

**Regular scheduled services:**

Sunday:

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday:

7:30 PM

**Everyone Welcome To Attend.**

**Chapman Highway church of Christ**

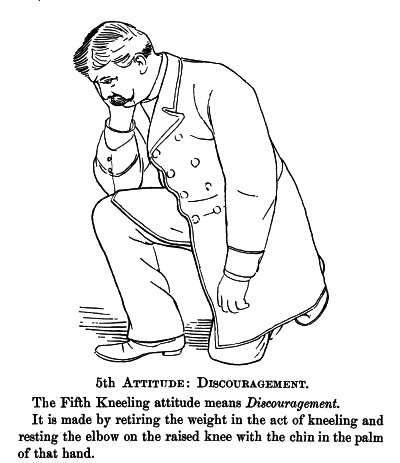
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DISCOURAGEMENT – THE DEVIL’S TOOL

The story tells of a rummage sale being held by the devil. Peter calls him the Christian’s

adversary and describes him as *“a roaring lion walking about, seeking whom he may*

*devour”* **1.Pet.5:8**.

In the story a person comes by and begins to browse through the items the devil has for

sale. They are the various tools he uses to entice people to follow him instead of the

Lord. As the browser passes from item, he notices that each device is indeed a clever

tool to ensnare people. He sees such gimmicks as fame, fortune, pride of life, fleshly lusts of all sorts, and many other devilish instruments. All of them are well used, having been used over the years to turn people away from God, and the devil tells him they are still effective. Of all the tools in the sale the browser notices that one tool is priced much higher than all the rest. The shopper asks why it is priced so high. The devil explains to him that the tool was called “discouragement” and it was priced so high because it was one of his most effective tools in reclaiming Christians.

When one thinks about it, this is probably so. All people become discouraged at times, even the preacher. But some are more easily discouraged than others. Discouragement is a very effective tool to keep a person from ever becoming a Christian. Of times when a person begins to think about becoming a Christian, the devil discourages the person by telling him it is useless to become a Christian since he will never be able to live the life of a Christian anyway.  In many cases this works. Through my years of preaching I have dealt with some who simply were convinced they would never be able to hold out living the Christian life, so they wouldn’t even try.

If the devil loses the first battle he doesn’t give up. After all, he knows that just because one has become a Christian, all is not lost.  There is still a chance to draw him back into his kingdom, the world. He will do anything necessary to regain the soul of a Christian. He will use the hypocrisy of others, deceptive teachers, difficulties in life, worldly attractions, etc. to cause one to become discouraged and return to the world. The devil knows that if members are not kept stirred up to a fever pitch, some will become discouraged and give up. Others begin to see the attendance and contribution fall, and enthusiasm fading, and they decide to call it quits. Some see members move to other locations and decide the church isn’t going to make it, so they also leave.

But, if he cannot persuade a person to openly quit, he will use discouragement to render a person worthless to the Lord and His church. Let me give some examples. Teachers in the Bible classes prepare their lessons, and week after week, they teach the scheduled classes. But, those who need it the most fail to show up, or don’t seem to care about their lessons if they are present. At times the teacher may be at fault with his teaching method and the devil uses it to produce discouragement among the students. In this case the teacher may need to change his methods. Others who should be teaching won’t teach. So few respond and improve their lives making it easy for teachers to become discouraged.

When the saints assemble for worship, there are those who will not help sing, especially if the songs are pitched a little low, or too high, or unfamiliar. This discourages the best of song leaders who is doing >>>

**Volume 6 January 5 2014 #1**

>>> the best he can. Or, one attempts to lead a prayer but makes a mistake. When this happens, these men need some understanding and encouragement. But some just criticize instead. It is no wonder that some will never attempt to develop their talents. They have let others discourage them.

People sometimes become a source of discouragement by not saying or doing anything at all. How long has it been since you complimented the teacher of your children? When was the last time you told the song leader or the one leading a prayer you appreciate the efforts being put forth? What about the one who keeps the books, making sure the bills are paid on time? What of the ones who clean the building, prepare the communion trays? When was the last time you called and/or visited a member who is weak in the faith? Do you suppose he/she can use some kind, encouraging words? What about the one who is sick in body? Does he/she know you care? Sometimes one becomes a source of discouragement simply by ignoring what needs to be done. What if the situation was reversed and you were the one who needed some kind word or deed?

Just because I am a preacher doesn’t mean that I am immune to discouragement. I have experienced it but pray that I will not succumb to the devil’s wiles and give up on the Lord. It is difficult not to be discouraged when someone who knows he/she is lost will not respond to the invitation. It is not easy to figure out why some who have been attending services for years, and should know better, suddenly quit. But they do. So often, the only time the preacher gets to hear from someone is when there are complaints or criticisms. When this happens, it is easy to become discouraged. What all of us need to do is make sure we do not become one of the devil’s tools of discouragement. And make sure we do not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by any of his tools. Read 1.Thes.5:12-15; Gal.6:9-10.

A brief examination. After reading the above article, what is your reaction. There are four types of church members. 1. Those who MAKE things happen.  2. Those who WATCH things happen. 3. Those who DON’T KNOW what is happening. 4. Those who CRITICIZE what is happening.  Which “type” are you?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



It is on the inside

"Do not let your adornment be merely outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (1 Pet. 3:3-4)

The world puts emphasis on one's outward appearance. Millions of dollars are spent each year on diet, exercise, clothing, and cosmetics, most of which are designed to improve one's outward appearance. Many of those things are superficial measures to make people appear more beautiful than they really are. It is empty and vain to beautify only the outward person. Prov. 31:30 says, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." 1 Sam. 16:7 says, "...The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

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Question of the week!

We are starting a new segment in the kids column of our bulletin entitled "Question of the week." This is directed toward our young people but all are encouraged to get involved.

We are blessed with a wide range of ages, and we want all to get involved. So some of our questions will be very simple, while others may be a challenge; But it is all about digging into our bibles for the answers. Good luck!

#1 - In the garden of Eden there were four rivers: the Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel. What was the name of the fourth river? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

By the way, if you know the

answer, tell Mr. Tim!



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Why Be Baptized?

If you BELIEVE with all your heart that Jesus is the son of God, (John. 20:30-31; Acts 8:35-39) you should REPENT of your sins, (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30), CONFESS your faith in Christ (Mt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37) and BE BAPTIZED for the following reasons:

1. Because God commands it. Acts 10:48  
2. To fulfill all righteousness. Mt. 3:15  
3. To be a friend of Christ. John 15:14  
4. Because you love God. 1 John 5:3; John 14:15  
5. Lest you reject the council of God against yourself. Luke 7:30  
6. To be born again. John 3:3-5  
7. To enter the kingdom. John 3:5  
8. For remission (forgiveness) of sins. Acts 2:38  
9. To receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38  
10. In order to be saved. Mark 16:16  
11. To wash away your sins. Acts 22:16  
12. To get into the death of Jesus where blood was shed. Rom. 6:3  
13. To be buried with Christ. Roman 6:4  
14. To be raised with Christ. Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1; 2:12  
15. To rise to walk in the newness of life. Romans 6:4  
16. To be a child of God by faith. Galatians 3:26-27  
17. To get into the body, which is the Church. 1 Cor. 12:13; Col 1:18  
18. To have a good conscience. 1 Peter 3:21  
19. To get INTO Christ. Gal. 3:27  
20. Because "*baptism doth also now save us*." 1 Peter 3:21

I have given twenty scriptural reasons why a penitent believer should be baptized. Can you think of ONE REASON why he should not be baptized? Ask your preacher if he preaches that people should be baptized for these twenty reasons. If he doesn't, he is a false teacher. Insist that he preach the truth about baptism, because his soul and the souls of those he teaches are at stake.(1 Tim. 4:16) Preachers might make fun of baptism but God's Word will continue to stand. (1 Peter 1:22-25).

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He Lives By Rush and Dash  
By J. Randal Matheny'

Man doesn’t live by bread alone, He lives by rush and dash,  
By tweets and tablets, ear to the phone, By credit card, not cash.

Man lives by face in virtual book, By moving gifs and text,  
By snaps and pics, and Pinterest cook, And wonders why he’s vexed.

Man lives today for posts from friends, For comments, likes, and blogs,  
But like the dead of olden trends, He goes with them to the dogs.

**Volume 6 January 12 2014 #2**

Why Should I Trust

the Bible?

By Larry Rouse

We live in a generation that has scoffed at the idea of any absolute standard of authority. Those who point to the Bible as containing the answers to the most crucial issues of life are pushed aside as ignorant or naive. If these thoughts are yours, please consider the following points:

1. To determine if the Bible is from God or man is an issue that can be tested and the truth known. I appeal to you to at least read the Bible with an open mind and then test what you read.  This is the appeal of Jesus Christ himself (John 8:32; 7:17).

2. Take the time to consider the

historical and archeological

accuracy of the Bible. History

tells us of many recent scholars,

such as Sir William Ramsey, who

because of their archeological

studies of the Bible lands came

to respect the Bible as one of the

most accurate sources of ancient

history. This tells us that the Bible is no myth but rather was written by men in the times claimed and written in a careful manner.

3. Consider the identity of Jesus Christ - who is He? The appeal of the apostles in the book of Acts is that they witnessed Jesus as one who was raised from the dead (Acts 2:32: 3:14-15; 5:30-32; 10:39-42; 13:27-31). Is this testimony valid? What was the motive of men like the Apostle Paul in making such an abrupt change from persecutor to preacher? History bears testimony that all these witnesses, save one, died a martyr’s death for this truth (1 Cor 15:30-32). Did they die for a lie?

4. Finally, consider the powerful evidence of fulfilled prophecy. In the death of Christ there are several detailed accounts of His death hundreds of years before the event (Psalms 22, Isaiah 53). How can this be?

Why not begin your examination of the Bible today?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Over Invisible Enemy

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6:11-12)

Doubled over and choking, they staggered to hospitals by the thousands, crying for help and refuge from a colorless cloud of gas that turned Bhopal, India into a tomb on a terrible December day in 1984. "We have been working nonstop to treat the people and still they are coming," said one volunteer who tried to help doctors and nurses cope with streams of injured at five jammed hospitals. Several thousand died in the accident at the Union Carbide plant, many never fully aware of what hit them.

No enemy is harder to fight than an invisible one. Believers also face an unseen adversary, who leads the forces arrayed against us in spiritual conflict. Let us be diligent to watch and pray. (From**Bible Illustrator**)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#1 - In the garden of Eden there were four rivers: the Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel. What was the name of the fourth river? **Euphrates, Genesis 2:14**

This week's question:

#2 - How many books are in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ How many Old Testament? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ How many New Testament? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?



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What Will I Leave Behind?

By Frank Himmel

Acts chapter 9 tells about a Christian named Dorcas who lived in Joppa. “This woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did” (v. 36). Dorcas fell sick and died. The disciples washed her body and laid it in an upper room. They then sent for Peter, who was at nearby Lydda.

Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them” (v. 39). Peter had plenty of material to preach an impressive funeral sermon, but he did something even greater: he raised her from the dead!

The Bible doesn’t reveal any other information about Dorcas. How old was she? What did she look like?  Was she married? Did she have children or grandchildren?  Was she a woman of considerable means or did she have little? We could guess, but that’s all it would be — a guess.

What we do know about this woman is enough to raise a question worth considering. The Bible emphasizes the good she left behind. Now the question is: What will I leave behind?

I will leave behind whatever material thing I have.  “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either” (1 Timothy 6:7).  What will those rummaging through my stuff find?  Will they find any evidence of a God-centered life, or will everything point to a life focused on self?

What will I leave to others? Will there by anyone who can produce a gift I gave to them? Will anyone have a memory of how I provided for them in a time of need, the way Dorcas did for these widows?

What example will I leave? Will it be one of faithful service to God?

Would it be the kind that might encourage a struggling Christian to

remain faithful?  Would it strengthen others to stand firm for truth?

What words of mine will people remember?  Will it be words of

encouragement or mostly complaining?  Words of kindness or words

of bitterness and anger?  Will anyone remember me having taught

them God’s word?

What difference will it make? Will my brethren even miss me? Will

it leave any appreciable void in the local congregation?

What will I leave behind?

**Volume 6 January 19 2014 #3**



A recent study found that 60 percent of people had lied at least once during a 10 minute conversation between two strangers. On average, the subjects lied 3 times in the 10 minute conversation.

***- via Journal of Basic and Applied Psychology***

**Colossians 3:9-10** - “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;  10  And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

“To Be Seen of Men”

By Greg Gwin

In the news there was a story about a deer which had been killed in the local vicinity. Now, it is not normally a newsworthy item when a deer gets shot in this part of the country. In fact, it happens hundreds of times each hunting season.  What made this particular situation unique was that the deer - a 12 point buck - was a tame deer which was kept in a fenced pen in a park! The deer even had a name - you guessed it - BAMBI!! He was shot at point blank range, his head cut off at the shoulders, and the remains left there in the pen. Somewhere there is now a beautiful trophy hanging on someone's wall.

Why would someone do such a thing?  There can only be one reason. It was done so that this impressive trophy could be displayed. Other hunters, not knowing that the poor animal was "stalked" and shot while confined in a pen, will marvel at the hunting prowess of the one who now proudly exhibits his "kill".  The fact is that this fella is no hunter at all, and certainly not a sportsman. He has done what he has done simply to impress others.

Similarly, in the religious world there are those who desire to make a big "show" of their service to God. Every move is calculated to produce the maximum impression on others. The list includes everyone from "media evangelists" right down to the man in the pew who is only there so that others will see and notice him. Jesus warned of doing our religious deeds "to be seen of men” (Matt. 6:1ff). Let's be sure that what we do is for the purpose of pleasing God, who "seeth in secret" and "rewards openly" (Matthew 6:4).



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



"Fly off the handle"

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (Prov. 16:32)

The expression, "Fly off the handle," is used when one quickly loses his temper. The original expression comes to us from the use of tools. After tools have set in the shed for months, the wooden handle becomes dry and shrinks.

When various tools such as an ax are used, the iron can easily fly off the handle because of the shrunken wood. When the blade of an ax flies off the handle, it is very dangerous to the user and everyone standing nearby. Similarly, when one, "flies off the handle" (has a violent explosion of anger), it endangers everyone.

Let us learn to rule our spirits.

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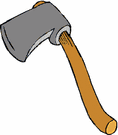
Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#2 - How many books are in the Bible? \_\_\_66\_\_\_ How many Old Testament? \_\_\_39\_\_\_\_ How many New Testament? \_\_\_27\_\_\_\_\_?

This week's question:

#3 - As David grew old, he set Solomon upon his throne as the king of Israel. but, before Solomon became king, David, had another son to try to take the throne. Who was he? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_





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Is on the Throne Not on Stage

By Dalton Key

The God we serve is an august, spiritual being both deserving and desirous

of our deepest respect. Though described in Scripture as a friend to man

(Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23), He is not some sort of "good buddy" to joke with

or about.

Our God is still on the throne (Psalm 45:6); His ways remain higher than our

ways (Isaiah 55:9), and His authoritative Word still promises to judge us in

the Last Day (Revelation 20: 12).

No measure of self-appointed, flippant familiarity with the God of heaven detracts one bit or whit from His inherent majesty. Our God is eminently worthy of our reverence; thus we must serve Him "acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28). Truly, reverence is the "very first element of religion."

Moreover, our periods of public worship should express this spirit of reverence. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all about him" (Psalm 89:7). Worship performed "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) suggests a demeanor of awe and reverence.

We agree that our worship services should be permeated with expressions of joy and thanksgiving - they should not come to resemble a congregational visit to the dentist, but neither should the reverent worship of our heavenly Father be confused for a carnival or rock concert.  Regardless of where, when, or by whom the worship is performed - it must be characterized by reverence and decorum. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (l Corinthians 14:40).

The worship assembly is not the proper setting for screaming, whistling, clapping, and stomping the feet in response to a speaker's message. We do not gather to pay homage to men but to worship God. We do not come together as we would at football game or a band concert; we come to worship God. We do not assemble with the intent of being entertained; we come to worship God. Any assembly of saints with the intent of worshipping and praising the God of heaven should reject that which emphasizes the carnal emotions and minimizes the spiritual man. An outsider should be able to attend one of our assemblies and see a marked difference between the worship of God and he Jay Leno show.

In the realm of worship, zeal without knowledge (Romans 10:2) paves a dangerous road toward pagan, flesh-oriented, and riotous assemblies. Most of our denominational neighbors have long gone this route, with services geared more toward entertaining man than worshipping God. May we learn to temper our joy in Christ with a Christ like reverence for things holy. And may we teach our children so.

Remember, our God is on the throne - not on stage.

**Volume 6 January 26 2014 #4**

When 900 Million People Are Watching

By Brent Petrillo.

Ninety-percent of all people deal with some level of stage fright. How do you feel when all eyes are on you? Do your palms get cold and clammy? Do you become nervous and anxious? Do you blush, tremble, shake, or feel nauseated?

There is at least one stage where the vast majority of people feel no fright at all.  This stage is Facebook.  Facebook recently exceeded 900 million active users.  Potentially, then, depending on your privacy settings, up to 900 million people are watching what you say and do. Many who would be very careful in front of a crowd may post on Facebook with reckless abandon.

God has called His people to be different (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Timothy 2:21). God has called us to be a light in the darkness (Matthew 5:14-16). The question for us is, do our Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest accounts reflect this? Here are several categories to consider:

§   What Do We Say and Post? Could someone look at our profiles and see bad language, gossip, slander, or crude and crass speech? (2 Corinthians 12:20; James 3).

§   What People and Activities Do We "Like" (Support)? Do we "Like" celebrities, athletes, artists, or others with trashy reputations? Do we support movies, music, TV shows, video games, or other things that are not Christlike? (Romans 12:2).

§   What Pictures Are on Our Profiles? Do any pictures show us engaging in sin or less than godly behaviors? (Romans 13: 13-14). Do any show us hanging with people or in places a Christians should not be? (l Corinthians IS :33). Do any pictures on our profiles display immodesty or promote lust? (l Timothy 2:9-10; Romans 13: 13; Matthew 5:28).

Remember, 900 million people are watching on earth, and One is watching in heaven.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11)

John was truly a great man in many ways. He was a child of promise born to godly parents. He prepared the way for the Lord and bore witness of Jesus as the Christ. His preaching was plain and powerful, and many people went out to be baptized by him. He died a martyr.

Nevertheless, as Jesus said, "He who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." This shows the greatness of the kingdom and the value of the blessings therein. Those who make up the kingdom have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. Col. 1:13-14 says, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

How about you? Have you been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom? If not, why not obey the gospel today?

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#3 - As David grew old, he set Solomon upon his throne as the king of Israel. but, before Solomon became king, David, had another son to try to take the throne. Who was he? \_ Adonijah I Kings 1:5\_\_\_

This week's question:

#4 - John wrote the book of Revelation while he was exiled on an Island. What was the name of the Island? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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Do You Want Bible Knowledge?

By Gary Smalley

I once heard an aged gospel preacher refer to a comment he received from a person who appreciated his sermons: “I wish I knew as much about the Bible as you.” His reply was, “Lady, if you study the Bible for as many years as I have you would know as much or more!” Bible knowledge was prized, desired and gained in the diligence of study.

Today, it is very sad to realize that there are many people who have allowed themselves to be convinced that the Bible cannot be understood. Many others hold the view that the Bible is very difficult to understand and for that reason they do not investigate it for themselves. How dreadful and dishonorable it is for people to not know what God has spoken! The Apostle Paul said people could have the knowledge he had by reading what he had written (Eph. 3:4; cf. 5:17).

In many cases, people who do not study the Bible for themselves have come to rely upon preachers to provide answers to their questions. Many preachers are very happy to help as many people as possible in gaining an understanding of what God has said. It is the mission of those who preach and teach God’s word to “make all men see” or “bring to light” the wisdom of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Eph. 3:1-ff). But we must heed the warning that Christ gave with regard to relying on men as a source of truth. Of the religious leaders of His day, He said, “…they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.” (Matt. 15:14). People should study the Bible for themselves. If they do not, they become so easily deceived. (1 John 4:1).

Studying the Bible is not nearly as difficult as some would lead you to believe. Being a worthy Bible student is simple if you will follow these three basic principles:

1. Recognize that the Bible is the word of God. This amazing book is unique; no other book compares to it. The writers were men, but they wrote what the ultimate author commanded: “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (2 Pet. 1:20-21). This incredible one-of-a-kind book reveals where man came from, why he is here and where he is going. Paul said, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Jesus Christ respected the Scriptures and regarded them as the word of God (John 17:17). You are in good company when you so regard the Bible. >>>

**Volume 6 February 2 2014 #5**

>>> 2. Hunger and thirst for righteousness. Following the Lord’s directive in Matt. 5:6, if we have an intense desire to obtain “the righteousness of God” (2 Pet. 1:1; Rom. 3:22; 10:3), with the same fervor we seek food and drink when hungry, we will obtain it! When we develop an appetite for regular servings of spiritual food, we will indeed grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:2). These are the ones who take advantage of every opportunity to discuss and learn from God’s word.

3. Pay the price. Paul admonished, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2Tim. 2:15).  Study is work. It is careful examination, analysis, seeking answers to questions with the specific purpose or intent to understand and learn.  There is no “easy” button to push and no knowledge pill to take. This price is far more than most are willing to pay. The price of that filet mignon causes me to lose my desire for it and choose chicken. The price for knowing the Scriptures causes many to allow others to tell them about their religious views rather than going to the source of truth. Any who are unwilling to do what it takes to know the Scriptures will never know and understand them as they could or should.

Yes, friend, you can obtain a great deal of Bible knowledge, if you remember and apply these simple basic principles. If you have the proper respect for the Bible as the word of God, a burning desire for the righteousness it contains and a willingness to pay the price for success, you can understand and know what God has spoken! And with that knowledge you can enjoy all the spiritual blessings that God has for man, which are found in Christ (Eph. 1:3). May we help you today?

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Remember our online Bible correspondence course

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**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Don't get swallowed up by the world!

"...If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24) "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

In December 1985, a 70-foot-wide sinkhole swallowed one home and a carport and forced the evacuation of four homes in a retirement community in Florida. The hole was about the size of a pickup truck when it was discovered. Within three hours it had grown to 30 by 40 feet and had swallowed half of a small house. Two hours later the house was gone. The owners escaped with only their coats, glad to be alive.

Without Christ, one will be swallowed up like a sinkhole, and the results will be far more catastrophic.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#4 - John wrote the book of Revelation while he was exiled on an Island. What was the name of the Island? \_\_\_\_Patmos, Revelation 1:9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#5 - The apostle Paul is one of the most well known

men of the Bible. Paul was born as a Roman citizen, but do you know where Paul was born?

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What Are We Expecting From Our Prayers?

By Roger Shouse

We pray because prayer works! James writes: "The effectual prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (5:16). If God never listened, or if God never answered our prayers "Yes," then why pray? There would be no motive to pray. We would say, "it just doesn't do any good." But we know better. All of us can be thankful for the numerous prayers answered in our lives. Prayer works! God is moved by the prayers of His people.

But, what are we expecting from our prayers? The simple answer would be, "We are expecting God to answer them." Thus, we pray in faith that He will respond.

Sometimes, however, I feel that some look at prayer as the "magical fix all" to our problems. We make a mess of our marriage and then in desperation pray about our home and think God will now make it right. We mess up our health by poor eating habits and a lack of exercise and then lay in a hospital bed praying for our health to return. We think the church will grow just because "we have prayed for that."

It seems that in all of this, we are expecting God to right all the wrongs, fix all the mistakes, and make everything fine simply because we have prayed about it. Now this is not questioning the power of God but it is essential that we understand our roles and responsibilities and our need to work with Him.

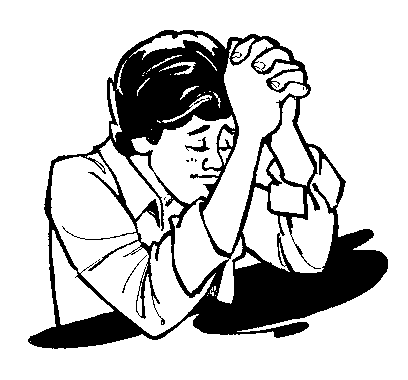
We Find Ourselves In A Mess Financially: -- because we spend instead of saving. It will take more than words to right the wrongs of unwise decisions.

We Find Ourselves In A Troubled Marriage: -- because of gossiping, nagging, dishonesty, and negativity. A change of hearts and a renewed dedication are essential to turning that relationship around. God will not "fix it" without the cooperation of those "in it."

We Find Ourselves In A Stagnant Church: -- because of indifference. Such a church cannot grow by the members merely saying a prayer and then waiting with arms folded for something to happen. Obviously, God expects cooperation from us.

Whether financial or familial, are we to expect that all one has to do to fix the mess is pray and everything will be fine? Absolutely not! There are consequences to our choices and responsibilities that rest upon our shoulders. God will do His part but... we must do ours!

**Volume 6 February 9 2014 #6**



If you are visiting we are glad you're here!

Please come again!

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gossip's Corrupt Fruit

By Tom Moody

“GOSSIP” is idle talk or rumors about others. The word can also be applied to the person who initiates or repeats such idle talk.

Many jokes are made about gossip. Some seem to view gossip as a harmless exercise – an annoyance or nuisance at worst.

Christians should realize that gossip (slander, tale bearing, being a busy body) is sinful and carries with it the potential of much heartache and devastation. The sinfulness and seriousness of gossip is clearly illustrated by its effects which are listed in a number of scriptures.

1. Gossip makes a fool of the one who practices it. “…he that uttereth a slander is a fool”, Proverbs 10:18.

2. Gossip causes deep wounds. “The words of a tale bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly”, Proverbs 26:22.

3. Gossip will separate close friends. “A forward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends”, Proverbs 16:28.

4. Gossip brings shame upon the tale bearer. “Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and disclose not a secret to another: lest he that heareth it put thee to shame and thine infamy turn not away”, Proverbs 25:9-10.

