how the bible expresses it: “God’s light has come into the world but we have rejected it because we love our darkness and our actions are evil” (John 3:19). Indeed how sad it is if we make this latter choice! However, you can respond positively to God and give Him the opportunity by praying this from your heart.

‘God, forgive me of all my sins and failures because of the death of Jesus on the cross. Come into my life Lord Jesus to save me and be my Lord.’

If you have prayed this prayer from your heart, then you have taken the most important decision in your life. It will be useful if you can contact us at the address below and/or join an active, bible believing church.

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