If you are tempted to gossip, work on purifying your heart (because evil speech proceeds from the heart, Matthew 15:18-20), increase your love for others, and learn to use your speech “to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers”, Ephesians 4:29.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Where There Is . . .

By Jesse Wagner  
  
Where there is love and generosity,  
there is joy.  
Where there is sincerity and sacrifice,  
there is friendship.  
Where there is harmony and simplicity,  
there is beauty.  
Where there is prayer and forgiveness,  
there is peace.  
Where there is moderation and patience,  
there is wisdom.  
Where there are conflicts and crises,  
there is opportunity.  
Where there is wonder and adventure,  
there is growth.  
Where there is adoration and confession,  
there is worship.  
Where there is compassion and concern,  
there is God.

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#5 - The apostle Paul is one of the most well known

men of the Bible. Paul was born as a Roman citizen, but do you know where Paul was born?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Tarsus, Acts 21:39\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#6 - As the children of Israel traveled toward the promised land they complained that they had no meat. What meat did God provide for them?

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HYMNS AND BEER

By J.R. Bronger

Leah Stanfield, 28, walks to a microphone across the room

and reads the evening’s gospel message. No, she is not in

some “church building” or “sanctuary”, she is in the

neighborhood pub.

She’s been attending “worship services” in this Fort Worth,

Texas, pub for about a year, and occasionally she leads

worship. “I find the love, I find the support, I find the

non-judgmental eyes when I come here,” she told National

Public Radio (NPR). “And I find friends that love God, (and)

love draft beer.”

You read that right. Every Sunday evening, about 30 to 40 gather with her at Zio Carlo brewpub to order pizza and pints of beer, have fellowship, and share communion. This, to them, is a worshiping of God. She and those who share her “non-traditional” views have one thing in common—they believe “church” has become too traditional.

Frankly, I cringe whenever I hear some-one (often a disgruntled, weak church member) complain that we (non-institutional churches of Christ) have become too wedded to “our traditions.” They grumble that we need to become more progressive and “make church more relevant,” especially to the thirty-something’s, so as to attract more people. Well! What could be more relevant to our “pub culture” than a church in a pub?

So-called “Pastor” Philip Heinze and his Calvary Lutheran Church told NPR that they sponsor Church-in-a-Pub, whose formal name is the Greek word Kyrie, because they, like many others, have become weary of “Traditional Church,” so they decided to mix hymns with beer.

And, believe it or not there are many mainline churches, concerned with dwindling attendance, that are also looking to break away from boring church tradition. And they believe that including beer is going to be a selling point. Instead of singing “There is Power in the Blood” one might find the congregants belting out “Pop-a-top Again.”

This “church” meets at the bar (for worship) sings, prays, give testimonies and drinks beer. What about your run-of-the-mill pub attendees? For sure, there are others there, non-worshipers who just come for the beer and boiled peanuts. Some of these secular drinkers are rather confused by the spiritual drinkers but the bartender clears it up for them.

“I tell ‘em, it’s a church service,” the bartender said, “and they’re, like, ‘In a pub?’ And I’m, like, ‘Yeah.’ Some of ‘em stick around for trivia, some of ‘em take off, some of ‘em will hang out and have another pint or two.”

>>>

**Volume 6 February 16 2014 #7**

>>> “Pastor” Heinze put it bluntly: “I’m not interested, frankly, in making more church members. I’m interested in having people have significant relationships around Jesus. And if it turns out to be (with) draft beer, fine.” There you have it! For those who are fed up with traditionalism it isn’t about Christ, it is about having fun with others. Forget about souls, forget about loving and obeying God, forget about holiness and righteousness—just give them another brew.

There are more churches that intend to follow Calvary Lutheran in moving “church worship” into the bars. “I think the institutional church now is getting onboard,” said Heinze, “because there’s a lot of anxiety frankly about the church’s decline and they’re trying to think outside of that institutional box.” Getting out of the box? Sounds more like out of the frying pan into the fire.

I wonder what LaGard Smith and others who have advocated that the church needs to be moved to the kitchen (get out of the institutional box) would say about getting out of the kitchen into the pubs. This is where one could conceivably wind up (the beer joint) when the word of God (Bible tradition, 2 Thessalonians 2:15) is abandoned for self-serving hedonism.

Now to be truthful this has not been co-opted by churches of Christ, yet; but it is something some Christian Churches are considering. In Portland, Oregon the First Christian Church has opened their fellowship hall for Beer & Hymns. This is because the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has seen a steady decline in membership in recent years, so the answer is not the gospel, God’s power to save (Romans 1:16), instead it’s beer & Hymns.

Do not be surprised to hear in the not too distant future that instead of putting on a nice suit or dress and heading off to Bible class and worship some of your neighbors will be heading to the neighborhood pub for hymns, beer, pickled eggs and pretzels.

Let’s remember where all this might wind up whenever we hear some decry that we are being too traditional!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



To Die In The Lord

"And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:59-60)

The above verse says that when Stephen was stoned, he "fell asleep." Our English word "cemetery" comes from this same Greek word which means "the sleeping of the dead." To label "death" as "falling asleep" is a wholesome thought about death rather than the usual harshness men associate with it. Psalm 116:15 says, "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." Rev. 14:13 says, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.'"

There have been many unjust killings since the beginning of the world, as was Stephen's. The thing, however, that made Stephen great was not that he was unjustly murdered, but that he died in the Lord. Let us proclaim along with the prophet of old: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his!" (Num. 23:10)

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#6 - As the children of Israel traveled toward the promised land they complained that they had no meat. What meat did God provide for them?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Quail, Numbers 11:31\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#7 - When Peter, James and John witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, there were two men mentioned who appeared with Jesus and talked with Him. Who were those two men?

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Return to the Lord

By Warren E. Berkeley

Built in to the message of the prophets was the appeal to repent. These men were sent by God to expose sin and urge the guilty to repent. Often the appeal was framed as a challenge to return to the Lord (Isaiah 6:10; Jeremiah 3:1; Malachi 3:7). For instance, Joel’s appeal to Judah was for the people to repent of their sins. “So rend your heart,” and “return to the Lord your God” (Joel 2:13). Through the distribution of His judgments (locusts, drought, desolation), God intended to admonish His people to come out of their sin and back to Him. It was His loving purpose to prompt a change in their direction. The essential definition of repentance has not changed through the dispensations. We can, therefore, use Joel’s statement as the basis for our understanding of returning to the Lord. And this study can find application for those who have been baptized but have left their God.

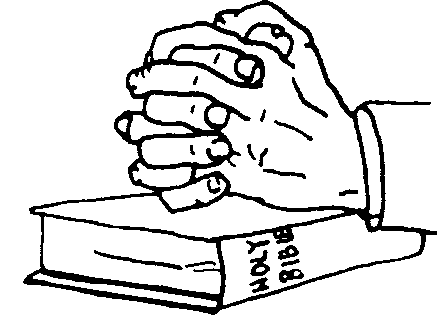
Repentance is a change in direction. The simple word “turn” shows that to be so. Those guilty of sin (before or after baptism) need to turn; a change of direction is needed. If you’ve been letting the world influence your thinking, your speech, your conduct, your dress or attitude, you need to change your direction. If you’ve abandoned the assembly, harbored ill-will in your heart, accepted false teaching, helped false teaching advance, participated in party strife or refused to grow, God seeks a change in your direction. Repentance is a change in your direction, turning from your sin to the Lord (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10).

Repentance occurs in the heart. Observe in verse 12 of Joel 2, “with all your heart.” Everything we do before God ought to be done with a whole heart. Repentance, to be complete and genuine, must come from a whole heart: a heart of reverence for God, love for God; a heart influenced by the cross of Christ. Repentance should be the product of a heart of mature responsibility toward everything that is holy and right. The conviction of sin from the Word should be let in, so that repentance finds its’ true and good expression.

Repentance is not just a ritual. “So rend your heart, and not your garments…” It was customary among the Jews to express their emotions in very public, visible ways. To this day in middle eastern cultures, when a family member dies, there may be public weeping and wailing; throwing dust in the air; beating the breast and the rendering of garments. The problem to be noted here is, the emotion must not be ritualized and confused with true repentance. The fact that someone may cry in public or come down an aisle doesn’t assure wholehearted repentance. Repentance is a personal decision to leave sin behind and come to God. It is a decision of heart, productive of good fruit. It may be accompanied by some open expression, but the essence of the matter lies in the heart and the results in life.

>>>

**Volume 6 February 23 2014 #8**



>>> Repentance is made possible by a gracious God. “Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love…” If you are alive to hear the Word, be convicted and repent, thank God that you have such a blessed opportunity. Thank Him for the precious blood of Christ. “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” If you are alive today, you can repent. Thank God for the time He has given you to return to Him, but don’t presume upon His grace and providence. “He relents from doing harm,” but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Repent while there is time.

If you are reading this as one convicted of your sin, now is the time to repent. If you just plan to repent someday, that isn’t good enough. Ask God to relent, turn from your sin and enjoy peace with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

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IS THIS THE TRUTH?

By Richie Thetford

Ask a denominational preacher if what he preaches is the truth and he will surely say YES. Ask him if one must believe the truth in order to be saved and he will no doubt say YES. But, ask him if one must believe the particular doctrine which he preaches in order to be saved and he will probably answer NO. (Now, make sense out of that!)

THINGS BY WHICH MAN IS SAVED:

The Bible teaches man is saved by God (Titus 3:4-5), Love, (John 3:16), Mercy (Titus 3:4-5), Grace (Eph. 2:9), Christ (Matt 1:21), Blood (1 Pet 1:18-19), Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:11), Gospel (Rom.1:16-17), Faith (Rom. 5:1), Repentance (Acts 17:30), Confession (Rom. 10:10), Works of Faith (James 2:24), Baptism (1 Pet. 3:21).

The Bible nowhere teaches men are saved by any one thing only!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



From The Heart!

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'" (Matt. 16:24)

Three military recruiters showed up to address high school seniors. Each recruiter, representing the Army, Navy, and Marines, was given fifteen minutes to speak. The Army and Navy recruiters got carried away, so when it came time for the Marine recruiter to speak, he had just two minutes. He walked up and stood silent for a full sixty seconds, half of his time. Then he said, "I doubt whether there are two or three of you in this room who could even cut it in the Marines, but I want to see those two or three immediately in the dining hall when we are dismissed." He then took his seat.

Later, when he arrived in the dining hall, he was greeted by a large number of students who were interested in becoming Marines. The recruiter knew that commitment comes from appealing to the heroic dimension in every heart. (By W. Frank Harrington)

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#7 - When Peter, James and John witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, there were two men mentioned who appeared with Jesus and talked with Him. Who were those two men?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Moses and Elijah, Matthew 17:3\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#8 - As we read the Bible we notice very quickly that there are a lot of unusual names, such as Methuselah, or Nebuchadnezzar, but do you know the longest name in the Bible?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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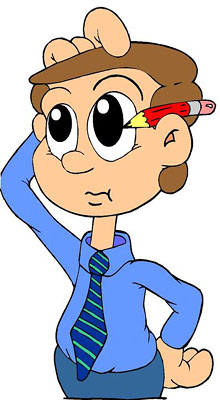
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“Everything Happens for a Reason”

By Greg Gwin

We often hear people use the expression: “Everything happens for a reason.”  This saying is the modern, New Age version of the old religious saying:  “It’s God’s will.”   Is this true?  Is there a reason for everything?  Does God’s will regulate all things?

First, some things happen because the Lord has placed certain ‘natural’ laws in place that cannot be violated without predictable results.  For example: a man broke his leg.  Why? What was the reason? He stepped off of a ladder and the ‘law of gravity’ prevailed.  In this sense, we can understand and acknowledge that this ‘happened for a reason,’ though we doubt that this is what the New Age crowd means when they use that expression.

But, we must essentially protest the claim that God has totally predestined our lives, or that His ‘will’ controls every aspect of our existence.  The Scriptures make it clear that God gives man choice.  Joshua’s famous statement makes this abundantly clear: “Choose you this day whom ye will serve” (Joshua 24:15).  We know that the invitation for salvation is open to all, but each one must decide: “The Spirit and the bride say, Come . . . and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17).  So, obviously, God has not predestined everything, else these statements about our freedom to choose would be senseless.

Further, we know that some things do, in fact, happen as a consequence of the choices God allows us to make.  Good choices typically bring good outcomes, and bad choices produce bad ones.  Many are suffering the ill effects of things they chose to do or not do, while others are enjoying the benefits of wise selections.  Moses advised the Israelites: “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

To put it simply, choices have consequences.  And while this is a definite rule of

God, the specifics are determined by us and our free will, not His.

Finally, we must note that there is not always a clear, one-to-one corollary to be

seen in every event in our lives.  Sometimes bad things happen to good people,

and vice versa.  Why?  Frequently we can ‘see’ it, but often we cannot answer,

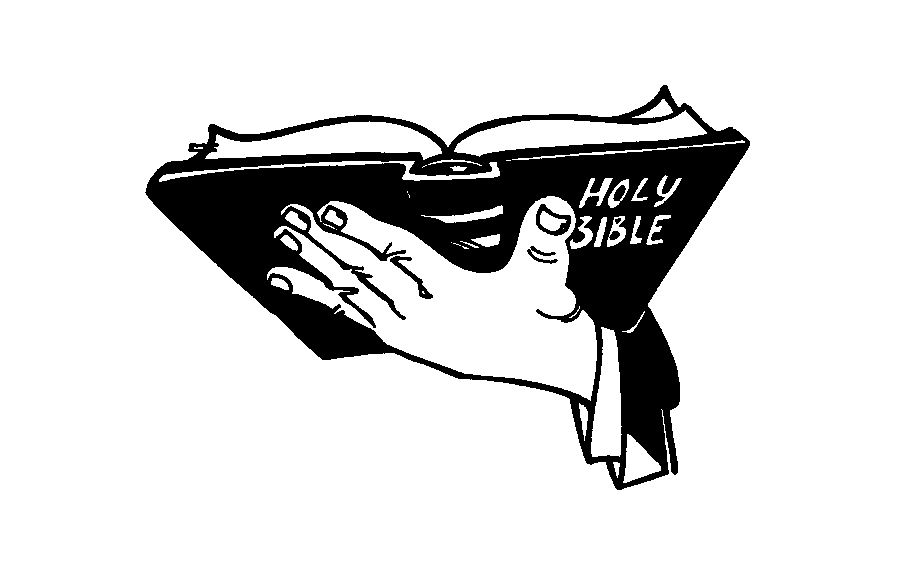
other than to lay it to the reality of living in this present world with its physical

suffering and death.  We may not be able to explain them, but we can use even

the ‘bad things’ to provoke us to do what is right and just – as we seek for a

world where such will never happen again (2 Peter 3:13).

**Volume 6 March 2 2014 #9**



Is God Within Your Plans?

By Bob Tidwell

We make plans in our lives many times.  Do you ever stop and think about God being a part of your plan-making?  The faithful child of God would and should.

If you were to have to make a move to another city and state, what would be your priorities in making such a huge step?  How would your plans affect you and your family?  Would you seek out to find the Lord’s body working in this new location and be a part of the work to serve and worship God?  Would God be in the forefront of the decisions you determine to do in carrying out these changes?  Would God be first in your life? (Matthew 6:33)  Would you seek to please God with your choices? (2 Corinthians 5:9)

James wrote: “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.  For what is your life?  It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.  Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”  But now you boast in your arrogance.  All such boasting is evil.” (James 4:13-16).

When we make plans, we should first seek to please God in what we are planning to do. Are the plans we make first authorized by the Lord? (Colossians 3:17)  Secondly, we should also have the attitude that “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that” as James teaches us.

Being with God forever and having eternal life should be our aim everyday. (Colossians 3:1-2).  The decisions we set on accomplishing in this life should always be toward pleasing God.  Are your plans according to God’s will?  Is He included within them?

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If you are visiting please come again!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



**The Bible Classes and You**

By Tim Nichols

A golden opportunity occurs here twice a week. And those who will not hear its knock are destined to be weak. The Book of God is opened wide and placed before our eyes; that we might place it in our hearts and by it be made wise. So come and have a part with us, and please do not be late. Have your lesson in your hand and then participate. The passive student cannot learn if no effort is made to have the lesson in one’s mind with groundwork firmly laid. So read the Scriptures, fill the blanks, and give the Lord a chance to teach you truth more thoroughly than one gains by just a glance.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#8 - As we read the Bible we notice very quickly that there are a lot of unusual names, such as Methuselah, or Nebuchadnezzar, but do you know the longest name in the Bible?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Mahershalalhashbaz, Isaiah 8:1\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#9 - There are a many fascinating characters in the Bible who faced many great obstacles. Do you know the name of the giant who David killed with a sling and a stone?

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How to Avoid a Spiritual Failure

By Paul Earnhart

In his final hours in Rome, awaiting an inevitable execution, a very lonely apostle Paul suffered some additional heartbreak. "Demas," he wrote, "hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4.10). We are left to speculate as to the particulars — what dread fears or powerful allurements led this faithful friend and co-worker to abandon the kingdom of God and to forsake his burdened brother. It was not as though he had fled the field at the first approach of trouble. During Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome Demas had evidently been a steadfast companion (Philemon 24; Colossians 4.14). Now, unexpectedly, this heart-mauling betrayal and desertion.

Paul said that Demas "loved this present world." The "world" is many things. John describes it as a way of thinking where lust, materialism and pride abound (1 John 2.15-16). What was it that got to the faithful Demas? Was it fear of death or imprisonment? Or was it something more subtle like a nostalgic longing for the old easy ways free of constant warfare? We are not told which one of these undid Demas but one of them found its mark.

Breaking points can come to us too if we are not very careful. A deep hurt we cannot find it in ourselves to forgive. A disappointing marriage. Failures with our children. Lost health or prosperity. Anything we had never imagined happening to us. And often it’s just plain prideful stubbornness. At any rate, don’t ever say you’d never do what others have done. You’ve never been all the places you could be. Peter learned a valuable lesson about that (Matthew 26.31-35). It is far better that we know our own weaknesses and watch and pray that we enter not into temptation (Matthew 26.41). Satan loves an arrogant and self-confident man.

Another lesson to be learned from the failure of others is that those who at last go back, at first look back. Departures of apparent suddenness are really the end of a process. Our Lord warned that those who put their hand to the kingdom plow and look back longingly at the world are not fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9.62). The disciples who go back are those who first begin to cultivate again the values of the world and like the Israelites in the wilderness grow nostalgic amidst their trials for the fleshpots of Egypt. They forget, of course, the galling bondage that accompanies the life of sin. These are the ones who gradually cease to meditate upon God’s word (Psalm 1.1-2), then become prayerless (James 4.1-2) as God and Christ seem far away. First men cease to study, then to pray, and, finally, to care.

Sometimes this all begins as a casual flirtation, a few ittle compromises dismissed as harmless. Too much time with worldly companions (1 Corinthians 15.33), too much interest in a job (1 Timothy 6.9-10), too much concern with being accepted and making our mark in the world (1 Peter 5.5). Finally, it becomes a passionate love affair that makes us heedless of the injury we do to our Savior, ourselves and others.

Satan is the master of the "short step" method. Slow change is more effective in producing spiritual collapse than sudden departure. The danger of alerting the victim to what is happening is eliminated. We can be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3.12-13). Warning flags need to start flying the moment we feel the slightest ebb in commitment. Beware the spiritual slow leak. >>>

**Volume 6 March 9 2014 #10**

>>> The unfailing answer to this kind of spiritual failure is the daily discipline of an uncompromising dedication which admits of no exceptions and makes quick and humble redress for every transgression. Burn all your bridges and press on to the heavenly mark (Philippians 3.7-14). And if, in spite of everything, you happen to stumble badly, don’t let despair destroy you. Remember that everyone who has faltered has not ultimately fallen. We can all thank God for that. John Mark’s disgraceful desertion in Pamphylia (Acts 13.13) was not the end of him because he didn’t allow it to be. Paul sent for him during his last hours (2 Timothy 4.11) and the Holy Spirit chose him to record the gospel story. We don’t have to be like Demas. In the mercy of God we have the privilege of being like John Mark or Peter, and, yes, even Paul.

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Ease?

It is easier to COMPROMISE

the truth than to STAND for it.

It is easier to IGNORE sin,

than EXPOSE it.

It is easier to JUSTIFY the sinner

than to DEMAND his repentance.

It is easier to CRITICIZE the truth

than to ENDORSE it.

It is easier to be SILENT

than to CONTEND for the faith.

It is easier to REFUSE an admonition

than to RECEIVE it.

It is easier to be WORLDLY

than to be GODLY.

It is easier to COMMIT SIN

than AVOID it.

It is easier to NEGLECT

than to TAKE HEED.

It is easier to MAKE EXCUSES

than to BE FAITHFUL

Why is this true? Simply because it is easier to travel the BROAD WAY than to travel the NARROW WAY (Matthew 7:13-14)!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Do All Roads Lead To God? NO!

"Then His disciples came and said to Him, 'Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?' But He answered and said, 'Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.'" (Matt. 15:12-13)

I'm always taken aback by anyone who thinks all roads lead to God, that all religions are equally valid. Nobody believes that about anything else. I wonder why anybody believes that about religion. Last summer, I had to have a root canal. It wasn't as bad as I had been told, but there are more fun ways to spend a summer morning. If my endodontist had said, "You know, Mr. Elzinga, it really doesn't matter how I do a root canal. Eventually, all roads lead to that problem tooth. I can go directly to the tooth, or I can go in through your ear, or I can go in through your nostril, or I can drill into your neck and work my way back up to that gum," at that point, I would look for a new oral surgeon! (From Kenneth G. Elzinga)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#9 - There are a many fascinating characters in the Bible who faced many great obstacles. Do you know the name of the giant who David killed with a sling and a stone?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Goliath, I Samuel 17:4\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#10 - As Jesus was lead to Calvary to be crucified He was unable to carry His cross, who was given the task of carrying the cross for Him?

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Things Left in the Pews

By Greg Gwin

Church members are prone to leave things behind in the pews.  We’ve even known of some folks who drove away from the meeting house before discovering that they left one of their toddlers sleeping in the pew.  Anyone taking a turn at cleaning the church building is in for an eye-opening experience.  It is amazing to see the things that get left in the pews. For example:

- Trash!  Candy and gum wrappers, scraps of paper, Kleenexes, and other rubbish frequently get carelessly strewn in the seats.  Some of this is accidental, but the volume of trash left in some pews is extraordinary.  Everyone could easily help with this by simply ‘policing’ their area before leaving.

- Personal items.  Blankets, sweaters, foot stools, children’s books and toys, and other such things are common in the pews.  We understand the need for some of this, but we’d encourage some organizing and tidiness to make a better appearance and impression – especially on visitors.

While these things are normal, and can easily be tolerated, there are some other things that represent a more significant issue:

- Bibles.  If you leave your Bible in the pew, it suggests that you don’t really use it on a regular daily basis.  That’s a problem that needs to be fixed immediately.  Take your Bible home.  Read it every day.

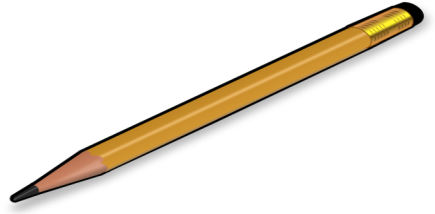
- Class materials.  Our children’s teachers work hard to make the Bible classes the best they can be.  They almost always have teaching aids and handouts to send home with the kids.  Too often these are carelessly left behind.  Please, parents, pay special attention to these things.  Gather them up.  Take them home.  Review the subjects with your children.  And, of course, the older kids and adults need to take their books home and study, too!  If you leave your class materials in the pew, it’s pretty obvious that you are not making any effort to come to class prepared.

- God’s truth.  The most serious of all things that get left behind in the pews is the truth.  Too many walk away from Bible classes and sermons without any serious consideration that the things that have been taught need to be put into practice in their daily lives.  They are effectively unchanged by the exposure to the essential truths of His Word.  “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:22-25)

Before you leave the pew, make sure that you haven’t left anything behind.  Think!

**Volume 6 March 16 2014 #11**





FIVE VIEWS OF

MARK 16:16

By E.R. Hall, Jr.

Mankind is certainly ingenious when it comes to inventing different views to tip toe around what God's word says. Mark 16:16 is one such passage.

THE METHODISTS read Mark 16:16 like this: "He that believeth not and is baptized shall be saved". One of their cardinal doctrines teaches the practice of infant baptism when the infant is way too young to know what's going on much less to believe anything the Bible teaches concerning sin, repentance, and salvation.

THE ATHEISTS read Mark 16:16 like this: "He that believeth and is baptized shall not be saved". They do not even believe in God to Whom man is accountable for his actions. Since there is no accountability to a God, there can be no such thing as sin and definitely no need for salvation.

THE UNIVERSALISTS read Mark 16:16 like this: "He that believeth not and is baptized not shall be saved". They believe EVERYBODY is SAVED and NOBODY is LOST.

THE BAPTISTS read Mark 16:16 like this: "He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved". They believe salvation comes at the point of faith and baptism has nothing to do with saving.

JESUS said in Mark 16:16 "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*". Now, which view are we going to take on this passage?

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"...In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thess. 5:18)

Here are Matthew Henry's, the well known Bible scholar, comments after he had been robbed. "Let me be thankful; first, because I was never robbed before; secondly, because although the thief took my wallet, he did not take my life; thirdly, because although he took my money, it wasn't much; and, fourthly, because it was I who was robbed, and not I who robbed."

Let us give thanks in all things.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Living Up to the Name

By Shane Williams

Animals are predictable in their behaviors. You can count on them to behave a certain way based upon what kind of animal they are. You would be surprised to find a cat who didn't at least swat at a mouse that ran by, or a dog never sniffed around or refused to wag his tail.  Animals only do the things that are based upon what they should do. They live up to their name.

God expects His children to do what they were redeemed to do – to live up to their name. "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Eph. 5:1). "Walk in love, just as Christ also loved you" (Eph. 5:2). "Do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints" (Eph. 5:3). "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). "Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them" (Eph. 5:11). "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise" (Eph. 5:15).

However, living as God's children is not a matter of instinct. We are challenged to remind ourselves daily of who we are because of God's great mercy and grace. Only as we do this consistently are we living up to our name.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#10 - As Jesus was lead to Calvary to be crucified He was unable to carry His cross, who was given the task of carrying the cross for Him?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Simon, Matthew 27:32\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#11 - The bronze serpent that Moses made and put on a pole was later taken and was used in idolatry what was the name it was called by those who burned incents to it?

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THE CHURCH'S PURPOSE

By Bill Hall

What is the purpose of the Lord's church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all blind man to see; that enabled one lame man to walk have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution free society in which to live, He would have given instructions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to destroy slavery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (Col. 3:22-4:1).

The church's purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity - It holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "*more precious than of gold*," and to rejoice - It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators - Its weapons "*are not carnal, but are mighty through God*." Its motivating theme: "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*"

When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world's poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when they feel called upon to express their views on the government's use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

**Volume 6 March 23 2014 #12**

"Just As I Am"

By Frank Himmel

The song Just As I Am is perhaps the most commonly used invitation song. The idea in the song is that we cannot make ourselves right with God on our own; apart from Jesus’ blood we have no hope. That is precisely the New Testament picture (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; etc.).

I fear, however, that some folks have an erroneous idea about Jesus saving us “just as we are.” They seem to think that He saves us without any change in our conduct. That is opposite to the New Testament picture.

Jesus’ charge to the apostles was “that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations”  (Lk. 24:47). Forgiveness is extended to those willing to abandon sinful conduct, not to those who insist on continuing in it.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, “Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you…”  (1 Cor. 6:9-10). He did not say such are some of you, but such were. They changed their conduct in connection with being washed, sanctified, and justified (v. 11).

“Just as I am,” if referring to our own helplessness, is a comforting sentiment. But to suggest it means salvation without repentance is to hold out false hope.

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CLEANLINESS, GODLINESS?

By David Lipscomb

For a parent to require a child to wash his face and keep his body clean and not require him to learn and obey the Bible, is to teach him the body is worth more than a pure heart and clean spirit. For a parent to require a child to learn spelling and reading and not require him to study the Bible is to teach him that it is much more important to be qualified to live in this world than to be fitted to live in heaven.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**





Watch Your Step

"Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, 'Be strong, do not fear!'" (Isa. 35:3-4)

Mountain goats live in a dangerous environment. One wrong move and they can fall to their deaths. Young mountain goats can be in special danger because of their playfulness. Douglas Chadwick in **National Geographic** writes that the kids of mountain goats are "born to romp, leap, twist, skip, and prance...High spirits and wandering attention can be fatal for young goats. Fortunately, nannies dote on their off-spring, tending them from the downhill side to block falls..."

This is an excellent illustration of how mature Christians should care for babes in Christ. New Christians will stumble and fall on occasions and, thus, older Christians should tend them from the downhill side, ready to block them when they fall. Gal. 6:1 says, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#11 - The bronze serpent that Moses made and put on a pole was later taken and was used in idolatry what was the name it was called by those who burned incents to it?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Nehushtan, II Kings 18:4\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#12 - The New Testament tells a story about a shepherd who leaves his 99 sheep to search for 1 which was lost. Do you know where the story is found?

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SELF-CONTROL

By Bill Hall

What is the value of self-control? Self-control is that which

enables us to hold our tongues when we are tempted to

viciously put someone in his place once and for all; or when

we know a juicy bit of gossip that would be entertaining to

the group and would  turn us into the "life of the party"; or

when an occasion almost demands that we betray a

confidence that must not be betrayed under any circumstances.

Self-control is that which enables us to control our passions when another is provoking us to anger; that keeps the clinched fists in the pockets when the agitator is only half our size; that keeps the lips sealed when another is railing and swearing at us. Self-control is that which enables us to be like our Lord "*who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously*" (I Peter 2:23).

Self-control is that which enables us to maintain purity of heart and to thrust out evil thoughts before they can take root; that enables us to place the best possible construction on another person's actions when unproven rumors could easily destroy our confidence in him; that helps us to maintain a cheerful disposition when everything around us has turned sour. Self-control is that which enables us to love the unlovable and to hate that which the world loves.

Self-control is that which enables us to rule our appetites; to say, “no" when our lusts would lead us to sin or when that which is harmful to our health is placed before us. Self-control is that which enables the smoker to put down his cigarettes and the alcoholic to put down his drink and never return to it. Self-control is that which enables us to rule rather than to be enslaved.

The Bible does not glorify the indifferent and impassive. It is not our goal to be uncaring. To be like Paul, we must be able to have our spirit stirred within us when we are surrounded by evil (Acts 17:16). To be like our Lord, we must sometimes feel anger when surrounded by hypocritical self-righteousness (Mark 3:5); we must even react with occasional outbursts of goodness on occasions, as when the Lord cleansed the temple (John 2:13-17). But, all such outbursts must be tempered with self-control, that in our anger we "*do not sin*" (Ephesians 4:26).

God does not view our uncontrolled actions with amusement. Our temper tantrums and harsh, unbridled words are soul threatening, a potential bar to the abundant entrance into the Lord's everlasting kingdom (2 Peter 1:5-11). We must not minimize the danger. We must not surrender to this evil.

What is the value of self-control? It is one of the qualities that enable us to go to heaven. The possessor of it is rich indeed.

**Volume 6 March 30 2014 #13**

A Prayer Suggestion

By Greg Gwin

Do you feel good about your prayers? Do you pray as often as you think you should? Are you satisfied that you pray about all the right things? Would you like to do better in this important matter of prayer? Surely all of us sense our need to improve.

There are, no doubt, many good suggestions that are helpful concerning prayer. But here we offer just one simple one. Use your directory! That's right, use your church directory to help you to improve your prayers. Here are the benefits, as we see them:

1) It will be a big boost to your brothers and sisters in Christ to have you praying in their behalf. The word of God commands us to ''pray for one another" (James 5:16). Even the apostle Paul begged, brethren, pray for us" (2 Thess. 3:1). So, we will be fulfilling a command and assisting our fellow Christians. And by using the directory we'll be sure to include every single member of the local congregation.

2) This process, if followed by all, will also insure that you are the recipient of the prayers of everyone else. What a comfort to know that everyone in the church is praying for you!

3) And, there's yet another benefit in this. Unless we miss our guess, when you get out the directory and begin to try to word a specific prayer for every other member in the local congregation you are going to discover that there are some folks that you simply don't know. At least, you don't know them well enough to know what their real needs are. And, when you've realized that, we hope you will begin immediately to remedy the situation by taking the appropriate steps to get better acquainted with those people. Remember, we are to "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another" (Romans 12: 10).

And so, let's pray for each other. Using your directory may be just the tool you need to do a better job.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



What Are We All About?

"I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)

An article in the Harvard Business Review talked about how some people didn't understand what business they were in. For example, the railroad people didn't realize they were in the transportation business; they thought they were in the railroad business. Had they realized they were in the transportation business, they would have invested in the airplane. The telegraph people thought they were in the telegraph business instead of the communication business. In 1886 or so, they could have bought all the telephone patents for $40,000. So obviously those people didn't know what business they were in. (From The Harvard Business Review in a article entitled "Market Myopia")

Churches today need to ask themselves: "What kind of business are we in? Is it the entertainment, recreation, or the soul-saving business?"

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#12 - The New Testament tells a story about a shepherd who leaves his 99 sheep to search for 1 which was lost. Do you know where the story is found?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Matthew 18:12-14;Luke 15:4-7\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#13 - There are three missionary journeys of Paul recorded in the book of Acts. All three of these journeys began from the same city, do you know the name of the city?

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11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday:

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This Is Where It Leads

By Greg Gwin

A growing number of self-professed Christians are found in support of homosexuality.  The increasing frequency of their pronouncements in favor of this sexual perversion is frightening.

Historically these defenders have tried to present Biblical arguments to shore up their claim that God does not condemn the homosexual lifestyle.  Their efforts have been weak at best, and illogical in general.  One does not have to be a Bible scholar to understand the clear and direct statements from God’s Word that identify homosexuality as sin.

But now some homosexual advocates are openly stating what has been obvious from the start; that is, that the Bible condemns the sin -- but they don’t care.  Luke Timothy Johnson teaches at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University.  He recently announced that he rejects what the Bible says, in favor of his own experience and opinion.  “I think it is important to state that we do, in fact, reject the straightforward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority . . . We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to . . .” (Commonweal Magazine, 6/11/07).

So, there you have it.  If the Bible doesn’t approve of what I like, what I want, what I think – just reject it!  While Johnson’s proclamation is more blunt than most, his sentiment is shared by many.  And, it’s not just about homosexuality.  Name the subject, and you will find a host of ‘religious’ people who dismiss the Bible in favor of their own ‘think so’s’.

Once we leave the solid authority of God’s Word – even the very first time – we have opened the door to everything else.  If one thing is allowed without authority, how can we object to the next thing, and the next . . . ?

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17).

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**GOSPEL MEETING**

**Speaker – E.R. Hall**

**April 13-16**

**Sunday 10:00 AM**

**11:00 AM**

**6:00 PM**

**Monday - Wednesday 7:30 PM**

**Volume 6 April 6 2014 #14**

Refusing to Obey Because of One's Family

By John Clark

Often in teaching the Word of God, we are confronted by the problems of one who will not obey the truth he has learned because of his family. He discovers his loved ones have been in error. If they are dead, he may even say, “If they are lost I don’t want to be saved.” Here are some things to consider. Weigh them carefully:

1. IT IS RECKLESS SENTIMENTALISM that keeps us from obeying the gospel because of our parents. Our parents cannot save us – it is an individual thing. No one can have your faith any more than they can have your health. In Ezekiel 18:20 we are taught individual responsibility before God. Father nor son can bear each other’s iniquity – “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

2. IT IS A DISHONORING THING. Our parents cannot save us, but they can teach us to be honest with ourselves and with the Word of God. A refusal to do different once we have learned different dishonors our parents.

3. IT IS AN INCONSISTENT THING. What right do we have to ask the Buddhist to give up the god of his parents; or what right do we have to ask the Jew to give up the religion of his parents? What right, we say, do we have to ask such, if we are not willing to give up the error of our parents, no matter how sincere they were?

4. IT IS AN UNSCRIPTURAL THING. Read what Christ said in Matthew 10:34-39 – He says that if we love father or mother more than Him we are not worthy of Him. We must learn to love Christ more than anyone or anything else. The chief accusation of ourselves will always be that we do not love Him enough.

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How many people have you invited to our services this week?

Remember, It's up to us all!

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. - Mark 16:15



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." (John 10:27-28)

Charles F. Kettering, the noted scientist and inventor, believed the easiest way to overcome defeat was to ignore completely the possibility of failure. Once he was developing this theme in an address delivered at Denison University, Granville, Ohio. He told how he had once given a tough assignment to a young research worker at the General Motors laboratory. Just to see how he would react to a difficult problem, Mr. Kettering forbade him to examine notes on the subject that were filed in the library. These notes were written by expert research men and contained statistics to prove that the assignment was impossible. The young research worker did not know this, of course, so he went to work with confidence that he would succeed. He did succeed, too. He didn't know it couldn't be done--so he did it. (From **Good Business**)

If we ignore the teachings of men, and confidently follow Jesus Christ, we will succeed in obtaining eternal life.

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#13 - There are three missionary journeys of Paul recorded in the book of Acts. All three of these journeys began from the same city, do you know the name of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Antioch, Acts 13:1; 16:36; 18:23\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#14 - When David killed the great giant Goliath, he used a sling and a stone. Do you know how many stones David took from the brook and put into his bag?

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IF THEY WERE DOING IT THEN, WHAT ABOUT NOW?

By E.R. Hall, Jr.

"*For we are not as many, which*CORRUPT THE WORD OF GOD*: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*" (2 Corinthians 2:17). "*But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor*HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD DECEITFULLY*; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*" (2 Corinthians 4:2). If God's Word was being corrupted and handled deceitfully nearly 2000 years ago, what about today? Yet you would think not. To hear people talk, everything that is taught in religion is OK. "You believe it your way and I believe it mine" are the replies often heard. One preacher preaches this way about a matter and another preacher preaches entirely different but "that's your interpretation" is the excuse given. "Join the church of your choice." "Attend church somewhere, today." "One church is as good as another." "We're all going to Heaven. We're just traveling different roads."

While people might NOT ACCEPT EVERYTHING they hear religiously,

they are willing to TOLERATE EVERYTHING that is taught religiously.

While they do not accept every church and its teaching, they are willing

to tolerate every church and its teaching. The question that really needs

answering is: WHAT DOES GOD TOLERATE?

Can we know what God tolerates? The God who created us and the

universe also gave us His inspired Word to reveal His will. Yet, some

are telling us we have "another revelation of Jesus Christ". Does God

tolerate anything but His word or is this "another revelation" one of our

modern day corruptions? "*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from*

*him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which*

*is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert*

*the gospel of Christ. But  though we, or an angel from heaven, preach*

*any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*" (Galatians 1:6-10). There is but one gospel and it was revealed by Christ and His apostles. Any other gospel is perverted. Would we do well to believe and practice a perverted gospel?

In Matthew 24:35 Jesus said, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*" If "another revelation" of Jesus Christ was discovered by Joseph Smith in the late 1800's, what about all those generations from Paul and the apostles until Joseph Smith? They were without the complete revelation of God's will! We must believe Jesus over the claims of Joseph Smith or any other "latter day" prophet. Jesus revealed ALL TRUTH to the apostles as He promised in John 16:13 and not to someone else 1800 years later. All such claims are only a corruption of God's word.

>>>

**Volume 6 April 13 2014 #15**



>>> "Another revelation" is not the only way to corrupt the Word of God. Much of the corrupting and deceitful handling occurs from those who claim to believe in the Bible. God's Word must be "*rightly divided*" (1 Timothy 2:15). It is an easy thing to think of men above that which is written. "*And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.*" (1 Corinthians 4:6). When this happens, doctrines and commandments begin to be taught that have originated with man and not God. The result: they corrupt the word of God and are handling the word of God deceitfully.

"Accept Christ as your personal Saviour". "Faith only." "One church is as good as another." "Everyone's entitled to their own interpretation in religion." "There's nothing in a name." "Baptism has nothing to do with saving you." These are examples of doctrines and commandments of men. Why? There is no scripture that teaches these statements. These are statements that can only be found in the written and/or spoken creeds of man.

Corrupting and deceitfully handling God's Word is not without consequences; grave consequences. "*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you*." (Deuteronomy 4:2). "*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*." (Revelation 22:18,19).

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Our Meeting Begins Today!

Sunday 10:00 AM

11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Monday-Wednesday 7:30 PM

Invite others to come!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



IS THIS THE TRUTH?

By Richie Thetford

Ask a denominational preacher if what he preaches is the truth and he will surely say YES. Ask him if one must believe the truth in order to be saved and he will no doubt say YES. But, ask him if one must believe the particular doctrine which he preaches in order to be saved and he will probably answer NO. (Now, make sense out of that!)

THINGS BY WHICH MAN IS SAVED:

The Bible teaches man is saved by God (Titus 3:4-5), Love, (John 3:16), Mercy (Titus 3:4-5), Grace (Eph. 2:9), Christ (Matt 1:21), Blood (1 Pet 1:18-19), Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:11), Gospel (Rom.1:16-17), Faith (Rom. 5:1), Repentance (Acts 17:30), Confession (Rom. 10:10), Works of Faith (James 2:24), Baptism (1 Pet. 3:21).

The Bible nowhere teaches men are saved by any one thing only!

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#14 - When David killed the great giant Goliath, he used a sling and a stone. Do you know how many stones David took from the brook and put into his bag?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_5, I Samuel 17:40\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#15 - There are two people mentioned in the Bible that did not die. Do you know who they are?

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Thoughts about the Noah Movie

By Roger Shouse

2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." Paul's words to the young preacher Timothy stresses the importance of speaking as God speaks. Handle the word accurately, are Paul's words. Mishandling, inaccuracies lead to misrepresenting God and stating things that God did not say. A common threat of Satan is to get people to twist and misuse the Bible. By doing this, people feel safe because they are using the Bible. They are lost along the journey because they are not handling the Bible accurately.

A new example of this is the current movie, Noah. The title and the trailer about a man in a boat with animals, would lead one to think that this is based upon the Bible. It's not. This is yet another attempt by Hollywood to discredit and change what the Bible says. I will not see this movie. I've read enough to know that it will fry my biscuits and make me mad because of how they misused God's incredible story. The movie is packed with stars such as Anthony Hopkins, Russell Crowe and Harry Potty star, Emma Watson. Noah is an herb farmer who runs an animal hospital. He tries to save the animals from poachers. The movie is not close to the Biblical record. The reason for the flood, the choice of who is in the ark, the actual people in the ark, and the presence of God is all skewed. The movie is not accurate. The movie isn't close. The most accurate thing about the movie is water. One might as well make a movie about Abe Lincoln and John Kennedy being neighbors who rode their bikes to school where they were taught by George Washington. Dumb. Fake. Fiction. It shouldn't be surprising that it turned out this way since the director of Noah, Darren Aronofsky, is a proclaimed atheist. He doesn't believe in God, the Bible or the truthfulness of what the account says. He's the wrong person to make that movie. What's the purpose of this movie? If it is not to accurately tell the story, are they rewriting history to move people away from the Bible? Do they have an agenda?

Here are some things we need to know: 1. This movie will become truth for many people. So few people even understand that Noah was a righteous man and that sin was the reason that God punished the creation with the flood. The common thought is that the Genesis account is a collection of flood fables from around the world. That thought is gaining strength. Indeed, there are over 200 cultures that have a flood story. There are similarities between those stories and the Bible account. Instead of thinking that someone put these together in the Bible, it may be that the Bible led to these other stories and more likely, these different cultures had this history passed down from generation to generation because it was true. If the flood account in Genesis was myths that were written down, who wrote them down? What about the rest of Genesis? Creation-that's been tossed out and replaced with evolution. Abraham? Joseph? The New Testament is built upon the historical accuracies of Genesis. Jesus referred to Noah, Abraham and the beginning. Paul, Peter and James used Genesis as proof for the things that they were saying. To discredit Genesis is to discredit the New Testament. So few people read the Bible today, that this movie will become truth for them. This is what many will now believe. That is the power of movies. That is the shame that most homes have a Bible but it's never opened.

>>>

**Volume 6 April 20 2014 #16**

>>> 2. This movie will be an opportunity for you to talk to others about the true flood story. People will go to the movie. They will have an opinion. In conversations, ask them to read with you Genesis 6-9. Let them see for themselves what the Bible really says. This is an occasion to defend God's word. This is an opportunity to teach what really happened. The movie, fiction as it is, can be a tool, to get people back to the Bible. You can be that bridge. Study up on the flood. Know the facts. Understand what happened. Speak out. Don't let others toss the Bible under the bus. Don't let an atheistic agenda discredit what the God of Heaven says. The Bible or Hollywood? Which will it be? Most don't see the big picture. They don't see the connection between Noah and Jesus. They don't see Genesis in the N.T. They don't see what is wrong with taking some liberties with what God said. If one can do it with the flood, can they do it with what God said about marriage? How about church? How about Heaven? God said it, but no one pays attention. We've allowed ourselves to shape the Bible to our own liking. There is a "Gay Bible" on the market now. Really? That is the outcome when we allow ourselves to be loose with God's word. Paul said handle it ACCURATELY.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**





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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#15 - There are two people mentioned in the Bible that did not die. Do you know who they are?

\_\_\_Enoch, Genesis 5:24; Elijah, II Kings 2:11\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#16 - In the New Testament the city of Ephesus is described as temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and also of something else. Do you know what the something else is?

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3. This movie is a reminder to us that we also, must be accurate with God's word. There are things we do not know. Speculation can build mighty theories and ideas. We can place more hope in those theories than what the Bible actually says. As Paul warned Timothy, we must handle accurately the word of truth. The old motto from the early days of the Restoration movement was, "We speak where the Bible speaks and are silent when the Bible is silent." That silent part gets us. We've moved on from that. When the Bible is silent, we often have an opinion. We guess why God does what He does. Isaiah tells us that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Moses said the secret things belong to God. Speak accurately. Speak firmly. Back up what you say with Biblical evidence.

I expect few would want to know that God destroyed the world because of man's wickedness. That thought would make us wonder about today. It would cause a person to stop and look in the mirror. It could lead to changed life styles and righteous living. It's easier to change the message than to change our hearts.

God's message doesn't change. A movie won't change what God says. Popularity doesn't change what God says. God's word stands, whether we believe it or not.  Handle accurately. Handle carefully. That word is powerful. It can change you and bring you back to God. I'll stick to the Genesis flood-that's the way things really happened. I'll pass on this movie.

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SermonsS



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Ruined by Bitterness

Author Unknown

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” (Eph 4:31-32)

He was a man nobody liked--hard, sullen, taciturn, and sour. If you met him on the street and wished him good-day, he would keep his eyes straight in front of him, grunt sulkily and pass on. He lived in a tumbled-down old hut away back in the bush. He spoke to nobody, and he made it perfectly plain that he wished nobody to speak to him. Even the children shunned him.

Some said he was a hermit; some that he was a miser; some that he was a woman-hater; some that he was a fugitive from justice, a man with a guilty secret. But they were all wrong. The simple truth was that in his youth a    companion had done him a grievous injury. ``I'll remember it to my dying day,'' he hissed, in a gust of passionate resentment.

And he did. But when his dying day actually came, he realized that the rankling memory of that youthful wrong had soured and darkened his whole life. ``I've gone over it by myself every morning,'' he moaned, as he lay gasping in his comfortless shanty, ``and I've thought of it every night. I've cursed him a hundred times each day. I see now,'' he added brokenly, a suspicion of moisture glistening in his eye, ``that my curses have eaten out my soul; they've been like gall on my tongue and gravel in my teeth. My hate has hurt nobody but myself.  But it's turned my life into gloom and misery!'' It was true.

The man at whom he had spat out his venomous maledictions, having done all a man could do to atone for the suffering that he had thoughtless caused, had dismissed the matter from his mind a generation back. Upon him the gnarled old man's bitterness had produced little or no effect. It was the man who cherished the sinister memory who suffered most. It shadowed his life; it lent a new terror   to death; it expelled every trace of brightness and excluded every ray of hope; and at last, a grim and ghostly companion, it lay down with him in his cold and cheerless grave.

May we each learn the healing power of forgiveness -- before it is too late!

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**READ YOUR BIBLE PRAY EVERYDAY AND YOU WILL**

**GROW, GROW, GROW!**

**Volume 6 April 27 2014 #17**

The Joneses’ Church

By Frank Himmel

Keeping up with the Joneses is an old way of describing people who think they must have everything their neighbors have. Not wanting to be outdone, folks buy new houses, cars, clothes, sports equipment, electronic gizmos, and more. In some cases the old things really are worn out or obsolete; in others, we simply do not want to be (or appear to be) outdated.

There is often a problem, however: the Joneses may make more money than we do. To solve that, we convince ourselves that these wants are needs and outcome the credit cards. (Are the Joneses’ finances in any better shape?) And there is another problem: the Joneses don’t ever quit buying. We are always aiming at a moving target. The process never ends.

Did you know that the Joneses go to church? Yes, they do. And would you be surprised to learn that church has it all, too?

Denominational churches have long known about the Joneses’ church. When it started having pot-lucks, others quickly followed. It then built a multi-purpose facility in which to have them. So did others. The Joneses’ church then turned to musical programs, plays, sports teams, day care, schools, exercise classes, camps, retreats, recreational outings and more. They were determined to be the biggest. But so were others.  They not only kept up with the Joneses’ church, they tried to outdo them. Now, anything goes. Nothing seems too far-fetched; some church somewhere has it.

Lost in all this scramble for image, size, and novelty is the simple New Testament pattern for local churches. Also lost is God’s approval. Merely attaching His name to a thing does not make it right (Matthew 7:21-23).

Conservatives preach against the Joneses’ church’s innovations, yet some of us look wishfully at their swelling numbers and begin to



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



**Did Paul Write Hebrews?**

By Keith Sharp

The author of the book of Hebrews chose not to identify himself. From the second century until the Protestant Reformation the overwhelming consensus of opinion was that Paul was its author. However, Martin Luther tentatively concluded that Apollos wrote Hebrews, and since then scholars have increasingly agreed with his assessment. References to chains, Timothy, and prison seem to point to the apostle Paul (10:34; 13:23). But scholars appeal to the elegant, polished Greek of Hebrews in contrast with the rough Greek of letters known to be written by Paul as evidence that Apollos, the evangelist known for being "eloquent" and "mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts 18:24), penned Hebrews. Bottom line, we must accept the fact that the author chose to be anonymous.

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#16 - In the New Testament the city of Ephesus is described as temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and also of something else. Do you know what the something else is?

"the image which fell down from Zeus" Acts 19:35

This week's question:

#17 - Jesus named 12 men to be apostles. All of these men walked with Jesus and seen the many wonders He did. Do you know which one of these apostle was first to die?

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dabble. A few of our “gospel meetings” are looking a lot like youth rallies or marriage seminars. Sermon content is shifting away from salvation and doctrinal themes. In some places VBS is getting increasingly playful and dramatic. So are some preachers.

There is no virtue in getting stuck in a rut.  The framework of what God authorizes certainly allows for some variety in approach. But the Joneses’ church will always have more to appeal to the worldly minded. Salvation is what the Lord’s church is all about (Ephesians 5:23).



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THE LORD’S CHURCH IN YOUR COMMUNITY

By Robert Turner

There are many churches in many places which have no bowling club, no softball team, nor do they sponsor a Boy Scout troop. The physical property of these churches includes a very modern place for assembly and worship, with class rooms for Bible Study; but in all of this widespread plant there is no kitchen, no banquet hall, no gymnasium, no party room.

Your first thought may be, "What strange churches! What strange people!" Perhaps. However, many of these church members are your neighbors and enjoy their food, recreation, and entertainment just as much as everyone else. But the church building is not used as a civic or social club. By now you may be asking, 'Then what does this congregation offer me? What does she offer the community in which you live?" These are fair questions and demand fair, open answers.

The church was established by Jesus Christ the Son of God, to fill a need, to do a work that no human institution could possibly perform. We deplore the fact that denominations have smothered the real purpose of the church beneath civic, social, and domestic affairs. Upon reading Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 3:10-11; 5:25; and 1 Timothy 3:15 we need to be impressed with the sacredness of the church. She can have no trivial purpose, nor is such assigned to her by the Word of God.

But some say, "We live in the 21st century. The church must meet the needs of today!” Exactly so! We have many fine civic and social organizations which can meet the physical needs of our community, and we as individuals need to support and promote all wholesome efforts to better the lot of mankind in this life. But this 21st century is woefully lacking in emphasis upon the soul of man, and his eternal welfare. Yes, the church must meet the need of today - the very greatest need of all being the peculiar and distinctive benefit offered mankind by Christ - the salvation of their soul.

Our primary concern is with the spiritual needs of mankind - his need is for God, for forgiveness of sins, for genuine God-satisfying worship, for the pureness of conscience that can come only from living, working and worshipping according to the directions of the Word of God.

As a people we know we are not perfect, “*For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without measure, but according to the measure to reach even unto you*” (2 Corinthians 10:12,13). We make no plea of greatness on our part, but pledge ourselves to strive diligently to follow the rule of God, the divine message. We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent.

Visit with us and we will welcome your honest investigation of the church of Christ in this community.

**Volume 6 May 4 2014 #18**



FACING THE CHALLENGES

By Greg Gwin

In times of crisis individuals can accomplish incredible things - things that ordinarily would be beyond their ability to achieve. We've all heard examples of nearly superhuman feats that were performed under extreme circumstances. For instance, men have been known to lift the weight of an automobile in order to free a person trapped underneath. Normally this would be beyond their ability, but in an emergency situation they succeed. Or, we're told of soldiers who do amazing and spectacular things in the heat of battle when their comrades are in danger.

There's a spiritual lesson to be learned here. Too often we go about our spiritual service to God without a good recognition of the crisis situation that exists around us. We are under attack - from both within and without the body of Christ. The forces of Satan are advancing against us and we hardly seem to notice. And, since we are basically unaware of the danger, we never accomplish anything terribly significant for the cause of Christ. We need to wake up. Have a good look at the crisis situation that surrounds us. It is a time for courage and resolve. "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*." (Ephesians 6: 12).

Christian; Sense the danger!  Realize the crisis! Recognize the battle facing us! Alone we would be helpless, but with God's help we can do amazing things in His service - but we have to be aware of the awesome challenges. He has promised, "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*." (Hebrews 13:5). Let's get busy!

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What is the very best way to show God that you believe?

\_ B \_ D \_ E \_ C \_



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



You Or Me?

"...As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children..." (I Thessalonians 2:11)

Several years ago, my second son, Steve, tried out for the high school football team. One day he walked into my office and proclaimed with great excitement, "Dad, I made the team!" I turned and said, "Yeah, but are you starting?" Steve walked away crushed. At the time, Steve was a junior in high school, and I just assumed that he would make the team. I was so preoccupied that I didn't take the time to understand what was important to Steve. As fathers, we need to take time to find out what's important to our children and then make those things our priority and focus. (From Phillip H. Porter, Jr.)

Likewise, as did the apostle Paul, we need to consider the needs and interests of our fellow Christians, and not be preoccupied with ourselves.

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#17 - Jesus named 12 men to be apostles. All of these men walked with Jesus and seen the many wonders He did. Do you know which one of these apostle was first to die?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Judas, Matthew 27:5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#18 - After Judah was carried away into captivity they began to return after 70 years. In the return they rebuild the Temple, and walls of Jerusalem. Who lead in the rebuilding of the walls of the city?

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IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

"GOSPEL" & "DOCTRINE"?

By Gilbert Alexander

"Doctrinal matters" are a source of perpetual conflict and division, as some people view them, while they view "Gospel" as something on which people can be united. Such an artificial separation of the information given us in the New Testament is both unwarranted and erroneous. The concept that "Gospel" is more important than "Doctrine" is without scriptural foundation. Please consider carefully the following paragraphs and the Scriptures cited.

Gospel (God-story or good story, glad tidings) is a term used for the message of salvation in Christ (Rom. 1:1-17; Acts 20: 24). It contains facts to believe (1 Cor. 15:1-8; Col. 1:3-5,3). It also contains commands to obey (Rom. 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 1 Pet. 4:17). It covers the questions of doctrine such as circumcision (Gal. 2:3-5). Paul's authority as an apostle of Christ (1 Cor. 9: 18), the hope of Christians (Col. 1:23), and the work of exhortation (1 Thess. 2:1-13). The Gospel is the Word of God preached by the apostles (2 Pet. 1:22-25). In it is revealed the righteousness of God (Rom. 1:17), and it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

Doctrine Is Teaching: -- It is the message taught. Sound doctrine contains the first principles of the Gospel including teach-ing repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment (Heb. 6:1,2). It is of God and thus authoritative (Jn. 7:16). It is of Christ, and thus authoritative (2 Jn. 9). Doctrine is contained in the Gospel; therefore, if one teaches the law of Christ, he is using the Gospel (1 Tim. 1:8-11). Sound doctrine effects salvation through faithful obedience to its instruction (1 Tim. 4:16; Rom. 6:17,18). It convicts sinners (Titus 1:9; Acts 2:37; Titus 2:1-15), and thus leads people to repentance. Sound doctrine is recognizable and distinctive, and those who teach a different doctrine must be noted and avoided (Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 6:1-5).

Dear brethren and friends, if you teach people anything relating to spiritual things, you are presenting doctrine over which there is division, whether the subject is faith in God, Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, or the organization and work of the church. The all-important question is: are you teaching sound doctrine according to the Gospel, or are you teaching things contrary to the truth and without the authority of the Gospel of Christ?

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Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp

to my feet And a light to my path.

**Volume 6 May 11 2014 #19**



Do We Lay It To Heart?

By Robert F. Turner

Every parent knows the difference in “Do I have to go?” and “Do I get to go?” “Do I have to go to bed?” means the child wants to stay up. “Do I get to go to the show?” means the child wouldn’t miss it for anything.

Isn’t it strange that some of us will wave those same clear signals with reference to the Lord’s service, and not see that we are being just as transparent as our children? “Do we have to go to Bible study?” says the same thing about our desires as it does when voiced by our child. When one asks, “How much must I give?” he is saying clearly, “I do not want to give anything, and would like to know how little will pay the bill.” Either that, or he has failed to grasp the most fundamental and essential element in the spirit of acceptable service unto God.

There can be no coming to Christ except we deny or give self (Matt 16:24). Translated into the context of “doing” this means we must first want to do all possible (100% committed) to serve the Lord. The proper spirit must motivate the doing, or it is shallow and empty --- may even be an abomination in His sight (Hos 6:6). God told the priests of Judaism, “If ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name...then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart” (Mal. 2:2).

Lay it to heart! That means truly respect God; take Him seriously. The priests had offered polluted bread on the altar (1:7); offered blind and lame animals as sacrifice (1:8). They said of the worship, “What a weariness it is!” (1:13-14). To make this current, they said, “Do we have to go to worship?” “How much do we have to do, or give?” “Do it any old way, just get it over with; we want to go home to the TV.” And to top it off, when rebuked, they acted so innocent and said, “When did we ever do that?”

“Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors, that ye might not kindle fire on mine altar in vain” (1:10). Better to close up shop - call it off - than to play at worship, and not “lay it to heart.”



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Who Is The Greatest?

"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11)

John was truly a great man in many ways. He was a child of promise born to godly parents. He prepared the way for the Lord and bore witness of Jesus as the Christ. His preaching was plain and powerful, and many people went out to be baptized by him. He died a martyr.

Nevertheless, as Jesus said, "He who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." This shows the greatness of the kingdom and the value of the blessings therein. Those who make up the kingdom have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. Col. 1:13-14 says, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

How about you? Have you been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom? If not, why not obey the gospel today?

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#18 - After Judah was carried away into captivity they began to return after 70 years. In the return they rebuild the Temple, and walls of Jerusalem. Who lead in the rebuilding of the walls of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Nehemiah, Nehemiah 6:15\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#19 - There are very interesting things recorded about the many various kings mentioned in the Bible. There was one king who's bed was 9 cubits long (13 feet). Who was he?

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IS ONE CHURCH JUST AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

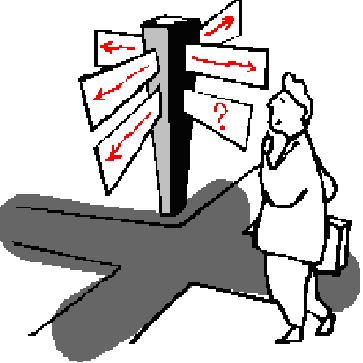
By Derek Long

Many today would tell you that it does not matter which church you go to, one church is just as good as another church, and go to the church that fits you the best. We must realize however that the Bible often calls upon us to do things that might not “fit my preferences”, instead I must learn to deny myself and submit to Christ (Matthew 16:24). Rather than seeking for a church that “fits” us, we should be looking for the Church that “fits” God.

When Jesus talked about the Church, He only promised to build one church (Matthew 16:18). If someone was to say it does not matter who builds your house, one person is just as good as another, would you agree with them? You would not. A contractor is going to do a much better job building your house than say an accountant or someone who has never built a house and is not qualified to do such. So it is with the church, those churches built by men are not as good as the Church built by God. We find that those who follow things not planted by God will be uprooted (Matthew 15:13) and such will be the case with many churches on the last day. Most people realize the importance of being in the Church that Christ built, yet by realizing this, they admit that a church built by man is not as good as the Church built by Christ and therefore one church is not just as good as another. However, when we look at the religious world around us we find many churches that have been built by men. Sadly, some even wear the name of a man openly in their title. For example, the Lutheran Church and the Wesleyan Church are churches that wear not the name of Christ but the name of a man because they were founded by men. Any church that you cannot read about in the Bible is certainly not the Church that Jesus built and therefore has the wrong builder.

The argument that there are many different churches all approved by God is in direct contrast to very clear Bible passages. For example, Ephesians 4:4-6 says, “*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*” From this passage we are taught there is simply one body, but what is the body? In Ephesians 1:22-23 we find, “*And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all*.” In this passage we learn the church is the body and since we have already noted there is only one body, there is only one church. Notice the inconsistency of those who argue all churches are alright. The same passage of scripture that teaches there is one church is the same passage that says there is one God yet they do not say it is alright to worship the God of your choice. The reason we cannot say one church is just as good as another is because the Bible only speaks of one church and Jesus only built one church. >>>

**Volume 6 May 18 2014 #20**



>>> In addition, notice that Jesus is “*the Savior of the body*” (Ephesians 5:23). Notice how there is only one Savior (Acts 4:12; John 14:6) because it simply speaks of “*the Savior*”. Yet at the same time, there must only be one body (one church) because it simply speaks of “*the body*”. Any argument opening the door to multiple churches approved by God, by the same logic, opens the door to multiple saviors approved by God.

In order to be added to the church that Jesus built, one must be saved (Acts 2:47). Upon meeting the terms of forgiveness as laid out in scripture, God will add you to the Church built by His Son (Colossians 1:13) not to some church built by men. In order to be saved and added to the Church, one must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), believe in Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16), repent of past sins (Acts 2:38), confess one’s faith in Christ (Acts 8:36-37), and be baptized (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).

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Clean from the heart

"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

Many years ago, at the Portland navy yard a United States ship came in for repairs and fumigation as yellow fever had broken out among its crew during its previous voyage. The ship was thoroughly scraped and repainted and then put into commission again, but it was less than a month at sea when the fever appeared again. It was decided to open the ship and expose the fever spores to a thorough freezing during the winter, as medical men said that the spores could not live in cold weather. In the spring the ship was again painted and refurnished, but the fever appeared again. Then it was realized that, though a noble-looking vessel, death was in it, and it was towed to sea and sunk.

So it is with all who have not been born again; they carry within their hearts the seeds of a fatal fever, and unless they are cleansed from it by the blood of Christ, they will one day go down in the sea of the divine wrath. (From **Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations**, compiled by David F. Burgess, p. 51)



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



A meaningful Life

"...In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him." (Eph. 3:12)

A man paid a visit to his local psychologist. When the doctor asked him what had prompted his visit, the man said, "I'm suffering from an inferiority complex." In the ensuing weeks, the psychologist put his new patient through an intensive battery of tests. Next came the long wait while the test results were tabulated and evaluated. Finally, the doctor called the man and asked him to return to the clinic. "I have some interesting news for you," the doctor began. "What's that?" Asked the man. "It's no complex," the psychologist replied, "You are inferior."

Only a life based on following God will provide a lasting, real sense of self-worth. The Scriptures will give us a true picture of who we are, who we ought to be, and with God's help, who we can become.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#19 - There are very interesting things recorded about the many various kings mentioned in the Bible. There was one king who's bed was 9 cubits long (13 feet). Who was he?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Og, Deuteronomy 3:11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#20 - As Peter and John went into the Temple at Jerusalem, Peter, healed a lame man at the gate called "Beautiful". Do you know how old this man was who had been coming to the gate to ask alms?

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The Bible is Understandable

By Dwight McGee

The multitude of different church buildings downtown in every city stands as a sad reminder of religious division and confusion. In man's loss of unity, he is tempted to blame God and His word, the Bible. Men conclude that, since we do not understand the Bible, then the Bible cannot be understood. This is a most serious and fundamental error. Furthermore, it is a personal attack on either God's goodness or His ability to communicate to men. The Bible declares plainly that it can be understood.

The Bible gives a man all the truth that he needs to please God:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17).

Even though we do not have the complete record of what Jesus did on earth, we have what we need to understand, believe and be saved.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31).

It is the truth that will make us free as Jesus said,"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). Jesus has provided that truth for us today in the pages of the Holy Bible.

It is clear from the Bible itself that God intended for us to understand and obey it. Paul said, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17). He also made it clear that God's revelation of the Bible through Him could be understood upon reading. "... How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)”  (Ephesians 3:4).

Some parts of the Bible are more difficult than others. Peter said, "...Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Peter 3:15-16). Even though it takes more study to understand some of the scriptures, you will notice in this passage that God neither condoned or excused the error that was taught because of Bible misunderstanding. He rather pointed out that the misusers of the Bible brought their own destruction. People will be lost in hell because they misuse the scriptures to teach error.

In a time of flooding religious error and misunderstanding of the Bible let us not blame God and His word, but with great determination find the truth revealed within the pages of the Holy Bible and unite on that truth to salvation. May God richly bless our efforts to know and do His will.

**Volume 6 May 25 2014 #21**

When Traveling

By Greg Gwin

Vacation time is here, and lots of Christians are hitting the road to visit new places and/or old friends. If you are planning a trip, we hope you will have a safe and pleasant journey. And while we know that you already know this, let us add an encouragement to you to maintain faithfulness to God during this busy, hectic time.

Part of your planning for a vacation should include some thought as to where and when you will worship. You need to search out the various locations along your route where faithful Christians meet, and you need to set your schedule so that you'll be in those places at the appropriate times.

Church directories are available that list sound congregations. And in recent years some industrious brethren have built websites that allow for easy searching on the Internet (Findthechurch.com, Goodfight.com, and Bible.ca are useful sites.)  Use them!  And, it may also be advisable to call or write in advance to be sure that you have all the accurate information.

Remember that such listings of churches have mistakes in them. That being the case, you should certainly keep your eyes and ears open to the announcements, the bulletin board, to the sermon preached, etc. You may discover that you've located an unfaithful group, and while it may be too late to do anything about it this time, you can note this situation for any future trips into the area.

Vacations are great, but there is no time to be on vacation from serving God.  Don't be guilty of excluding God from the careful planning of your trip. And also remember that all the rules of godly conduct (activities, clothing, etc.) still apply no matter how far from home you travel - because God is still there wherever you are!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



I Took a Piece of Plastic Clay  
Author Unknown   
   
I took a piece of plastic clay  
And idly fashioned it one day-  
And as my fingers pressed it, still  
It moved and yielded to my will.  
  
I came again when days were past  
The bit of clay was hard at last.  
The form I gave it, still it bore,  
And I could change that form no more!  
  
I took a piece of living clay,  
And gently fashioned it day by day,  
And molded with my power and art  
A young child's soft and yielding heart.  
  
I came again when years were gone:  
It was a man I looked upon.  
He still that early impress bore,  
And I could fashion it never more.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#20 - As Peter and John went into the Temple at Jerusalem, Peter, healed a lame man at the gate called "Beautiful". Do you know how old this man was who had been coming to the gate to ask alms?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_40, Acts 4:22\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#21 - Abraham is known by his great faith in God. God called Abraham to leave his home, do you know the name of the city from where Abraham was called?

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"I JUST DON’T GO TO CHURCH…”

By Bill Crews

"*But he, desiring to justify himself, said* . . ." (Luke. 10:29). These words were uttered by a certain lawyer, and how like that lawyer many of us become. We desire to justify ourselves, to excuse the sins we commit before God, to minimize, to overlook our own transgressions. May God help us to face our sins, to have a sense of sin, to be aware of our weaknesses, to be penitent and humble, to confess and forsake our wrong, to amend and serve anew.

One of the most common and, indeed, most tragic statements made by unfaithful brethren is this: "The only thing wrong in my life is that I just don't go to church." Surely such confession exhibits the climax of misapprehension and understatement. Be it understood that one sin persisted in before God is enough to condemn us, but, brethren, how can any one of us forsake "*the assembling of ourselves together*" (Heb. 10:25) without being guilty of a number of sins?

When we cease to meet with our brethren to worship God, we will soon cease to read our Bibles, cease to pray, cease to teach our neighbors, cease to train our children in things holy. We may continue to be morally upright, honest, sincere, and charitable as far as men are concerned, but we have turned away from God. When we "just don't go to church," do we obey God's instructions to eat the Lord's Supper, to sing together, to lay by in store of our means, to pray together and to study and learn together?  We cannot remember the sacrifice of God's Son nor show forth His death until He comes; we cannot teach and admonish one another; we cannot help to edify the saints and to glorify God; we cannot stand behind and support the work of God in this world; we cannot grow in grace and knowledge WITHOUT FAITHFULLY ASSEMBLING FOR THE APPOINTED PERIODS OF BIBLE STUDY AND WORSHIP! One Christian does not a congregation make, and the Lord's supper cannot be eaten privately at home (I Cor. 11:20-34; Acts 20:7).

A young couple who had not been to such services for a number of years asked: "What have we done wrong besides not going to church?" They had robbed God of thousands of dollars (I Cor. 16:2; cf. Mal. 3:8); they had forsaken the Lord's own memorial supper (I Cor. 11:23-26); for years their voices were unheard in the praises of the saints, their petitions and thanksgiving absent from the prayers of the saints, and their knowledge of God's word stifled and fading, while their spiritual growth was completely neglected -- to say nothing of the bad example set and the wrong influence exerted upon others around them!  Indeed, their souls had become dead to God, and yet they ask: "What have we done wrong besides not going to church?"  May God help us to see ourselves as He sees us!

Brethren, we need God and His church, and we need the local congregation. We need to serve and honor Him as God in the divinely ordered way of His will. Let us not forsake "*assembling of ourselves together.*" And let us remember that all sins are not matters of transgression; some are matters of neglect - a failure to do right. James 4:17 warns: "*To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*.”

**Volume 6 June 1 2014 #22**

Are You Weary In Well Doing?

By Steve Klein

A wealthy heiress hired a new maid, who proceeded on her first day of work to drag around the house with all the vim and vigor of an aging snail. Finally, the mistress asked the maid, "Isn't there anything you can do quickly?" "Yes ma'am," said the maid, "I can get tired in a hurry!"

There are probably a lot of people who can get tired of doing housework in a hurry. Much of it involves labor that is little appreciated by others and will soon have to be repeated. The same can be true when it comes to our labor in the Lord's house. Bible study, worship attendance, visiting the sick, teaching Bible classes, prayer, and dealing with temptation are sometimes viewed as the spiritual equivalents of vacuuming and dusting. Because they must be done repeatedly, we may think of them as unpleasant or unproductive chores. And if that is our attitude, we'll get tired of them. But in 2 Thessalonians 3:13 Paul urged, "*But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good.*"

Feeling tired is often more a state of mind than a lack of physical energy. If we are properly motivated, weariness will seldom prevent us from doing what should be done. The New Testament provides Christians with tremendous motivation to continue doing good. It tells us that we should not become weary in working for the Lord because:

We'll reap a reward for doing good. Housework may not pay all that well, but working for the Lord does. In Galatians 6:9 Paul wrote, "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*"

Others have worked harder. When we compare our efforts to those that Jesus put forth on our behalf, how can we be tired? Hebrews 12:3,4 says, "*For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*"

Others have received a great reward. Hebrews 6:12 states, "*Do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*."

Jesus commended the church at Ephesus because they "*persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary*" (Revelation 2:3). Let us, like the Ephesians, be tireless in our labors, "*not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*" (Romans 12:11).



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



If You Had Died for the Sins

of the World How Would

You Feel?

When men took your name in vain? When men damaged their bodies dabbling in sin instead of glorifying you as their savior in their bodies? When men fussed and got angry among themselves in which you had established and thus brought reproach upon you? When men chose to go somewhere else on the day which you had set aside for men to worship you? When men refused to obey what you said they had to do to gain the benefit of your death? When men did not appreciate your sacrifice enough to stay for the supper you had left as a memorial of it? When men did not respect you enough to wear your name? When men did not care whether their conduct caused anyone else to stumble? Did you ever stop to think? The Son of God probably would think the same as you would about such thoughtless people.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#21 - Abraham is known by his great faith in God. God called Abraham to leave his home, do you know the name of the city from where Abraham was called?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Ur, Genesis 11:31\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#22 - The book of revelation is addressed to the seven churches of Asia, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. I have named 6, do you know the one I left out? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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**IS SINCERITY ENOUGH?**

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

There can be little doubt that sincerity is essential to pleasing God. Jesus reserved the most scathing rebukes of His earthly ministry for hypocrites (Matt. 23). He said the first and great commandment is to "*love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind*" (Matt. 22:27). Religious words and services that are not from the heart are useless (Matt. 15:8; 1 Cor. 13:1-3). A pure heart a good conscience, and a sincere faith are essential to pleasing God (1 Tim. 1:5).

I am convinced that only conscientious, sincere and devout people will go to heaven. I don't believe there will be any hypocrites and pretenders there. But, is sincerity and devotion enough to save one? Is it possible for two people to be equally sincere, devout and conscientious in their worship and service toward God and one be saved and the other lost? Does the fact that one is sincerely doing what he thinks is right toward God make him right? Is it not possible that one might be sincere and devout and, at the same time, be ignorant and/or deceived as to what God requires of one to be saved? Once we see that one is sincere and devout in his religious service, should we leave him undisturbed to do what he believes to be right?

It is possible for one to even kill the Lord's servants thinking he offers God service (Jn. 16:2). "Oh, but killing the Lord's servants could never be right," one may say. If sincerely thinking a thing is right before God makes it right for that person, then such killing would be right for such persons. Obviously, there must be some standard of judgment. The Word of God will judge us (Jn. 12:48). It must be preached (2 Tim. 4:2). It must be obeyed (1 Pet. 1:22). One is born again by it (1 Pet. 1:23). It lives and abides forever (1 Pet. 1: 23-25). Peter then shows that the Word of God is not some inner voice, but “*the word which by the gospel was preached to you*" (1 Pet. 2:5b). Regardless to how devout and sincere one is, he still must conform to the objective standard of the Word that the apostles preached — the New Testament revelation.

In Acts 2, Peter tells an audience of "*devout men*" (vs. 5) that they had crucified the Christ (vs. 36). They were told to "*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized...for the remission of sins*" (vs. 38). If being devout was enough, why must they repent? Why must they be baptized for the remission of sins? Evidently, being devout is not enough.

In Acts 9, Saul of Tarsus was converted. What kind of person was Saul? "A wicked persecutor of Christians," you answer. That's right, but that is not all. He was an honest, devoted, sincere, conscious clean, persecutor of Christians. He was doing what he conscientiously though to be right toward God. He later said, "*I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day*” (Acts 23:1) and "*Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them*" (Acts 26:9,10). Paul always did what he thought was right and what he sincerely believed God wanted him to do. Evidently, such sincerity was not enough. He later said he was chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

>>>

**Volume 6 June 8 2014 #23**

>>> In Acts 10, Cornelius was "*a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always*" (vs. 2). Yet, he needed (words by which {he} and all {his} household {would} be saved (Acts 11:14). If he was yet to be saved, then he was presently lost. Here is a devout, God-fearing, alms-giving and constantly praying man who was lost! He still had to hear the gospel, believe it and be baptized to be saved from his past sins (vv. 34-48). Again, God must require more of us than sincere, conscientious, heart felt devotion. It is possible for one to have a zeal for God and it not be according to knowledge (Rom. 10:1).

One must devoutly, sincerely, and conscientiously learn, accept and obey the truth to be saved -- to become a Christian (1 Pet. 1:22-25). As a Christian, one must devoutly, sincerely and conscientiously walk according to the truth of the Gospel (cf. Gal. 2:14ff; 5:7). All spiritual truth is found in the Word of the Gospel which the apostles preached (Jn. 16:13; Gal. 1:8-10).

"*Whosoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God*" (2 Jn. 9). It does not say "whoever (unless he is devout, sincere, and conscientious) transgresses..." but "whoever" -- sincere or not.

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Too Much?

Some brethren said to brother J. D. Tant, who was a widely known gospel preacher in the southwest many years ago, “We would like to have a meeting, but just aren’t able.”  He made them a proposition: “Brethren, every time you buy a sack of tobacco or a plug to chew, put the same amount of money in the treasury and save it for the meeting next year.  I will take whatever you save up and be satisfied with it.”  The brethren were elated and said they would let him know.  They got off, did some figuring, came back and pointedly informed him that they could not possibly do it with a clear conscience, because, “No preacher is worth that kind of money.”



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



FAITH

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1)

One day a 6-year-old girl was sitting in the classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children. The teacher asked a little boy, "Tommy, do you see the tree outside?" "Yes," said Tommy. The teacher asked, "Tommy, do you see the grass outside?" Again, Tommy said, "Yes." The teacher said, "Go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky." Tommy returned a few minutes later and said, "Yes, I saw the sky." The teacher asked, "Did you see God?" Tommy said, "No." "That's my point," said the teacher, "We can't see God because He isn't there."

A little girl spoke up and wanted to ask Tommy some questions. The teacher agreed, and the little girl asked, "Tommy, do you see the tree outside?" Tommy said, "Yes." She asked, "Tommy, do you see the grass outside?" Tommy, getting tired of the questions by this time, said, "Yes." She asked, "Tommy, do you see the teacher?" Tommy said, "Yes." She asked, "Do you see her brain?" Tommy said, "No." She asked, "Does that mean she doesn't have one?"

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#22 - The book of revelation is addressed to the seven churches of Asia, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. I have named 6, do you know the one I left out? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Thyatira, Revelation 1:11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#23 - There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Some of the chapters are very long, such as Psalm 119 which has 176 verses. Do you know the shortest chapter in the Bible?

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THE STEWARDSHIP THAT LEAVES HOME

By Jim King

Have you noticed your children lately? The baby who couldn't do anything but cry last month can now turn over by himself. The toddler who pleaded to be read to last week is suddenly a six year old who independently reads to himself. And the youngster who just yesterday wanted to borrow a crayon, today wants to borrow the car. All too soon, these eternal products of our stewardship will walk out our doors to begin lives of their own, never to return again in the same way.

All of our gifts from God come with a tag attached: "On loan. Manage properly. Be a good steward." "*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*" (1 Cor. 4:21). Our children are near the pinnacle of God's richest gifts. Every parent could say along with Jacob, who when asked about his offspring said, "*They are the children God has graciously given your servant*" (Gen.33:5). Like turning out products at a factory, we parents have scheduling deadlines that must be met. We cannot put a child on hold until we have more time. They will grow up with our having nurtured them in the Lord, or they will grow up without it.  But they will grow up. We must strike while the iron is hot, and it is only hot for a few fleeting years.

Do you have a plan for carrying out God's commands to you as a parent? Are you deliberately and purposefully developing and implementing specific strategies that will start your sons and daughters on the road to maturity in Christ Jesus? Do you realize the urgency and infinite importance of this stewardship, or are you just haphazardly hoping that everything will somehow turn out right?

It would be great to save the world. But we need to begin with our little corner of it. Because one day the Master who owns these children is going to make us give an account for how we managed His precious gifts. "*But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief*' (1 Thess.5:4).

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Human Philosophy

The philosophy of GENERAL EVOLUTION has reduced man to an accident of nature and a highly developed animal, governed by no fixed code of ethics, accountable to no one. The philosophy of HUMANISM has removed God from the picture, deified man, removed restraint, and made fleshly pleasures the highest goals in life. Both hate God and God's word and labor with a passion to destroy man's belief in them. *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”* (Colossians 2:8).

**Volume 6 June 15 2014 #24**

Heaven & Hell:  Most Believe, But Few Think They Will Go to Hell

By Greg Gwin

The Gallup pollsters regularly conduct surveys about the religious beliefs of people in America. Some of the most interesting statistics have to do with the views of people regarding heaven and hell.  Typical results are like these from a previous survey:

- Believe in heaven------------------------------- 78%

- Among those who believe in heaven, the percent that think they have a fair, good, or excellent chance of going there-------------- 94%

- Believe in hell----------------------------------- 60%

- Among those who believe in hell, the percent that think they might go there: - probably will go---------------------------- 4%

- uncertain ------------------------------------ 19

- little chance of going------------------- 77%

These numbers are particularly interesting when viewed in light of what the Bible clearly teaches. Jesus said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"* (Matthew 7:13,14).

It is not difficult to see why so few are really committed to a diligent pursuit of Christianity - they simply don't believe they need it - they're going to heaven anyway! It's time people began to wake up and realize that they are lost and doomed to hell unless they obey the Lord!

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**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



We All Need A Savior

"But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. 64:6)

Let us suppose that a plane crashes into the water with three men aboard, and there is no boat, ship, or land within hundreds of miles. One of the men is able to swim only a few hundred feet. The second can manage to stay afloat an hour or two. The third is a world champion long-distance swimmer. What is the fate of the three?

It doesn't matter if the third is a great swimmer or not. He is in the same fate as the other two. The first will drown in twenty minutes; the second in an hour or two; and the third in fifteen hours. All three need a savior, for without one, all three will drown.

So it is with all men. Being a good moral person alone amounts to nothing more than filthy rags. We all are sinners, and without a Savior are doomed to destruction.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#23 - There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Some of the chapters are very long, such as Psalm 119 which has 176 verses. Do you know the shortest chapter in the Bible?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Psalm 117:1-2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#24 - Many people know the shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept" John 11:35. But do you know the longest verse in the Bible?

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Better Worship During Preaching

By Roger Shouse

We hate to admit this, but most of us have sat through a sermon with our minds somewhere else. The preacher was boring, the sermon was long, and we were no longer with him. There is a responsibility upon the preacher to find ways to communicate effectively and efficiently with the audience. But we have a responsibility as well. How do we worship better during the preaching?

To understand this we must understand the concept of worship.  Worship involves participation on the part of each of us.  Worship is not a spectator sport. Worship is action. It is something we do. Worship reflects an attitude we have. It involves all of you, including your mind, your heart and your emotions. The things that affect your insides will affect your worship. Being tired, bothered, worried, bored, or mostly how you view God, will affect worship. It’s hard to get much out of a sermon when one can barely keep his eyes open or his mind is racing with all that he plans to do the next day. Doing worship better begins with being focused.

Sermons really serve two purposes. First, they inform and instruct. Some listen to sermons, others learn from sermons. There is a difference. So we ask, “How do I learn better?” First, bring your Bible and follow along. Listen to what the preacher is saying. See it in your Bible. That is essential. The facts of the Bible will build faith, strengthen convictions and destroy error. God’s word is powerful! Take notes, either in your Bible or on paper. Circle words, underline phrases, write down what words mean, interesting thoughts, and things that you did not know. Make your Bible user friendly to you. We remember only so much of what we hear. We remember more by hearing and seeing. We remember even more by hearing, seeing and writing down. We remember the most by hearing, seeing, writing down and telling someone else. Find a way to save and then use your notes from the sermon. You might refer to them in teaching a friend, or you might use them in teaching a class. There is a wealth of study being shared with you each week. Listening week after week ought to be a growing experience for you. You are learning and you are getting stronger as you think, listen and grasp the messages from God’s word. Come ready to learn!

It is sad to see brethren gathering each week, with no Bible in hand, no paper to write on and just staring at the preacher during the sermon. If a college student did that in one of his classes, he’d probably not pass. It’s hard to remember things from week to week. We can do better. We must do better.

The second purpose of preaching is to persuade the listener. Paul said, “Knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5.11). The preaching of Peter moved the audience to interrupt him and ask, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2.37). Preaching is more than the giving of facts, it is the changing of lives. The Lord ended His incredible Sermon on the Mount with the story of two men who built their houses on different foundations. This story illustrated the difference in those that were persuaded to do something and those who were not. The preaching of Jonah changed the city of Nineveh. Preaching can change your life >>>

**Volume 6 June 22 2014 #25**

>>> and impact generations of your family. in fertile hearts will produce a disciple that longs to walk with Jesus. That’s what a sermon can do.

You will get more out of a sermon as you engage in the worship with an open heart and mind. The preacher is talking to you! That’s all that matters. Where are you in the things that he says? The words of the sermon can move us to obey the Gospel of Jesus. They can move us to a deeper commitment and challenge us to become more involved. See yourself, not just in the sermon, but in what the Bible says. Make application. How can this lesson make me a better parent, or a better disciple? What is it that the Lord wants me to be? The seed that was planted into the good and honest heart produced a bountiful harvest. The good and honest heart — that’s up to us, not the preacher.

The other soils found in the parable of the sower may well explain why we are not getting the most out of preaching. Our hearts may be too crowded, or shallow or hard. I will get the most out of a sermon when I listen to it with the idea of making application to myself. It is so easy to play spiritual dodge ball with the preacher, ducking from this point and then that point, or worse still, to try to guess what person the preacher is talking about, never realizing it could be me. Don’t do that. You are wasting time, not worshiping as you should and failing to grasp a wonderful opportunity to become a disciple of Jesus. All of us, including those of us who preach, can learn from the sermons of others. The message is more important than the messenger. What is said is more important than how it is said. Sometimes we get that backwards.

Preaching and teaching are God’s avenues of growing the kingdom. There is no other way. That powerful seed planted in fertile hearts will produce a disciple that longs to walk with Jesus. That’s what a sermon can do.

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If You Are Visiting We

Are Glad You Are Here!

Come Again Soon!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Anger And It's Scares

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (Prov. 16:32) "A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention." (Prov. 15:18)

There was a little boy with a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, to hammer a nail in the back fence. The first day, the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Then, it gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally, the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say and do things in anger, you leave scars just like as in this fence." (Author Unknown)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#24 Many people know the shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept" John 11:35. But do you know the longest verse in the Bible?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Esther 8:9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#25 - In the book of Acts a man named Philip taught a man who had been to Jerusalem to worship and was on his way home. Do you know where he had traveled from?

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REACTIONS TO THE TRUTH

By E.R. Hall, Jr.

In the Bible we see different reactions to the truth. We would like to think that all people's reactions would be to ACCEPT truth and, indeed, we read of those who did. Those three thousand Jews on the day of Pentecost did. "*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*" (Acts 2:41). Yet, this is not the reaction found throughout the Scriptures.

When some heard the truth, they DELAYED. Such was the case when Paul preached the truth to Felix. "*And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee*." (Acts 24:25).

Yet, there were those who outright DECLINED and IGNORED the truth. After Jesus told the rich young ruler what to do to have eternal life, the Scriptures reveal: "*But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions*." (Matthew 19:22). When Agrippa heard the truth preached to him, he said to Paul, "...*Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*." (Acts 26:28).

As if it is not bad enough to delay, decline, and ignore the truth, we find where some were ANGERED and HATED the truth. Paul asked the Christians in Colossie "*Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?*" (Galatians 4:16).

Some even set themselves up to OPPOSE the truth. "*And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a     false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.*" (Acts 13:6-8)

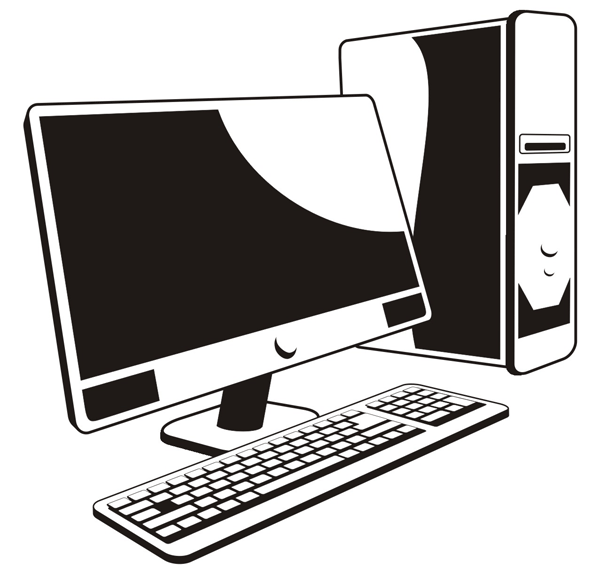
WHAT ABOUT YOU? What is your reaction to the truth revealed in these verses? "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*." (Matthew 7:21). "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*." (Mark 16:16). "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching*." (Hebrews 10:25).

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**Volume 6 June 29 2014 #26**



THE STEWARDSHIP THAT LEAVES HOME

By Jim King

Have you noticed your children lately? The baby who couldn't do anything but cry last month can now turn over by himself. The toddler who pleaded to be read to last week is suddenly a six year old who independently reads to himself. And the youngster who just yesterday wanted to borrow a crayon, today wants to borrow the car. All too soon, these eternal products of our stewardship will walk out our doors to begin lives of their own, never to return again in the same way.

All of our gifts from God come with a tag attached: "On loan. Manage properly. Be a good steward." "*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*" (1 Cor. 4:21). Our children are near the pinnacle of God's richest gifts. Every parent could say along with Jacob, who when asked about his offspring said, "*They are the children God has graciously given your servant*" (Gen.33:5). Like turning out products at a factory, we parents have scheduling deadlines that must be met. We cannot put a child on hold until we have more time. They will grow up with our having nurtured them in the Lord, or they will grow up without it.  But they will grow up. We must strike while the iron is hot, and it is only hot for a few fleeting years.

Do you have a plan for carrying out God's commands to you as a parent? Are you deliberately and purposefully developing and implementing specific strategies that will start your sons and daughters on the road to maturity in Christ Jesus? Do you realize the urgency and infinite importance of this stewardship, or are you just haphazardly hoping that everything will somehow turn out right?

It would be great to save the world. But we need to begin with our little corner of it. Because one day the Master who owns these children is going to make us give an account for how we managed His precious gifts. "*But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief*' (1 Thess.5:4).



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



COME TO THE LIGHT!

"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (Eph. 5:15-17)

Once when Alexander the Great laid siege to a city, he had a great lamp set up, and he kept it burning night and day as a signal to the besieged. He sent word to the people in the city that while the lamp was burning, they had time to save themselves by surrender. But when the lamp was put out, the city and all that were in it would be destroyed without mercy.

So God has set up His light, the cross, and waits year after year, inviting people to come to Him that they might have light and salvation. Will you exhaust His patience? Redeem the time! (From **Encyclopedia of Sermon Illustrations**, compiled by David F. Burgess, p. 53-54).

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#25 - In the book of Acts a man named Philip taught a man who had been to Jerusalem to worship and was on his way home. Do you know where he had traveled from?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ethiopia, Acts 8:27 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#26 - God parted the red sea for Israel on the way to the promised land. He also parted another body of water for them, do you know where it was?

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**When God is With Us**

**By Bill Hall**

In our prayers, I am constantly hearing the expression, 'Be with this one,' and 'Be with that one.' What is meant by the expression?" That question was addressed to this writer thirty years ago. He would like to think that the answer given in this article will be more enlightening than the feeble answer given then.

A consideration of the occasions when God said, "I will be with you," should help in providing an answer.

To Moses: When Moses asked, "Who am I that I should go up to Pharaoh?" God replied, "I will certainly be with you" (Exodus 3:12).

To Joshua: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (Joshua 1:5). God further assured Joshua that the crossing of the Jordan on dry ground would show the people that "as I was with Moses, so I will be with you" (Joshua 3:7).

To Gideon: "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor" (Judges 6:12).

To David: Saul said to David as he was leaving to face Goliath: "Go, and the Lord be with you" (1 Samuel 17:37). Two giants faced one another that day: one, a physical giant; the other, a spiritual giant. The difference in the battle was in the fact that God was with the spiritual giant and was not with the physical giant.

To Jeremiah: "Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you" (Jeremiah 1:8).

Obviously, the expression, "I will be with you," is assurance of success in whatever God wants to accomplish through that person whom He is with.

**Present Day Application** - How can a man and his wife leave family and friends to go into some foreign field to preach the gospel? How can they go where custom and language are different and where living standards are far below what they have been accustomed to all their lives? The answer: "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19,20).

How can a Christian face death in peace, with confidence as he passes from this life into the realms that he beyond? The answer: "Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4).

"Be with me, Lord, no other gift or blessing,

Thou couldst bestow could with this one compare;

A constant sense of Thy a abiding presence,

Wher-e'er I am to feel that Thou art near." - T. O. Chisolm

>>>

**Volume 6 July 6 2014 #27**

>>> **When God is Not with Us -** If success is assured when God is with us, failure results when God is not with us. After the Israelites in their lack of faith refused to enter the promised land (Numbers 14:1-4), some had a change of heart and decided to go up after all. Moses warned them that they would not succeed, but would fall by the sword:

"Because you have turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you" (Numbers 14:43). Their efforts indeed failed. One may appear to succeed for a while when the Lord is not with him, but eventually he will fail.

**Conditions to be Met -** What must be true of one if God is to be with him? The answer is found in God's statement to Jeroboam after promising him ten of the twelve tribes: "Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house" (1 Kings 11:38). Unfortunately, Jeroboam chose to follow his own ways rather than God's, and consequently his name ranks among the infamous.

When my loved ones are sick, or I am facing surgery, or am leaving for gospel meetings, or am in distress in any way, I want the prayers of that person whom God is with. I do not care about his race, gender, or station in life. If God is with him, he is the one whose prayers will avail. That person is the richest of all persons. Let each ask himself, "Am I that person?"

"Go, and the Lord be with you."

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**Blaming your faults**

**on others does not**

**remove your**

**responsibility for**

**your actions.**



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



What we wear

reflects out heart!

"Do not let your adornment be merely outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

The world puts emphasis on one's outward appearance. Millions of dollars are spent each year on diet, exercise, clothing, and cosmetics, most of which are designed to improve one's outward appearance. Many of those things are superficial measures to make people appear more beautiful than they really are. It is empty and vain to beautify only the outward person. Prov. 31:30 says, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." 1 Sam. 16:7 says, "...The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#26 - God parted the red sea for Israel on the way to the promised land. He also parted another body of water for them, do you know where it was?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Jordon river, Joshua 3:13\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#27 - Timothy is described by Paul in a very endearing way, he describes him as "...my beloved and faithful \_\_\_\_\_\_..." Do you know the word that fits into the blank?

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WHO MADE MAN’S MOUTH?

By Verlin Cox

This seems like an odd question but God directed this very question to Moses. Moses was at the burning bush and God was giving him instructions on leading the Israelites out of Egypt. On this day Moses was full of excuses. In Exodus 3:11, Moses was told that he had been chosen to lead   this deliverance. Moses replied with an excuse in the form of a question, “*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?*” Moses was using his insecurities to avoid doing the job God had chosen for him. Shortly after Moses made another excuse in the form of a complaint, “*Behold they will not believe   me.*” He was overwhelmed by the job and was looking for a way out. God continually reinforces his decision in Moses. Moses tries once again to    get out of the job by informing God of his short falls, “*I am not eloquent... I am slow of speech and slow of tongue*.” God answers Moses with our

question in Exodus 4.

Exodus 4:11-12: “*And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man’s mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind?    Have not I the Lord?  Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say*.”

This statement is close to what we call sarcasm. God is letting Moses know that He understands fully the choice that He made. Moses has continually told God that he is an inferior choice and that God has made a mistake. God through these two questions informs Moses that He is fully aware of who he is, what the people will believe and how good Moses can use his tongue.

We are very similar to Moses today when we do not do what God asks of us. We make similar excuses as attempts to be lazy. Let us look at our ability to study.

2 Timothy2:15: “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* “

Excuses used for poor study habits: (1) I have never been a good reader. (2) I can’t remember scriptures. (3) I don’t know where to start. (4) I   am too busy to read.

These excuses are similar to those Moses made. Are we saying that God has made us inferior and we cannot accomplish what has been commanded? Or maybe we are saying that He has given us more to do than we can handle. Let us redirect our focus now to attendance.

Hebrews 10:25: “*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching*.”

Excuses used for poor attendance: (1) I am not able to sit through a Bible class and the worship. (2) I am not able to get up that early on Sunday. (3) It is too much trouble to get the children ready for services. (4) If I attend Sunday night I will not be able to get anything else done. >>>

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**Volume 6 July 13 2014 #28**

>>> Likewise, has God asked too much of us? Did He cause us to be unable to get up, sit for two hours, or not get enough personal tasked accomplished on Sunday? Has He blessed us with children so that it will be impossible to fulfill His other commands?

We could look at many more examples but the point has been made. I want to close by noticing how the conversation between God and Moses concluded.

Exodus 4:13-14 (NKJV): “*But he said, ‘O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send.’ So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. . .*”

Moses saw that his excuses where foolish before God. So the truth comes out, he is unwilling to obey.  Looking at the above excuses, we also  should be able to see that they are foolish when presented to God. The truth behind our excuses is summed up in the same manner; we just do not   want to do what is required of us. We can easily sit through a two hour movie, we get up before daybreak for work, and we get our children prepared for school every day. We can remember hundreds or recipes, ball player stats, or gardening tips. We are capable of reading the newspaper  every morning or a three hundred page novel with ease. David says we are fearfully and wonderfully made and we will all agree, when it coincides with our personal desires.

God knows every hair on every head. He has not created an inferior being and then asked it to accomplish impossible tasks. Let us get to the    heart of the matter; we do what we want to do! God finished the discussion with, “*Now therefore go*...”. God will not be swayed by excuses, our jobs have been given, go do them.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If you are visiting we are glad you are here!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



God Knows Your Needs

"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." (2 Chron. 16:9).

An article in the November 1987 Reader's Digest reports: "Enhanced 911 has been a dramatic success. For example, a 6-year-old boy called 911 to report that his house was on fire. Even while the operator was telling the frightened boy what to do, fire equipment was being sent. A terrified girl called to say that a man was trying to break into her home. Within 3 minutes an arrest was being made, and the child was safe. And, in another city, a girl whispered to a 911 operator that a man was hurting her mother, and then hung up. Police arrived in time to capture a rapist."

We need to remember that God is always ready and willing to show Himself strong in our behalf. Whenever we fervently call on Him, we know He is listening, and He answers our prayers.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#27 - Timothy is described by Paul in a very endearing way, he describes him as "...my beloved and faithful \_\_\_\_\_\_..." Do you know the word that fits into the blank?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Son, I Corinthians 4:17\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#28 - As Jesus was sentenced to be crucified, He made His way to the Golgotha. Who was the man who carried the cross of Jesus?

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TO DISPLAY OR NOT TO DISPLAY?

By Alan Jones

They both were women. They both were royalty. They both were fair to look upon. They both were called upon to display themselves before reveling men on feast days. But, that's where the similarities end.

One woman refused to display herself and lost her position as queen. The other danced and "*pleased*" the king, causing him to cut off the head of a righteous man. One woman has served through the centuries as an example of purity and modesty; the other as an example of lasciviousness.

Queen Vashti, wife of the Persian King Ahasuerus, was commanded to show off her beauty in front of the nobles and princes of the Medo-Persian Empire - all of which were drunken. She refused to come and was deposed from her throne (Esther 1:9-12,19).

The daughter of Herodias danced before King Herod, his lords, the high captains, and the chief men of Galilee. Herod was so "*pleased*" with her lasciviousness, he swore that she could have anything she wanted, up to half the kingdom. After a conference with her mother, she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Herod reluctantly and sorrowfully kept his oath (Mk. 6:21-29).

Today, all women have the same choice - to display or not to display. "Daughters of Herodias" are all around us in the world - especially now that it's summertime. More than tans are being flashed. Bodies are being placed on public display! Where are the "Vashti's"? Surely they can be found among those professing to be God's children.  But, alas, so many times, this is not the case!

Christians, both women and men, should dress "*modestly, with shamefacedness and sobriety*" (1 Tim. 2:9). Ask yourself just one question, "If in a pinch, with no time to change clothes, would I be ashamed to wear the clothes that I wear in other public places to worship services?”  If the answer is yes - soul searching is in order. To display or not to display? To be a "Vashti" or “Daughter of Herodias"? Only YOU can decide!

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FIRST

By Roger Shouse

The Bible tells us to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33). There is so much more involved with this than just attendance. "Seeking first" is an attitude as well as a commitment to the cause of Christ. "Seeking first" means such things as:

- Putting others first (Phil. 2:3,4)

- Being willing to give up things for the sake of others (1 Cor. 8:13)

- Being wronged rather than going to court with a brother (1 Cor. 6:7)

- Going the extra mile for another (Matt. 5:41)

- Doing without things so you won't stumble (Matt. 5:30)

Is the kingdom important to you? Is it so important that you are willing to put it FIRST in your life?

**Volume 6 July 20 2014 #29**

ADMONITIONS TO PARENTS OF TEENS

By David Pratt

1. Always Be Consistent with Teens. Don't compromise your standards just because they wear you down with asking.

2. Live What You Expect of Your Teens. Don't expect something of them you are not willing to do yourself.

3. Don't Throw Up Your Hands When You Fail. Like adults, teens can be tempted. Evil companions corrupt good morals. It takes lots of time, love and understanding to raise up a child in the way of the Lord. When you fail, pick yourself up and go on.

4. Don't Be Afraid to Say "I Was Wrong." Oftentimes that is the hardest thing to do but parents are human and teens will respect you for it.

5. Last, and Certainly Not Least, Pray! What parent goes to bed without praying for his/her children? Prayer is one of the most important things to help parents make it through the teen’s years.

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**Glorious Exchange**I brought Him all my sorrow   
And all my falling tears;   
I brought Him all my loneliness   
And all my wasted years.   
  
He took them all upon Himself,   
With all my load of sin,   
And gave me in exchange   
His love, His joy, His peace within.   
  
He took away my sorrow   
And gave me back a song;   
And now my heart can only praise   
My Savior all day long.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Bible Classes

By Hershel Patton

I attend because they help me grow in grace and knowledge. I share in the lessons and thoughts from various ones. There my children learn lessons that will help preserve them from the pitfalls of life and prepare them for heaven and eternity. My participation shows to the world my interest in the church and spiritual things - which may influence others for good. My concern for others, my children and my own soul will not let me willfully neglect such activity.

Now, suppose you make a list of reason why you do not attend the classes:

-"I'd rather sleep late.”

-"It's too much trouble to get up and get the kids ready. "

-"There's something else I had rather do.”

-"The teacher doesn't interest me."

- "I'm good enough and know enough already. "

-"I need the extra rest (so I can work more overtime and/or engage in more recreational activities).”

Go ahead, make your list. Then present it to God when you pray! If you think God will accept such excuses, I suggest you read (before you reach judgment day) Matt. 6:33; Matt 25, and Rev. 3:14-21.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#28 - As Jesus was sentenced to be crucified, He made His way to the Golgotha. Who was the man who carried the cross of Jesus?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Simon, Matthew 27:32\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#29 - Who was the man who cut his hair at the end of every year? Do you know the weight of his hair? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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A Good Attitude

By Irvin Himmel

The posture of one's mind makes him what he is. Words and deeds are mere reflections of the heart. It is highly important to develop a good attitude. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). Here are some ways in which it is imperative that one show a good attitude:

**Toward the Word of God:**

God gave us the divine word to guide us. We are not capable of directing our own steps (Jer. 10:23). God's revelation shows us the way out of darkness into light, out of sin into righteousness, out of gloom into hope, out of failure into success, out of misery into joy, out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Christ.

When Paul preached the gospel to the Thessalonians long ago, they displayed a good attitude toward the truth. They received the word of God, "not as the word of men, but as it is in the truth, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13). God's word is to be reverenced and obeyed because it is the word of God. To have the right attitude toward God necessitates the right attitude toward His word. This is the disposition to believe and yield to the authority of His will.

**Toward Correcting Faults:**

No matter how terrible a mistake one may make, there is hope if he shows a good attitude. David did not have that kind of attitude immediately after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. For a time, he attempted to conceal his guilt. He wanted to shift the blame. It was not until Nathan the prophet pointed the finger of accusation straight toward David, using the parable of the little ewe lamb, that the proper attitude developed. David humbly admitted his guilt. God put away his sin, and from that time on, David was of a different disposition toward what he had done. If a person has a good attitude toward correcting his faults, he does not become angry with one who lovingly points out his sins, nor does he resent attempts to help him overcome his weaknesses.

**Toward Daily Work:**

Every person is free to choose his occupation. Whether one decides to be a plumber, doctor, lawyer, salesman, farmer, teacher, engineer, policeman, or something else, his mental outlook toward his vocation has strong bearing on success versus failure. Some people complain constantly of their work, the low pay, the horrible conditions under which they labor day by day, and the general misery that they experience. One wonders why they do not change jobs. Is their work really all that bad, or is it a matter of attitude?

Other people have the kind of attitude that makes their daily work a joy. They have been careful to choose the kind of vocation that enables them to do what they really want to do. Their frame of mind contributes to their being successful and feeling a sense of accomplishment. This good attitude toward their chosen field of work enables them to cope with unpleasant situations which may arise. >>>

**Volume 6 July 27 2014 #30**

>>> **Toward Solving Problems:**

Perplexing and distressing developments have a way of surfacing in all human relationships. Problems may arise in the church, in the home, in our work, in school, in the neighborhood, in business transactions, and in numerous other connections. It is a bit unrealistic to expect life on this earth to be free of problems, and it is equally visionary to expect our problems to automatically vanish.

Like the poor, some problems are always with us. But the person who has a good frame of mind toward the solving of his problems, whatever they may be, is to be commended. In many cases, our attitude toward a problem is half the solution. With a good attitude we can approach the problem objectively, view it sensibly, and handle it wisely. Even if the problem is never fully solved, a good attitude will provide the means to forge ahead and not be unduly upset or hindered.

**Toward Trials:**

The times in which we live are trying to our souls. Evil forces are pulling and tugging at us. On every hand there are temptations to sin. Young people who want to do right have an especially difficult task. So many of today's youth have imbibed the "do as you please" philosophy. Drugs, illicit sex, insistence on one's rights to gratify his lusts no matter how others may be injured, intoxication, profanity, lying, stealing-these and other evils are increasingly prevalent among young people.

The Bible warns that all who do right will be subjected to fiery trials. Old and young alike may expect pressures and temptations. We must learn to have a good attitude in the face of whatever trials come our way. "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial . . ." (Jas. 1:12, NASB). With the proper attitude toward trials the Christian keeps his faith, prays for strength, rejoices that tribulations empower him to develop patience, and draws comfort from the promises of God.

What is your attitude toward the word of God, toward correcting your faults, toward your daily work, toward solving problems, and toward trials? May each one of us examine self and work to develop an improved attitude in all these vital areas.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Social Media

Nine out of ten 13- to 17-year-olds have used some form of social media. Three out of four teenagers currently have a profile on a social networking site .

68% of all teens say Facebook is their main social networking site . . . For the vast majority of teens, social and other digital com­munications media are a daily part of life. 68% of teens text every day, 51% visit social networking sites daily . . . 34% of teens visit their main social networking site several times a day. 23% of teens are “heavy” social media users, meaning they use at least two different types of social media each and every day.

- via The Center for Media Research, 7/25/12

Ecclesiastes 12:1  “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;”

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#29 - Who was the man who cut his hair at the end of every year? Do you know the weight of his hair? \_Absalom, two hundred shekels, II Samuel 14:26\_\_

This week's question:

#30 - Abraham was called from the city of Ur. As he traveled toward the land God would show him he went through another city where his father Terah, died. What was the name of that city?

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Some Questions About Divorce & Remarriage

By Rusty Miller

Must the innocent party divorce the spouse guilty of fornication? Certainly not. Fornication does not dissolve marriage, but instead gives the innocent party the right to dissolve the marriage. They are not obligated to do so. In fact, it could be a great lesson in forgiveness if they choose not to divorce.

Must a Christian take back a mate guilty of fornication in order to forgive? The question arises from a misunderstanding of the difference between sin and the consequences of sin. For instance, it is true that a murderer may be forgiven of his dreadful act, even by the family of the murder victim. It is also true that the murderer may still have to spend time in prison or even face death by capital punishment, and that sentence may be due to testimony given by those who have forgiven him. Forgiveness of sin does not absolve a person of the consequences of that sin. Likewise, the innocent party may forgive a mate of fornication, but because of the mental anguish caused by such a betrayal, may not be able to receive them back as a mate. Divorce is still the right of the innocent party and may be the consequences the fornicator pays for sin.

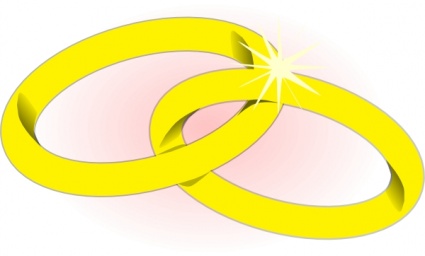
If the marriage bond is broken by God in a scriptural divorce, can the guilty party remarry, since they are no longer bound? Again, this is a misunderstanding. God allows the innocent party to dissolve the marriage, and frees them (the innocent) from their bond. The bond remains for the guilty. The guilty party who remarries is then guilty of adultery (Matt. 19:9).

Does Matthew 19 really give  anyone the right to remarry, or does it just give the innocent the right to divorce? Matthew 19 discusses remarriage as much as divorce. Where there is no remarriage, there is no resulting adultery for the guilty. Therefore, when Jesus says, "Whoever divorces ... except for fornication, and marries another ... commits adultery," it is implicit in the statement that one who divorces for fornication and marries another does not commit adultery.

Since all the passages dealing with this problem are addressed to men divorcing women, can a woman divorce her mate if he is guilty of fornication? Clearly, this is just a question of semantics. Mark 10:10-12 addresses the woman who divorces and remarries without proper cause (fornication) and puts her actions in the dissolving of a marriage equal with that of the man. Granted, Mark 10 does not mention the exception, but Jesus' teaching on this matter must be gathered from all sources (thus Matthew as well). In addition, there are other passages in the New Testament addressed to "men" which are really addressed to all (see Gal. 6:1, Matt. 5:27-28). Therefore, we must conclude a woman whose husband commits fornication has scriptural right to divorce him and marry another.

What about the one who is innocent, but a sinful mate "puts them away?" Jesus gives the right to remarry only to those who "put away" their mate for fornication. If one is "put away" and then remarries, they commit adultery. Therefore, if an innocent party is "put away" for incompatibility, they commit adultery if they remarry. >>>

**Volume 6 August 3 2014 #31**



>>> Why is this issue so much debated recently? It is clear that we have let worldly ideas about marriage and divorce influence our lives as Christians. Many people seek for "ways out" for loved ones and friends who find themselves divorced without proper cause. As Christians, it is important to stand for what is right and true even when "the truth hurts."  We do not wish for anyone to have to suffer the lonely life of a "eunuch for the sake of the kingdom of heaven," but we recognize that this is far better than being lost. Our desire to stand on the scripture compels us to continue to debate this vital issue with those who would distort His word.

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Life and its consequences

"But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out." (Num. 32:23)

A wealthy widower deeded all his property to an only son and his wife on the condition that he would be allowed to live in the country with them for the rest of his life. After a few years, when the inheritance had been spent, the daughter-in-law got tired of having the elderly gentleman around and told her husband he would have to leave. The son agreed and broke the news to his father. A short time later he and the feeble old man walked down the dusty road to a state- supported home for senior citizens. Being very unsteady on his feet, the father finally asked if he could rest for a few moments on a sawed-off stump to regain his strength for the last mile of the journey. As he sat there, he suddenly put his head in his hands and began to sob. The son, pricked in his conscience, tried to make excuses. Finally his dad controlled himself enough to say, "I'm not crying so much because I'm going to this lonely home for the poor and unfortunate. I'm weeping because of my own sins. Forty years ago, I walked down this road with my father and brought him to the very same place. I am now seeing the

results of the evil deeds I

have sown!"

Let us do to others as we

would have them do to us.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Think About I!

"Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content." (1 Tim. 6:6-8).

Many people mistakenly think they can find contentment in the things of the world. A wealthy employer once overheard one of his workers exclaim, "Oh if I only had a hundred dollars, I would be perfectly content." Knowing that his own money had not given him inner peace, he told her, "Since I would like to see someone who is perfectly contented, I'm going to grant your desire." He gave her the money and left, but before he was out of earshot, he heard her remark bitterly, "Why on earth didn't I say $200?" The boss smiled, for he had made his point that money doesn't make a person "perfectly contented."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#30 - Abraham was called from the city of Ur. As he traveled toward the land God would show him he went through another city where his father Terah, died. What was the name of that city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Haran, Genesis 11:32\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#31 - Paul was a great man of faith in Jesus Christ, but he did not start out that way. Do you know the name of the city were Paul became a Christian?

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Four Biblical Reasons for Christians to Cover their Nakedness

By Joshua Gurtler

Some Christians believe that biblical modesty pertains only to putting on costly clothing, and not to a lack of clothing.  While the Bible certainly warns against showy, attention-grabbing garb (1 Pet. 3:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:9), God also address a lack of clothing.

An older preacher once told me that, in India, it would be wrong for preachers to tell Christian women to cover their midriffs.  Likewise, he said, it is wrong to impose our "American custom" of covering our breasts on topless Christians in Africa.  You heard me right.  (This in a continent where HIV and AIDS are at all-time epidemic levels.)  Another Christian once told me that if you converted a man in Africa, who had a harem of wives, it would be wrong to tell him to divorce all but his first wife ([see Rom. 7:2-4; Ezra 10]).  Both of these men believed that biblical teaching, regarding nakedness and multiple marriages, pertained only to the violation of social móres.  In like fashion, some Christians, who would never invite a guest into their home in only their undergarments, will, nevertheless, go to the beach, pool, park, or gym in attire that covers the same amount of flesh as their undergarments. In response to those who teach that nakedness, or a lack of clothing, is not addressed in the Bible, here are four Biblical reasons for Christians to cover their nakedness:

1.  The word "naked" or "nakedness," in the New Testament, can indicate nudity or simply a lack of clothing, which the Bible treats as something that should be remedied - See Mt.  25:36-44; Rom. 8:35; 2 Cor. 5:3; 11:27; Jas. 2:15; Rev. 3:17, 18; 16:15; 17:16.

2.  Displaying physical nakedness (a lack of physical clothing) in public, is viewed as shameful in both the Old Testament (Exo. 20:26; 28:42, 43; Isa. 47:1-3; Lam. 1:8; Nah. 3:5) and in the New Testament, where John says, "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see" (Rev. 3:18).  The Lord's illustration, comparing (by analogy) the Christian's spiritual depravity with physical "nakedness," would have made absolutely no sense to the Laodicean church, unless there was a premise of "shame" in being  physically naked, which would be understood by the Christians there.  John's teaching was a spiritual precedent from God.  It was not based on a "social móre" because nakedness wasn't considered a "shame" within the pagan Laodicean culture.

3.  Removing clothing to expose the body to the opposite sex incites sexual arousal, which should be reserved for the "marriage bed" (Heb. 13:4; Prov. 5:18-19).  The first reference to Solomon's bride having her clothes removed in his presence, was in her dream (S. of Sol. 5:3) only after their wedding ceremony (S. of Sol. 3:11), and not before; although some Christians today feel we can remove our clothing in the presence of the opposite sex when at the beach, pool, park, gym, etc.

-  Is it any wonder that surveys find that roughly 90% of adolescent boys go to the beach to see girls unclothed, and 90% of adolescent girls go to the beach to be seen by boys unclothed?

-  Is it any wonder that scantily-clad women are a lucrative marketing technique today?

>>>

**Volume 6 August 10 2014 #32**

>>>   - Is it any wonder that the best-selling book Every Man's Battle (Arterburn et al., 2000) specifically deals with the day-to-day problem many men have, lusting after scantily-clad women in advertisements, billboards, while exercising, driving, in the work place, while watching entertainment and on the internet?

-  Is it any wonder that the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue is the most lucrative issue of the year?

- Is it any wonder that, when women in the world are trying to attract a man, they wear less clothing to get his attention?  This was told to me by a former colleague, from another country, as a technique she used to woo her (now) American husband away from his former wife (Prov. 7:10).

4. Related to the previous point, the "shamefast" woman of 1 Tim. 2:9 does not want to be a stumbling block, inciting lust in men by her apparel, or lack thereof.  Many women (or even men) do not realize the result that wearing tight, see-through clothing, or even a lack of clothing produces on the opposite sex.  Psychologists, sociologists, Hollywood producers, executive advertising firms, and teenage men will readily admit that women exposing their thighs, backs and breasts induces arousal in men.  Yes, this is an uncomfortable subject to discuss with our children and brethren, but it is the way God made us - a fact of life that must not be ignored.  The World and Even Some Erring Believers Get the Point - Do We?

It is possible that for some Christians, who are advanced in years, for whom "the caperberry (i.e., aphrodisiac, JBG) is ineffective" (Eccl. 12:5, NASB), it may be easy to forget how easily the adultery of the heart was committed in their youth:  "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt. 5:28).  Let's not forget the great battle against adultery of the heart, being fought by  (1) young men (or women) with "raging hormones," and/or (2) single Christians who are not married and, thus, may be more-easily tempted to burn with lust ( 1 Cor. 7:8,9).  The teaching in this article is not "Victorian tradition," but should be common sense, based on scriptural precedents, stated above.  These are principles that even the world and many (otherwise erring) denominational believers understand. Do we?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



WE NEED ENDURANCE

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:6-7)

Several years ago a man reported his observations of the effects of a hurricane on a southeastern Gulf Coast town. As he walked up and down the ravaged streets, he observed that the palm trees had been uprooted and flung about. Once tall and majestic, their root systems were too shallow to withstand the hurricane force winds. But, as he proceeded, he came to a lone oak tree. The leaves had been blown away and some of the smaller branches ripped off, but the roots had gone deep, and the tree held its position. And, in due season it would again produce leaves. (From **1500 Illustrations for Biblical Preaching**, p. 120)

Likewise, if we are to endure in times of hardship, stress, and difficulty, we must be rooted and grounded in Christ. Through Him can we be victorious in all things.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#31 - Paul was a great man of faith in Jesus Christ, but he did not start out that way. Do you know the name of the city were Paul became a Christian?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Damascus, Acts 9:1-18\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#32 - Samson was a strong and mighty warrior who killed a thousand Philistines at one time. Do you know the object Samson used?

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Changes in Pleasing Worship

By David Hartsell

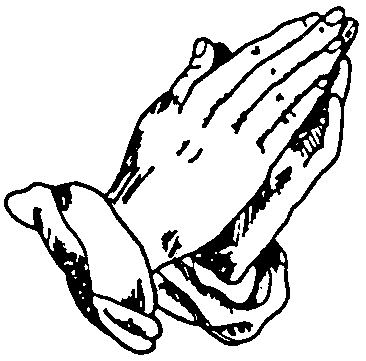
The Bible is the Word of God. Careful reading of it reveals how we can please our Lord in all things - especially worship. This is precisely the problem among many professed disciples. They don’t “carefully” examine the scriptures. As a result, the focus of their worship, the priority of Jesus’ authority, and those who are to take the lead in worship are entirely missed. Let us consider God’s will concerning each of these three areas.

The Lord is at the heart of our worship. A youthful Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself spiritually. (Dan.1:8) Jesus taught the Samaritan woman that God desires that our spirit communes with His. (Jn.4:23-24) Paul warned that to eat the Lord’s Supper without properly reflecting on Jesus’ sacrifice would bring spiritual death. (I Cor.11:27-30) In spite of these obvious truths, many change the focus of worship from the Lord to intellectualism or to entertaining others. We should give our best as we honor God. Yet, when we choose speakers based on their educational degrees or their turn of a joke, we are emphasizing the wrong things. When “worship” becomes “jazzed up” choruses, clapping or waving of hands, and appeals to emotions over God’s Word, we have missed the focal point of “true worship.” The Lord wants us to center our hearts on knowing and keeping His word so that “your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” (I Cor.2:5)

Why do we worship the Lord in the first place? Fundamentally, we are made by God for Him. (Ecc.12:13-14) All of His commands are for our spiritual benefit. (Deut.10:13) In every age God’s people are expected to follow His directives. Adam and Eve ate of the “forbidden” fruit and were driven out of the paradise garden. (Gen.3:22-24) Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, violated The Lord’s sacrificial system and were instantly killed by fire. (Lev.10:1-2)  Timothy was warned about coming apostates who would give heed “to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.” What are these horrendous ideas that would take them away from Jesus? They are the false concepts that it is wrong to marry and sinful to eat certain foods. (I Tim.4:1-3)  These regulations are man-made and not from God. Jesus said some would claim kinship to Him while not doing His will. One cannot properly honor a Lord they will not obey.

Worship in local congregations is to have a certain order. Obviously, Jesus is the head over His church. (Eph.1:22-23) He gave apostles, prophets, evangelist, and pastors to help His people mature spiritually. (Eph.4:11-12) Men are to lead in preaching and other congregational leadership roles. (I Cor.14:33-34) When it comes to acceptable worship who would know better than God Himself? Let us be satisfied with His ways and not ours.

**Volume 6 August 17 2014 #33**



Immersed in Jesus

By Steve Klein

When a person immerses himself in something, he totally surrounds himself with it.  He spends time thinking about it and making plans around it.  It occupies his mind, utilizes his energy and expends his resources.

People can immerse themselves in many different things.  Some are immersed in hobbies, recreation or sports such as hunting, fishing, college football, baseball, golf, racing, collecting, or gardening.  Others are immersed in their work or school.  Some are immersed in their children or grandchildren.  When a person is seriously sick, it is easy to become immersed with health concerns.

As Christians, "we were all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13).  Most of us understand that the word "baptized" means "immersed."  But what we may not have thought much about is the connection between being immersed in water and being immersed in Jesus.  The apostle Paul puts it this way in Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."  Those of us who have been "baptized into Christ" are to have put Him on like a garment.  We are to be covered up with Him -- immersed in Him.

By itself, immersion in water does nothing to change a person's life.  But when that immersion is the beginning of being overwhelmed with Jesus Christ, lives are truly changed.  Baptism into Christ results in a person being raised to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).  "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17).  This new life is one that is immersed in Jesus.

Every sinner needs to be immersed in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).  But every one who is immersed in water is thus obligated to live a new life immersed in Jesus.  Are you immersed in Him?  "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Romans 13:14).



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



A Touch of Loveliness  
   
Add a touch of loveliness  
To the things you say and do.

Give pleasure to more people  
By a happy smile, won’t you?

Be thoughtful of the people  
Whom you meet in shop and store,  
Then to God you will be dearer,  
He will love you even more.  
Aim higher, think kinder,  
Be a better, nicer you.  
Aim higher, think kinder,

For this world has need of you.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#32 - Samson was a strong and mighty warrior who killed a thousand Philistines at one time. Do you know the object Samson used?

\_\_\_\_\_\_Jawbone of a donkey, Judges 15:15\_\_\_\_\_\_

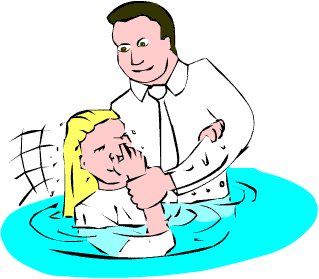
This week's question:

#33 - Jesus encountered a man possessed with a unclean spirit who dwelled among the tombs. Jesus ask the spirit his name, do you know the name the unclean spirit used?

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A Strong Church

By R.J. Evans

Over the years, much has been written on how to build a strong church.

And, no doubt, much of what has been written is good, scriptural, and

should be applied.  The Apostle Paul has given an inspired formula for

a strong church in Romans 15:14:  "Now I myself am confident

concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with knowledge, able also to admonish one another."  We would do well to constantly keep before us this passage.

A strong church is one that is "full of goodness."  To be full of goodness is to be characterized by the excellence of the inner person which manifests itself in a quality of life that is attractive to others.  A striving for moral excellence should characterize every member of a congregation in order for the church to be strong.  Churches composed of members who are of questionable moral character are weak churches.  Preachers who shy away from strong teaching on moral issues for fear such would diminish their numbers in attendance are making their contribution to the weakness of the church.  The strength of a congregation is not to be equated necessarily to the number in attendance at its services.  A congregation with thirty-five members who are full of goodness is more honorable in God's sight than one of several hundred members who are not.

A strong church is one that is "filled with all knowledge."  This means that strong churches are not made up of people who are ignorant of the Bible.  This is true because "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).  One simply cannot have a strong faith based upon a weak understanding of the word of God.  Our age is an age of shortcuts and convenience, but there is no shortcut to acquiring a genuine knowledge of the Bible.  Nothing will take the place of honest, diligent study and meditation of the scriptures. We must study to be approved of God and to save our souls (2 Tim. 2:15).  Paul knew that he could not expect to help build a strong church at Rome out of people who were too lazy to study and meditate on the word.  Let us not make the mistake of thinking that we can allow emotional excitement, entertainment, or anything else, to substitute for the truth of the gospel.

A strong church is one made up of members who are "able also to admonish one another."  That this might be true, two things are necessary: (1) sufficient knowledge of God's word in order to communicate it to another, and (2) the disposition or desire to do so.  One cannot teach what he does not know, and one cannot know the Bible if he has not studied it with great interest.  But all the knowledge in the world will not make a strong church unless those possessing that knowledge are of the disposition to communicate it to others.  How sad it is that many members of the church do not have enough zeal to admonish their brethren or to encourage sinners to obey the gospel of Christ.  Zeal without knowledge is just as bad as knowledge without zeal (Rom. 10:1-3; Lk. 12:47-48).

Let us all do our share (Eph. 4:16) so that the congregation will be a strong church.

**Volume 6 August 24 2014 #34**

PARENTS: CONSISTENCY IS A KEY!

By Greg Gwin

All godly parents are concerned about bringing up their children to be good, God-fearing people. In fact, we are commanded to do so (Ephesians 6:4).

There are lots of negative influences in the world that make this an increasingly difficult job. We worry about the impact of the schools, peer pressure, wickedness in the media, etc. In the face of all these forces that seek to ruin our kids, how can we succeed in teaching and training them to do what is right?

While there are many Scriptural principles that might be mentioned here, we want to emphasize just one — consistency. A key in bringing up faithful children is to be consistent.

An obvious area where this consistency needs to be seen is in attendance at the assemblies. If you allow your kids to miss the worship services in order to be at a ball game, you are teaching them that the ball game is more important than the Lord. If you let them skip the assemblies for school functions, band trips, dramas or plays,  or to go camping, fishing or hunting, in all of these ways you are demonstrating that there are things that are more important than God. If you fail to worship when you are traveling or on vacation, you are showing them that serving God is something you do only when it is convenient. If you let them take part-time jobs that interfere with their attendance, you are giving them a clear sign that work and career considerations are higher in priority than spiritual things.

Many parents who are violating the principles stated above will scoff at these warnings. Yet the personal experiences of many people, as well as the plain teachings of God’s Word indicate that this is the truth. Joshua had it right when he said, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). There would be no compromise in his family. He would LEAD them in a consistent, faithful path. Let's imitate his example of consistency!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Looking Big!

"When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath." (Esther 3:5)

Some people's egos are so huge that other people exist only to serve them in some way or another. Adolf Hitler was like that. According to Robert Waite, when Hitler was searching for a chauffeur, he interviewed thirty candidates for the job. He selected the shortest man in the group and kept him as his personal driver for the rest of his life, even though the man required special blocks under the driver's set so that he could see over the steering wheel. Hitler used others to make himself appear bigger and better than he really was. A person consumed with himself never considers spending time raising others up. (From **The Psychopathic God: Adolph Hitler**, by Robert G. Waite, p. 244-245)

Rom. 12:16 says, "Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#33 - Jesus encountered a man possessed with a unclean spirit who dwelled among the tombs. Jesus ask the spirit his name, do you know the name the unclean spirit used?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Legion, Luke 8:30\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#34 - Paul went to many cities and preached the gospel. In one city, it mentions the world was turned "upside down." Do you know the name of the city? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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“Return To The Lord”

By Warren E. Berkley

Built in to the message of the prophets was the appeal to repent. These men were sent by God to expose sin and urge the guilty to repent. Often the appeal was framed as a challenge to return to the Lord (Isa. 6:10; J er. 3:1; Jos. 6:1; Mal. 3:7). For instance, Joel’s appeal to Judah was for the people to repent of their sins. “So rend your heart,” and “return to the Lord your God” (Joel 2:13).

Through the distribution of His judgments (locusts, drought, desolation), God intended to admonish His people to come out of their sin and back to Him. It was His loving purpose to prompt a change in their direction.

The essential definition of repentance has not changed through the dispensations. We can, therefore, use Joel’s statement as the basis for our understanding of returning to the Lord. And this study can find application for those who have been baptized but have left their God.

Repentance is a change in direction. The simple word “turn” shows that to be so. Those guilty of sin (before or after baptism) need to turn; a change of direction is needed. If you’ve been letting the world influen ce your thinking, your speech, your conduct, your dress or attitude, you need to change your direction. If you’ve abandoned the assembly, harbored ill-will in your heart, accepted false teaching, helped false teaching advance, participated in party strife or refused to grow, God seeks a change in your direction. Repentance is a change in your direction, turning from your sin to the Lord (1 Thess. 1:9-10).

Repentance occurs in the heart. Observe in verse 12 of Joel 2, “with all your heart.” Everything we do before God ought to be done with a whole heart. Repentance, to be complete and genuine, must come from a whole heart: a heart of reverence for God, love for God; a heart influenced by the cross of Christ. Repentance should be the product of a heart of mature responsibility toward everything that is holy and right. The conviction of sin from the Word should be let in, so that repentance finds its’ true and good expression.

Repentance is not just a ritual. “So rend your heart, and not your garments…” It was customary among the Jews to express their emotions in very public, visible ways. To this day in middle eastern cultures, when a family member dies, there may be public weeping and wailing; throwing dust in the air; beating the breast and the rendering of garments. The problem to be noted here is, the emotion must not be ritualized and confused with true repentance. The fact that someone may cry in public or come down an aisle doesn’t assure wholehearted repentance. Repentance is a personal decision to leave sin behind and come to God. It is a decision of heart, productive of good fruit. It may be accompanied by some open expression, but the essence of the matter lies in the heart and the results in life.

Repentance is made possible by a gracious God. “Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love…” If you are alive to hear the Word, be convicted and repent, thank God that you have such a blessed opportunity. Thank Him for the precious >>>

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>>> blood of Christ. “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” If you are alive today, you can repent. Thank God for the time He has given you to return to Him, but don’t presume upon His grace and providence. “He relents from doing harm,” but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Repent while there is time.

If you are reading this as one convicted of your sin, now is the time to repent. If you just plan to repent someday, that isn’t good enough. Ask God to relent, turn from your sin and enjoy peace with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

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A Big Commitment

By Dan Gulley

Rock star Rod Stewart, himself twice divorced, verbalized the casual attitude toward marriage he and millions of others have acted out. He said, "I think marriage vows should be changed, because they've been in existence for 600 years, when people used to live until they were only 35. So they only had to be with each other for 12 years, then they would die anyway. But now, it's a big commitment because you're going to be with someone for 50 years. It's impossible. The vows should be written like a dog's license that has to be renewed every year."

Stewart's statement reminds us that millions have simply lost their way as regards marriage and God's will for it. Men have by and large rejected what the Lord has to say about marriage and divorce. Marriage – as God would have it - certainly is a big commitment.

We are not denying that marriage is rough, tough work, sometimes more sour than it is sweet, more hurt than it is happiness, more give than it is receive. Anybody who says it isn't has never been married. But none of that changes the fact that a marriage must be based on commitment, not convenience, if it is to last. A good marriage is not easy but neither is it impossible. What is required is a deep-seated commitment to the will of God and one's mate.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Jesus Is Real

"And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom. 8:10)

A boy while flying a kite was so successful that the kite went out of sight. He stood in the field with a cord in his hand that bent upwards into the sky. Someone asked him how he knew the kite was there, and he let them put their hand on the string. They could feel the pull of

the unseen kite. Similarly,

although the world cannot

visibly see Christ in us,

they can recognize His

invisible power in every

phase of our lives. They

are forced to admit that

we, as Christians, have

something which they do

not possess.

Let us truly have Christ, the hope of glory, within us.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#34 - Paul went to many cities and preached the gospel. In one city, it mentions the world was turned "upside down." Do you know the name of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Thessalonica, Acts 17:6\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#35 - When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and "cry out against it." Jonah went to a city and boarded a ship. Do you know the name of the city? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_





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THE VANISHING HERESY

Written by: Hugh Fulford

(Editor’s Note: I have known Hugh Fulford since the 1950's when we were in college together. Since the split over the institutional question, he has worked among the “institutional” churches. This article reflects his good insight into what is going on in many churches today.)

Several months ago I read Phil Sanders’ book, A Faith Built on Sand: The Foolishness of Popular Religion in a Postmodern World. This is a sequel to Phil’s 2000 book, Adrift: Postmodernism in the Church. Both are deserving of a serious read by all who would be aware of what is taking place in the contemporary world of Christendom. Chapter 8 is titled “The Vanishing of Heresy.” Phil begins the chapter with a 1987 quote from J. Packer:

“The net result of all these impulses to pluralism is that … there are just about as many theologies as there are theologians to devise them; the concept of heresy has almost lost its meaning; and loyalty to the institutional church has for the most part taken the place of loyalty to the faith once for all delivered to the saints, for no one is quite sure any more what the essence of that faith really is” (p. 89).

Packers (and Phils) point is that speaking facetiously heresy is now a thing of the past. It does not exist today! The only “heresy” that exists in our postmodern world is the assertion that something is heresy! Every cockeyed notion, theory, doctrine, practice, and belief is to be uncritically accepted. No one is to be told that they are wrong. Interestingly, however, one postmodernist recently told me, “The Bible is wrong about many things!”

Later in the chapter Phil observes: “The preaching in churches of Christ has changed in the last generation. Over time the church has become afraid to say much of anything with conviction. Preachers preach much love but little truth, much grace but little repentance, much salvation but little obedience, and much on relationships but little on relating responsibly to God Himself. Some speak much on believing and confuse their listeners by speaking little on what to believe” p. 100).

The notion exists in many quarters that preachers ought not to emphasize doctrine “because doctrine only divides.” The idea is that we should “preach only Christ.” But to preach Christ is to preach “doctrine.” It is “doctrine” to affirm that Christ alone is “*the way, the truth, and the life*,” and that no one comes to the Father except through Him! (John 14:6). But there are multiplied millions who do not believe that Christ is the only way to God. Therefore, Christ Himself is divisive. He said, “*Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I came not to bring peace but sword*” (Matthew 10:34).

What does it mean to preach Christ? Can we preach Christ without preaching what He taught? Can we preach Christ without preaching the doctrine of Christ? Philip the evangelist preached Christ to the Ethiopian eunuch and the eunuch asked to be baptized (Acts 8:35-39). How did the eunuch know that he needed to be baptized unless in preaching Christ to him Philip had told him what Christ said one must do to >>>

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>>> be saved? Jesus said: “*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned*” (Mark 16:16).

The apostle Paul did not subscribe to the idea that doctrine is not important or that there was no such thing as heresy. He named “heresies” as one of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-22). He further warned that “*the time will come when they* [the professed people of God, hf] *will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned aside to fables*” (II Timothy 4:3-4). In this respect, the ones of whom Paul spoke were like the wayward people of God in the Old Testament who said, “*Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things*…” (Isaiah 30:10). Translation: Don’t tell us what we need to hear; tell us what we want to hear. Don’t rebuke us for our sins; rather, show us how we can continue in our sins and still be good church members. Show us how we can be religious without having to be righteous! Make us feel good about ourselves! Such are the times in which we live.

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"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7)

**How To Forfeit Peace:**

1. Resent God's ways.

2. Worry as much as possible.

3. Pray only about things you can't manage by yourself.

4. Refuse to accept what God gives.

5. Look for peace elsewhere than in Him.

6. Try to rule your own life.

7. Doubt God's word.

8. Carry all you cares.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



REJOICE

"The desire of the righteous is only good, but the expectation of the wicked is wrath." (Prov. 11:23) "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4)

**Daily choices:**

We can choose to be in a good mood or we can choose to be in a bad mood. Let us choose the mood of rejoicing in the Lord.

When bad things happen, we can murmur and complain or we can choose to learn from our bad experiences. Let us endure and grow wiser.

When others come to us unjustly complaining, we can choose to be unhappy with them or we can be thankful that things aren't any worse than they are.

Let us emphasize the positive side of life.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#35 - When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and "cry out against it." Jonah went to a city and boarded a ship. Do you know the name of the city? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Joppa, Jonah 1:3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#36 - There was a man that John described, "who loves to have the preeminence". Do you know the name of this man? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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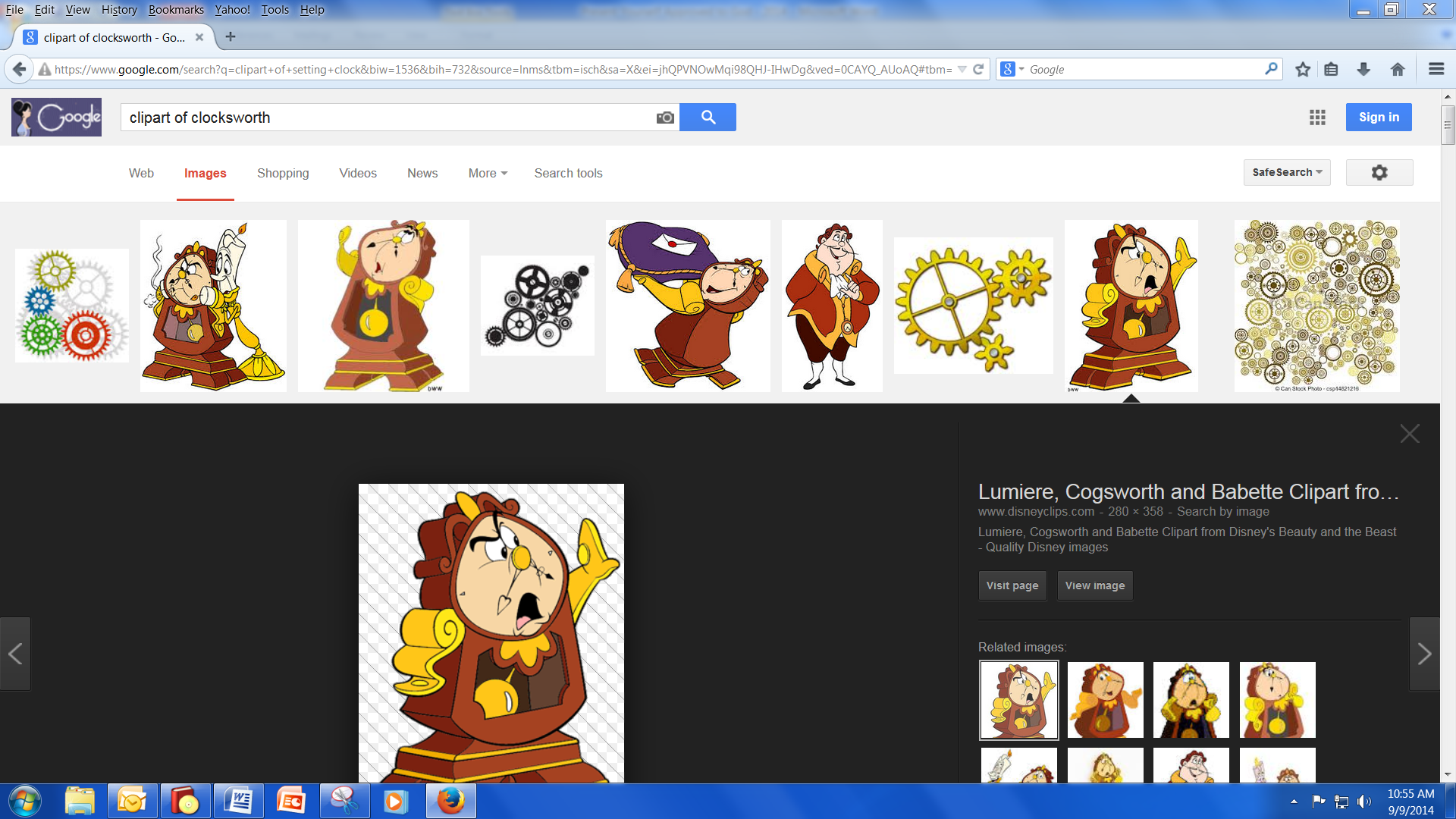
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Setting Your Spiritual Clock

By Steve Klein

Several years ago it was reported that the telephone operator in a town in Cape Cod received a call every morning asking for the correct time. Finally, overcome with curiosity, she asked the inquirer, ``Would you mind telling me why you call about this time every day and ask for the correct time?'' ``Sure, I'll tell you,'' the man said. ``I want to get the exact time because I'm the man who blows the whistle at twelve o'clock.'' ``Well, that's funny, that is,'' said the operator, ``because every day at the stroke of noon I set our clock by your whistle.''

How often do we set standards for ourselves based on what others are doing without considering what standard they are following? The examples of others are worthy of emulation ONLY IF those setting the examples are following the ONE TRUE standard or rule. This seems to be Paul's point in Philippians 3:16b- 17 when he states, ``let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.'' To follow the example of others without being aware of what standard they themselves are following is the height of folly. The scriptures speak of those who, ``measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise'' (2 Corinthians 10:12).

*Setting Your Watch* - Every individual has a personal standard which he takes with him everywhere.  He may either choose to follow it or ignore it. This inner standard is his conscience. Like a wrist watch which we may check through the day to keep us ``on time,'' the conscience can be used to keep us on the right track if it has been correctly set. But the conscience can be set by a false standard. Saul of Tarsus lived ``in all good conscience'' when he was a blasphemer and persecutor of Christians (Acts 23:1; 1 Timothy 1:13). The individual who sets his watch by asking a stranger on the street for ``the correct time'' is a lot like a man who sets his moral standards and religious beliefs by others.

This careless conscience setting is seen, for example, in a Christian whose conscience allows him or her to wear immodest attire because ``it is not as immodest as what others wear'' or ``other Christians dress like this.'' It is seen in the person who believes that they can be saved by ``faith only,'' not because they ever read it in the scriptures (see James 2:24), but because that's what their parents or grandparents believed.

*Setting the "Church Clock"* - Groups of people sometimes also set their collective conscience by an uncertain standard. In the days of the judges, Israel pled for a king; they wanted to be ``like all the nations'' (1 Samuel 8:5).  As a group of people, they had set their clock by the surrounding nations. In doing so, they rejected the Lord as their standard of authority (1 Samuel 8:7). >>>

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>>> Even so, many churches today set their programs of work according to what surrounding churches (denominations) are doing. Children's church, Easter observances, and ``rallies'' to entertain the young people are just a few of the practices adopted by some churches of Christ (so-called) which illustrate this point. Each of these things have been done among denominations for decades, and now some churches of Christ are setting their clocks accordingly. Not one of these practices can be found in scripture, either by command, statement, apostolic example or necessary conclusion. These practices are of human origin.

Jesus said, ``in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men'' (Matthew 15:9).

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The Importance of Evidence

by Greg Gwin

Have you heard of the International Flat Earth Society?  There really is such a group, and they believe the Earth is flat even though there are mountains of evidence to the contrary.  We would say that this is simply ‘crazy’!

Some suggest that believing in God and the Bible is just like believing in a flat Earth.  They imply that those who are believers ignore reason and logic and blindly follow their faith without any supporting evidence.  But, the truth is that believers understand the need for evidence and, in fact, the Bible emphasizes essential evidence.

When the disciples of John came to Jesus asking, “Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” He did not say ‘yes’ or ‘no’, but pointed them to the evidence that would provide the answer.  “Show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up . . .” (Matthew 11:3-5).

The inspired apostles were skilled at presenting the evidence that would convince their hearers that Jesus was the Son of God.  For instance, numerous times the apostle Paul is described as “reasoning’ with his students about the identity of Jesus (Acts 17:2,3; 18:4,19; 24:25). >>>



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



>>> Do you know what you believe AND why you believe it?  Can you explain your faith to others?  Are you “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15)?  All of us should place an emphasis on careful study and preparation in the matter of evidences.  Our own faith will be strengthened and our ability to teach others will be improved.

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Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. - II Timothy 2:15.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#36 - There was a man that John described, "who loves to have the preeminence". Do you know the name of this man?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Diotrephes, III John 9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#37 - There is an account in the New Testament of two men who were singing and praying while in prison, do you know who they are? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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**FATAL RICHES**

By Aaron C. Andrews

”*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*" **(1 Tim. 6:10).**

There was a story in the news about a German billionaire who threw himself in front of a train last week. The family confirmed that he took his own life.  They said, "The distress in his firms caused by the financial crisis and the related uncertainties of recent weeks, along with the helplessness of no longer being able to act, broke the passionate family businessman, and he ended his life,"

After reading the article I thought about how sad it is to be in a frame of mind that says, "Because of the loss of riches, and without the ability to change that, the next best solution is to take my own life."  
  
Paul tells us those who seek after riches: "*pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*" This man could not live with the fact that he had lost so much money in the markets, as well as his standing in financial circles. While striving for prosperity and great riches he lost everything. He had pierced himself through with many sorrows.

If only he would have learned the lesson Paul gave in 1 Tim. "*Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*" (1 Tim. 6:6-8).  Contentment does not come by having more and more stuff, for surely the loss of it would be great.

Contentment is a frame of mind. We are commanded in Heb. 13:5 to "*be content with such things as you have*." Surely if we put money in its proper place, and are content no matter what happens in life, we can keep ourselves from the many sorrows that people of the world find while chasing the "almighty dollar."  
  
One of the tragic things about this story is that he was survived by children and grandchildren. What great lessons he could have taught them about succeeding and rolling with the punches, about getting up when you are down, about learning to be content with whatever you have. Instead the lesson left them was "when all seems lost, it really is."

I am certain this billionaire now knows the tragedy of what he has done. He ended his life because he thought he had lost everything, but by ending his life he truly did loose everything. Certainly we can say that the love of money destroyed this man and destroyed his only chance to learn the contentment in this life and for all eternity.

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“I STUDY MY BIBLE LIKE I PLOW MY FIELD”

A farmer explained: I study my Bible like I plow my field. Oftentimes when I’m plowing or breaking new ground, my plow will get hung under a root, and if I’m going at a pretty good clip it will really jar me. But I don’t get mad and beat my mule and burn my plow. No, I just back up a little, ease over the root and get on with my plowing. Next time around I’ll probably hit that root again and it still shakes me up, but I don’t quit farming. I just back up, ease over the root and keep on working. Pretty soon I have hit that root so many times that it’s loose and the first thing you know I plow right through it and don’t even notice it. I’ve got it shook loose. That’s the way I study the Bible. When I come upon a hard passage, it might shake me up a little bit, but I don’t throw away my Bible and quit the Lord on that account. I just ease over it and keep on studying. The next time I read that passage I jar it a little bit more. I keep on doing this until finally, because of information that I have gathered from other parts of the Bible I am able to jar the passage loose. I understand it.

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Passionate For The Truth

"Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not." (Jer. 20:9)

William Lloyd Garrison, who wrote the anti-slavery paper called the Abolitionist and was probably the leader in that cause, was so hot to get rid of the slavery cancer upon our society that he angered many, many people. One of his friends, Samuel May, said one day to him, and I quote, "Oh, my friend, do try to moderate your indignation and keep more cool, why you're all on fire." To which Garrison replied, "My friend, I have need to be all on fire for I have mountains of ice around me to melt." (From John Maxwell)

May God's word be as a burning fire in our hearts so that we can melt the mountains of ice around us!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Fearfully and wonderfully made

"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." (Psalm 139:14-15)

The body's entire structure, from head to foot, is a miracle of precision engineering and production. No matter what portion of the human body is considered, one cannot but be impressed with what a marvelous mechanism each member is. The major organs alone--and there are 10 of them--perform such unique feats of electric conduction that it would take a big book to explain each one adequately. In the fraction of a second that it takes you to read one word on this page, the marrow in your bones produces over 100,000 red blood cells. (From **Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations**)

Truly, we are fearfully and wonderfully made by an awesome Creator. To say that it all just happened by chance is sheer nonsense.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#37 - There is an account in the New Testament of two men who were singing and praying while in prison, do you know who they are?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Paul and Silas, Acts 16:25\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#38 - After those who left by choice, how did God tell Gideon to choose the 300 men who would go up against the Midianites? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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10:00 AM

11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday:

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Who Cares?

By Dan Shipley

Did you ever think about who turns out the lights and locks the doors at the church building? It may seem a small thing, but it could create some problems if no one did it. The point is, someone accepts the responsibility that most members give very little thought to. The same could be said of cleaning and maintaining the building, parking lot, lawn, etc. Usually, some few willing souls will volunteer their services — and most others are perfectly willing to let them. Many Christians simply do not relate themselves to such work, and worse, may not appreciate those who do. But, in the absence of paid janitors and yardmen, why is any one member any more or less responsible than any other? What if no members cared about the appearance of a dirty building, or a weed-filled lawn or broken windows? Such neglect would soon become embarrassingly apparent.

On the other hand, other and more serious neglect is not so apparent. Take, for instance, the erring brother. Whose responsibility is he? Who cares? Must he finally embarrass the church like an unpainted door or a broken window to merit attention? God says, "Ye which are spiritual" should restore such a one (Gal. 6:1). As none will admit to not being spiritual, that makes the erring member the business of every member! When Christians are motivated by genuine love and concern for each other; when they have the same care one for another (1 Cor. 12:25); and when each looks to the needs of others (Phil. 2:4), little time will be wasted in trying to figure out who has to go and help "save a soul from death" (Jas. 5:20). What if no one in the whole church cared about the weak brother? It's bad when Christians don't care about unkempt meeting places; but it's far worse when they neglect the erring brother, one for whose sake Christ died.

Equally important is the responsibility every Christian has in regard to teaching the lost. The faithful are to be able to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). All are to be ready always to give answer concerning their hope (1 Pet. 3:15). To that extent they can teach others how to gain such hope. When the early Christians were scattered abroad, they went about preaching the word (Acts 8:4). Unscattered Christians can and should do the same. Paul writes of how most of the Roman brethren were bold to speak the word of God without fear (Phil. 1:14). The world urgently needs such bold brethren speaking that same word today! But who will do it? Those who turn out the lights and lock the doors? Only those who preach from pulpits? God looks to His people — all of His people — to help others in the way of salvation. The blessings of truth and salvation are not to be hoarded, but shared — else, we risk losing them. Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10). How can His followers not be interested and involved in the same work? How can they not care?

Shunned and shifted responsibility has hurt the Lord's church immeasurably. The slothful spirit of "doing-as-little-as-you- can-get-by-with" may suit the world, but it is grossly inappropriate for those who care — and those who have been blessed with God's best.

**Volume 6 September 28 2014 #39**

What Men Have Done to Hell

By Bill Crews

1. Atheists, skeptics and modernists have eradicated it by their “wonderful” powers of “reason”.

2. “Christian Scientists” have attributed it to improper thinking, the figment of bad imagination, or “malicious animal magnetism”.

3. Universalists have removed the need of fearing it since they teach that all will be saved anyway.

4. Unitarians and others have decided that the only real heaven or hell are encountered by men in this life by pleasant or unpleasant experiences.

5. “Jehovah’s Witnesses” have reduced it to annihilation, eternal non-existence rather than eternal punishment.

6. Many Protestant denominations have taken away any concern about being lost from millions by their doctrine of “once saved, always saved”.

7. Catholicism has assured millions that they will not go there because of her sacraments and rituals, and has caused many to be more concerned about an imaginary “purgatory”.

8. Many have sought to remove the eternal duration and the awful torment of hell by their own concept of God’s love.

But what the Bible says about hell remains true. You may read about it in: Matthew 18.8-9; 25.41,46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Revelation 14.10-11; 20:10, 15; 21.8.

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GOSPEL MEETING

October 5-8

Sunday: 10:00 AM

11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Monday-Wednesday 7:30PM

BRING YOUR FAMILY BRING YOUR FRIENDS WE WANT EVERYONE TO ATTEND!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Looking at the good in others

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father..." (1 Thess. 1:2-3)

A preacher tried to help a young man who was constantly disturbed and upset about the weakness and faults of the other members of the congregation. He caused a small black mark to show on a large white screen, and asked, "What do you see?" The young man said, "A black mark." The preacher asked, "Is that all you see?" He said, "Yes." The preacher said, "This is your problem. You only see the black marks (the faults) of the other members. You do not see the large white screen (the enormous good) of those members."

It is wrong to focus only on the faults of others. Let us appreciate, commend, praise, and pray for those who continue to do good.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#38 - After those who left by choice, how did God tell Gideon to choose the 300 men who would go up against the Midianites?

\_\_\_\_lapped water with their tongue, Judges 7:5\_\_\_

This week's question:

#39 - When Jesus was born Herod set out to find and kill Him, but He was taken away where Herod could not find Him. Do you know where

Jesus was taken? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

By E.R. Hall, Jr.

It is not difficult to convince someone of the importance of knowledge they need pertaining to their job, a hobby they like, or other item of interest to them. We desire to know all we can about our job in order that we might do it better. A hobby or something of a particular interest is more enjoyable the more we learn about it. Should we not have the same desire to know spiritual things that pertain not only to our lives now but eternity, too?

The importance of Bible knowledge can be seen in that it can give us the PROPER CONCEPT OF GOD. We can know that God is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1). It is in Him that "*we live, and move, and have our being*" (Acts 17:28). While we are His offspring, we must not change Him in to some graven artwork or any other thing that man might devise. While "*the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork*” (Psalms 19:1), these things do not tell us about God's will. That's the importance of Bible knowledge.

Knowledge of the Bible also gives us the PROPER CONCEPT OF SALVATION. This is certainly important in view of the fact there so many false concepts. Many, today, have forgotten why Jesus came into the world. "*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins*." (Matthew 1:21). Since He is the one who can save us from our sins, we need to listen to what He says. "*I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*." (John 8:24). "*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*." (Luke 13:3,5). "*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven*." (Matthew 10:32). "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*." (Mark 16:16).

May we all realize the importance of Bible knowledge and begin our search for the truth that we might put it into practice in our lives.

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**Volume 6 October 5 2014 #40**

Extremist Cult

By Terry W. Benton

How will the liberal agenda begin the intimidation process against Bible-based churches? The fires of testing are beginning to stage the attack to silence churches that openly teach what the Bible says about the sexual immorality of homosexual activity. Not that this is the only sin we might preach about, but if you preach about it at all you fit the "hate crime". Already in parts of our present world the media has labeled Christians as “extremist cults”.

How many will go into silent mode? How many will abandon local churches to avoid persecution and intimidation? The brainwashing is actually happening through early public schooling. Those who stand upon the word of God will be hated and branded as "haters" and "extremist cults".

When the fires of testing begin at home, how prepared are you to stand up for Jesus and the inspired word of God? Some will begin “rethinking” whether those parts of the Bible were really inspired and will conveniently dismiss those parts, which means that they will compromise truth for the sake of convenience. Some within local churches will demand that topics not be mentioned or spoken about to avoid public labeling.

What was freedom of speech and freedom of religion in this country and common knowledge may soon be labeled as “extremist cults”. The fires of testing will sort the gold, silver, and precious stone believers from the “believers” who are wood, hay, and stubble **(1 Cor.3)**. It will purify and solidify the true believer and will burn up those who have no depth of love and commitment to the Lord. When the smoke clears, where will you be standing? Where are you standing now?

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"And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." - Joshua 24:15.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



A Faith That Can

Take The Heat

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ..." (1 Pet. 1:6-7)

In the early 1970s the firefighters of Fairfax County, Virginia, received new helmets. They were sharp looking, colorful, size-adjustable, made of high-impact plastic, and scuff resistant. There was only one problem with the helmets: when they were worn near the heat of a fire, they melted. This, of course, made them useless to firefighters; they needed helmets that could take the heat.

In the same way, we need a faith that can take the heat - a faith that endures the fire and protects us in the midst of the blaze. (From **1,001 Contemporary Illustrations, Vol. 1** - Adversity)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#39 - When Jesus was born Herod set out to find and kill Him, but He was taken away where Herod could not find Him. Do you know where

Jesus was taken?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Egypt, Matthew 2:13-14\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#40 - There are many kings mentioned in the Bible from various kingdoms. Do you know who Nebuchadnezzar was king of?

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**Two Men Disagree With the Preacher**

**By Bill Hall**

Two men disagree with the preacher. They have both been taught that they are not just to "swallow" everything the preacher says; that they are to think for themselves. They are to be commended, therefore, for their careful evaluation of what is taught.

The key words with the first man, however, are, "It seems to me." All teaching is judged according to his own thinking, as to whether or not it makes sense to him.

The key words with the second man are, "What does God say about it?" He desires truth and knows that truth can only be found in God's word (John 17:17). If he disagrees with the preacher, he does so because he is convinced the preacher has misused a passage of scripture or has failed to consider a scripture that might affect his conclusion. He comes with an open Bible and an open mind, prepared to defend his position or to yield if he sees that it is indefensible.

The first man exalts self. He places too much confidence in his own thinking. He may do so unconsciously, but in reality he makes his own intellect and experience his god. His thinking is reflected in the words of Naaman, "Behold, I thought," words that would have taken Naaman to a leper's grave had it not been for the admonition of his servants (2 Kings 5:1-14).

The second man exalts God. His confidence is in what God says in the scriptures. He recognizes that his own intellect and experience fade into nothingness when placed in the brightness of the light of truth. A "thus saith the Lord" ends all controversy with him. His thinking is reflected in that of the Bereans who "were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they... searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so " (Acts 17:11).

Unless the first man changes his attitude he is hopeless.

He is susceptible to all manner of false ideas. He cannot come to know God and His truth through his own wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:21). He must throw his own wisdom, intellect, and experience aside; he must become poor in spirit, meek before God, mourning, hungering and thirsting for righteousness; he must bow in submission to the Lord and to His word. He must say with Paul, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?'" (Romans 11:33-34).

The second man is a blessed and fortunate man in-deed, for he will learn the truth that will make him free (John8:32). Unfortunately, he is a rare man in the twentieth century. But he does exist—and he can exist even in the man who is presently reading this article. What a challenge to each of us! After all, it is one thing to disagree with a preacher, but quite another thing to disagree with Almighty God!

**Volume 6 October 12 2014 #41**

**The Truth Sometimes Hurts**

**By Jonathan Perz**

How much do you appreciate the truth? The truth is easy to hear when it is flattering, encouraging and uplifting. However, the truth can sometimes hurt. Do you always desire the truth from those around you, regardless of whether it is favorable or not? Do you always demand the truth from those who preach and teach the gospel of Christ?

The truth pleased the rich young ruler until Jesus told him the one thing he lacked (Mark 10:17-22). Some would call such a declaration of truth unloving, but the Spirit called it love (note verse 21). How do we feel when someone courageously and honestly points out our shortcomings (Prov. 27:6)?

Some of the Jews who heard Peter on Pentecost appreciated the truth, though it indicted them. They chose repentance and baptism (Acts 2:36-40). Whereas, those Jews who heard Stephen speak that same truth hated what was spoken. They responded by stoning Stephen to death (Acts 7:54-60). How do we respond to the truth?

The Galatians loved the apostle Paul—so much that at one point they were willing to pluck out their own eyes and give them to Paul. However, in the very next verse, Paul was compelled to ask if he had become their enemy because he told them the truth (Gal. 4:14-16). Do we despise those who tell us what we need to hear?

Simply stated, unless we have a love of the truth, we will never appreciate the truths that hurt (2 Thess. 2:10-12). Unless we are willing to accept painful truths, we cannot know the sanctifying power of truth (John 17:17). Unless we obey the truth, we will be condemned (Rom. 2:8).

How much do you appreciate truth? The answer is painfully obvious when we are confronted with agonizing truths that require change in our lives. Change hurts, but the truth saves. How will you respond the next time you are confronted with the truth?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



REAPING WHAT YOU SOW

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (Gal. 6:7-8)

A farmer posted a "No Trespassing" sign to keep the neighborhood boys from crossing his property. One embittered young man vowed revenge. One night he walked all over the man's farm with a sack of Johnson Grass seed and sowed it in every field. Johnson Grass spreads rapidly and is a weed that is almost impossible to eradicate.

A few years later, the boy married the farmer's only daughter. In a short time, the old man died, and the boy inherited the farm. He spent the rest of his life fighting Johnson Grass.

We reap what we sow both physically and spiritually, both now and in eternity.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#40 - There are many kings mentioned in the Bible from various kingdoms. Do you know who Nebuchadnezzar was king of?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Babylon, Daniel 1:1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#41 - The apostle Paul suffered many things for the gospel of Christ. Do you know the city where Paul was stoned and left for dead?

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Preach Christ and Not...

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

One should never underestimate the subtlety of the Devil. I am convinced that one of his more subtle devices over the years has been to convince people that if they are going to give Christ the glory that he deserves that they need to be preaching “Christ and not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” You fill in the blank with about anything associated with Christ in the New Testament and you will get the picture. Some examples of things we have head over the years:

1. “Preach the man (Christ) and not the plan.”  
2. “Preach Christ and not baptism.”  
3. “Preach Christ and not the church.”  
4. “Preach Christ and not obedience.”

This sounds very appealing, especially when one says

this is the kind of preaching the apostles did and points

to passages about preaching Christ. And who would

not want to give the name and person of Christ all glory

and praise? The fact is the results of implementing

these suggested preaching styles is to encourage people

in their minds to separate Christ from the things he

teaches, loves, and cherishes. Preaching a Christ without

these things is preaching a Christ other than the one

revealed in the New Testament scriptures. Paul warns

the Corinthians against preaching another Jesus, spirit,

or gospel (2 Cor. 11:4).

Philip, the evangelist, preached Jesus to the eunuch

(Acts 8:35). Somehow the eunuch got the message from

this preaching that he needed be baptized (v. 36). Do you

suppose that preaching Jesus included preaching about

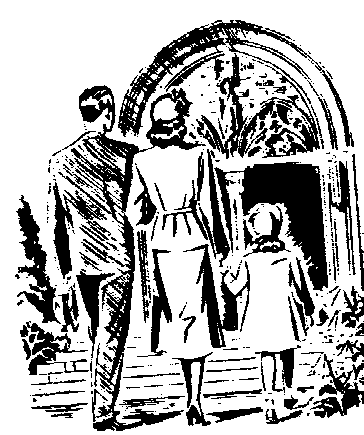
baptism? Earlier in Samaria, as one of those scattered

abroad preaching THE WORD (v. 4), Phillip is said to have preached CHRIST to them (v. 5). In verse 12, it says that he preached “the things concerning the KINGDOM OF GOD, and the NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, they were baptized.” He preached Christ AND the church (Kingdom) not Christ AND NOT the church and as a results people were baptized.

The facts are, one cannot preach the Christ of the New Testament without preaching his plan for man’s salvation, or baptism, or the church, or obedience to all his commands. Nor vise versa. One cannot preach the N.T. plan of salvation, N.T. baptism, N.T. church, N.T. obedience without preaching Christ. It is not “either, or.” It is all of the above.

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**Volume 6 October 19 2014 #42**



>>> It is Christ who gave the plan which includes baptism and has revealed it. It is Jesus who is said to have established the church, gave himself for it, purchased it with his blood, loves it, cherishes it, etc. It is Jesus who is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:8-9). One is preaching Jesus when he preaches any of those things that one must obey and the results of that obedience.

We grant that not everyone who repeats the catch phrase, “Christ and not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,” means to completely eliminate whatever may be put in the blank. But, by often repeating such may very well encourage their hearers to do so.

One additional thought about the church. Saying, “We need to preach Christ and not the church” is not the same as we sometimes say, “Our loyalty should be to Christ and not the church.” The later is saying that Christ is the source of all truth and not the church. The church is to practice the truth, but it can err from it. If our loyalty is to the church rather than Christ, then we will go with the church into error. But if our loyalty is to Christ then we will remain with Him.

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How Committed Are We?

"...Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Heb. 10:25).

I once heard of an excellent example of faithfulness which occurred in a country church in central Kentucky. An older brother who was in very poor health, and unable to walk, insisted on being carried to worship services. For years, his grandchildren literally carried him in and out of the building before and after services. At times, he was in such bad health that he was unable to sit up, and his grandchildren would carry him in and lay him on the front pew. This they did until the day he died for they knew it was what their grandfather wanted.

In view of this, can we honestly say that our little aches and pains are a legitimate excuse for forsaking the assembling of the saints?

**THINK ABOUT IT!**



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Thinking too much of ourselves

"When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom." (Prov. 11:2) "Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, and before honor is humility." (Prov. 18:12)

A famous football coach was on vacation with his family in Maine. When they walked into a movie theater and sat down, the handful of people there applauded. He thought to himself, "I can't believe it. People recognize me all the way up here." Then a man came over to him and said, "Thanks for coming. They won't start the movie for fewer than ten people. With you and your family here, we now have more than ten."

The "pride of life" is one of the avenues through which the devil tempts man. Regarding qualifications for elders, 1 Tim. 3:6 says, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#41 - The apostle Paul suffered many things for the gospel of Christ. Do you know the city where Paul was stoned and left for dead?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Lystra, Acts 14:8,19\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#42 - The Bible mentions two men who did not die a natural death. Elijah was one, do you know the name of the other man? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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THE CHRISTIAN AND TOBACCO

By Kent E. Heaton, Sr.

For every individual who seeks to be a child of God, there is a continued need to "*sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*" (1 Pet. 3:15). In every situation of life, the Christian must be able to answer why he chooses to follow the path before him. The Christian must give an answer for his actions before men and before God. Col. 3:17 reads: "*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*" With this verse we understand that whatever we do, we must do so in the name of the Son of God. Such is the case of tobacco and the Christian.

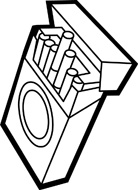
What is your answer for those who ask why you use tobacco? If you smoke, dip or chew tobacco, what answer do you give to every man who asks you concerning your hope of Heaven? There has been a long standing practice of dipping and chewing tobacco bythose who profess to be Christians. It has become an accepted norm with our society for many years with only the most recent years people turning away from its use. But why is it taking so long for God's children to finally admit the danger of using tobacco? Not the danger of dying of cancer - the danger of losing your soul. Do you consider the use of tobacco wrong? Do you think that smoking is not a good idea? Do you believe that you will be allowed into heaven with a pack of snuff in your pocket or a bag of chew in your hand? Do they have ashtrays in heaven for your cigarette habit? Seriously - is the use of tobacco a sin?

We are so careful to attach the word SIN to anything anymore. It is either "wrong," "bad judgment," "maybe not a good idea" etc. But the truth is we must speak where the Bible speaks and accept the teaching of God. "Tobacco contains over 4,000 different gases, particles and compounds including tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide. Nicotine is found only in tobacco. It acts as a mild stimulant to the central nervous system and is what causes the addiction to tobacco products.”

Take the tobacco test: (1) Can you use tobacco in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father? (Col. 3:17). (2) Can you fulfill the image of 2 Cor. 4:10 that reads, "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" and load your mouth with snuff, chew, cigar, cigarette or any such thing? (3) When you light up or load up can you say you are holy? "*As He which called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living*" (1 Pet. 1:15). (4) Do you "*present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service*" (Rom. 12:1) when you use tobacco? (5) Are you being conformed to the world or transformed by the renewing of

>>>

**Volume 6 October 26 2014 #43**



>>> your mind to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God when you use tobacco? (Rom. 12:2). (6) How can you justify the use of tobacco when 1 Cor. 6:19,20 reads, "*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s*."

The Christian has no right to take the temple of God and defile it with tobacco. (or any other defiling substance really, ERH). The body of the Christian BELONGS TO GOD and if we dip snuff in it, load our mouths with chew and smoke tobacco we are taking the body that belongs to God and defiling it -- thus we sin! 1 Pet. 2:21,22 says, "*For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth*." The example of Jesus is that we should follow in His footsteps. No guile was found in His mouth and He will not allow His disciples to have tobacco in their mouths either.

Rick Lanning wrote, “What man or woman who wears that holy name, who 'imbibes His spirit and imitates His example,' who seeks to walk even as He walked, and to be holy in all manner of living can in his wildest imagination picture the holy, harmless,  undefiled Jesus asking Peter for a light, or pulling a cigarette from His garment or putting a 'pinch between his cheek and gum'? I could as easily draw in my mind our Savior at a disco party or a poker game or seated at a bar as I can Him puffing on a rolled up cancer stick or spitting before offering a 'holy kiss'! Any saint ('holy one') who can think otherwise, 'hath not seen Him, neither knows Him.'"

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**Colossians 4:2-4** - Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;

3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains,

4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Don't Be Fooled

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11:13-15)

A group of students at Harvard once tried to fool Agassiz, the famous professor of zoology. They took parts from a number of different bugs and with great skill attached them together to make a creature they were sure would baffle their teacher. On the chosen day they brought it to him and asked that he identify it. As he inspected it with great care, the students grew more and more sure they had tricked this genius. Finally, Professor Agassiz straightened up and said, "I have identified it." Scarcely able to control their amusement, they asked its name. Agassiz replied, "It is a humbug." (From **Bible Illustrator**)

A person who knows the truth will be able to detect a counterfeit when it presents itself.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#42 - The Bible mentions two men who did not die a natural death. Elijah was one, do you know the name of the other man?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Enoch, Hebrews 11:5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#43 - It was not David, but his son Solomon who build the Temple of God. Do you know the city where it was built? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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A Simple Verse About Right and Wrong

By Frank Himmel

 “. . . abhor what is evil; cling to what is good” (Romans 12:9).  This short verse (actually it is just the second part of the verse) would be a fine one to commit to memory. It states or implies at least three vital points.

First, there is such a thing as good and evil. People used to understand that. We used to know that one is supposed to keep his word, that greed is a bad thing, that marriage is for life, that homosexuality is a perversion, etc.  Now, several generations have grown up listening to denominational preachers say that it does not matter what you believe, thereby undermining Bible authority.

We have heard libertarians rationalize any and every kind of conduct. We have grown accustomed to comedians making daily fodder of sin of every kind.  Is it any wonder people are confused?  Come to think of it, this is nothing new. Long ago Isaiah wrote, “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; . . . who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight” (Isaiah 5:20-21).

Second, it is both possible and necessary to discern good and evil. Personal preferences and moral relativism leave us adrift. There is a fixed standard.  It is God. He is right or righteous.  “A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4). His word, His self-revelation, is the yardstick by which all conduct is measured. It is the standard by which we shall be judged (John 12:48).

Discerning right and wrong begins with the “thou shalt/thou shalt not” passages. We must also take into account principles of conduct, such as maintaining a clear conscience (Romans 14:22-23), not putting other things before God (Matthew 6:33), leaving off questionable things that would lessen our influence for good (Matthew 5:16), etc. Paul often prayed that Christians would grow in this area of distinguishing conduct (Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12).

Third, we must act in keeping with the quality of any given behavior. If a thing is good we are to cling to it. The original verb in our text is from the Greek noun for glue; be glued to it. On the other hand, if conduct is bad, we are to abhor it. Abhor is from the Latin word for horror, which literally means to shudder. We should shudder at the very idea of some kinds of behavior [misbehavior].

Simply put, Romans 12:9 tells us to use God’s word and draw the line between good and evil. Once that line is drawn, do not see how close to it you can get without stepping over; stay as far away from evil and as close to God as you can.

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**GOD IS SO GOOD!**

**Volume 6 November 2 2014 #44**

Beware Of Normal

By Larry Walker

According to a humorous television commercial, one of the first signs of termite infection in your home is that "everything looks perfectly normal." It is their way of convincing us that a lot of damage can be done before you even notice it. The ad might serve to remind us of problems that can occur in our spiritual house if we do not take protective measures. The very foundation can be destroyed while everything on the outside seems to be normal by the standards of our day. When our lives are comfortably blended into the society we live in, when there is nothing unusual about our moral or religious principles, when our priorities are the same as the great majority of our neighbors, then things are dangerously "normal." The problem is that "normal" is a term that is determined by man's standards, and though measuring up to it may provide a degree of comfort here, it falls far short when it comes to laying up treasures in heaven.

Paul warned the Corinthians of some who "measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding" (2 Cor. 10:12). It is God's yardstick that matters, not that of the "mainstream of society." God has always required His people to be separate (Isa. 52:11; 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1) not physically withdrawn, but distinct in conversation and conduct, not fashioned according to the world (Rom. 12:1,2). It is a sobering Biblical truth that few will be saved; the majority will enter the broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13,14). It is strange, then, that we should be satisfied with attaining a status accepted by society. What value is it, if we lose our souls?

Friend, if your life seems "normal" enough by man's standards, it may be that your spiritual house is caving in. It will not be shored up by man's money or man's tools, but by the Word which framed the worlds (Heb. 11:3). The answer is some honest, objective study of it, for it is the standard which will judge us (John 12:48).



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Let Your Light Sine

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord." (Eph. 5:8-10)

The blacker the night, the greater the need for a light bulb. If the bulb does not shine, it's not because of the darkness. Darkness cannot put out a light. If the darkness increases until it is black as a cave, it is still not dark enough to extinguish a light. No one has yet smothered a light by increasing the darkness. Darkness gets darker because the light fails. When we fail to reflect Christ's light, we let the darkness win. (From **What Jesus Said About Successful Living**, by Haddon Robinson, p. 101)

Phil. 2:14-16 says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life..."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#43 - It was not David, but his son Solomon who build the Temple of God. Do you know the city where it was built?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Jerusalem, I Chronicles 6:10\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#44 - It is said that there are 31,102 verses in the Bible. Do you know which verse is the longest? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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How Do You View Others?

**By John R. Gibson**

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Psalm  133:1).

The fourteenth chapter of Romans was written to produce unity, yet it has often been a source of division and conflict. It is a chapter that presents difficulties to most (and this writer is no exception), but we may find it easier to unravel some of its difficulties if we first learn to view one another as Paul suggests?

Consider the five views of others presented in Romans 14:1—15:7. They are: (1) “another’s servant”, 14:4; (2) “your brother”, 14:10,13,15,21; (3) “the one for whom Christ died”, 14:15; (4) “the work of God”, 14:20; and (5) “his neighbor”, 15:2.

Matters relating to unity are important, for not only did the Psalmist commend unity as good and pleasant, but our Lord prayed that His disciples would be one (John 17:20-21). Christians should deplore division, desire unity and, in doing so, realize that we would be spared much of the feuding and fussing that goes on in local churches if we viewed one another as this section of Scripture directs. We are more likely to understand the passage better when we learn to understand one another better.

When dealing with others in the local congregation, we are to view them as our neighbors whom we seek to please. In applying Romans 14:1—15:7, we must seek the edification and strengthening of our neighbor. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) should challenge us to be merciful in our dealings with one another. “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Galatians 5:14).

Have we developed a sense of family in the local church? Though the comparison of fellow-Christians to earthly brothers and sisters is frequently made in the Scriptures, we often fail to develop a true sense of family within the congregation. We are to make “Brother” and “Sister” more than empty titles; they must become expressions of genuine feelings for one another. “Let brotherly love continue” (Hebrews 13:1).

When making application of Romans 14, we must realize that the Scriptures require discipline of wayward members and not contradict those passages requiring disciplinary action; but we must also avoid “judging another’s servant” (Romans 14:4). Never forget that your fellow-Christian belongs not to you, but to Christ. The Lord will judge His servants; we must make only those judgments He has commanded. “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged…” (Matthew 7:2).

Have we ever treated a brother in a shameful, unloving manner when Christ loved this same brother enough to die for him? It is essential that each member of this or any congregation seeking to please Christ deal with the other members as though they were valuable—so valuable the Son of God would die for them! If the Eternal One would die for this person, surely we can cast aside selfishness and go that second mile to make peace. “And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16). >>>

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>>> Finally, we must not forget that our brother is the work of God. How dreadful it would be to discover, as did Saul of Tarsus, that we have been guilty of working against God. The Lord God is working for the salvation of our brethren—what is it that we are working toward? As we seek to apply difficult passages such as Romans 14, let us be certain that it is God’s work we seek to further and not our own pride and position. “I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls” (2 Corinthians 12:15).

Love must not become an excuse for failing to reprove and rebuke, for love never eliminates the need for discipline (2 Timothy 4:2;   
Proverbs 13:24). Love should not lack backbone, but brethren cannot justify a bitter spirit and lack of brotherly love by referring to such conduct as “contending for the faith.” Let us view one another as the apostle has taught us to do.

“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 15:5-6).

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Check Your Tongue

By Michael Pickford

For many years, doctors would take a close look at the tongue of a patient in order to determine his health. The ability of many doctors to diagnose various illnesses simply by checking the tongue is amazing. While physicians gauge the health of an individual by the tongue, the great Physician can gauge the health of the soul by the tongue. In relation to how the tongue speaks, Jesus said, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil things” (Matthew 12:35). Often, we can get a good idea about a man’s character by the way he speaks. Our speech is very important. Not only does our tongue reflect the health of our soul, but the health of our soul influences the tongue. Paul spoke often about the proper use of the tongue, and James places a great deal of stress upon controlling the tongue (Eph. 4:25, 29-32; James 3:1-12). Not only can your corrupted soul defile your tongue, but your tongue can defile your clean soul. Oh, the importance of the tongue! So much so that Jesus stated, “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:37). So, while you are living day by day, don’t forget to check your tongue!



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Materialism

"Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us." (Psalm 62:8)

The trend of government is to undergird us with material securities from the cradle to the grave, providing all kinds of insurance--health, old-age, education, unemployment and so on. In addition, we insure ourselves against fire, earthquake, hurricane, accident and old age.

These safeguards are not wrong, but they can very easily become a serious hindrance to our complete trust in God. Undoubtedly, if our debts are paid and our refrigerator full, if we have money in the bank, we have a tendency to feel secure in ourselves and to sense our need of God less. Herein lies the danger. My greatest need is to feel and know my need of God every hour. (From C. Stacy Woods)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#44 - It is said that there are 31,102 verses in the Bible. Do you know which verse is the longest? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Esther 8:9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#45 - God told Jonah to go to "...great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." Do you know the name of the city?

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**A SIMPLE VERSE ABOUT RIGHT AND WRONG**

By Frank Himmel

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First, there is such a thing as good and evil. People used to understand that. We used to know that one is supposed to keep his word, that greed is a bad thing, that marriage is for life, that homosexuality is a perversion, etc. Now, several generations have grown up listening to denominational preachers say that it does not matter what you believe, thereby undermining Bible authority.

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Simply put, Romans 12:9 tells us to use God’s word and draw the line between good and evil. Once that line is drawn, do not see how close to it you can get without stepping over; stay as far away from evil and as close to God as you can.

**Volume 6 November 16 2014 #46**

"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph. 5:15-16)

Twelve things to remember:

1. The value of time.

2. The success of perseverance.

3. The pleasure of working.

4. The dignity of simplicity.

5. The worth of character.

6. The power of kindness.

7. The influence of example.

8. The obligation of duty.

9. The wisdom of economy.

10. The virtue of patience.

11. The improvement of talent.

12. The joy of originating.

(From Marshall Field)

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"Depart From Me ..."

By Bob Craig

The Bible says in Matthew 7:22-23, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Many, many, today fall into the category mentioned. They are making all kinds of claims of doing “worthy works” and always, “in the name of the Lord.” Just to make a declaration that a thing is “in the name of the Lord” or by his authority, doesn't make it so. Some of these have been exposed as religious frauds. The word “iniquity” as is used in the quoted verse is translated by the word “lawlessness” in several other translations. That is, these people the Lord was talking about were spiritual “outlaws.” They were doing their “wonderful” works outside the realm of Bible authority.

But hear what the Lord says their end will be: “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity [or lawlessness].”



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



The power is of the Lord

"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

Many object to baptism for the remission of sins by saying, "There's no power in the water." Jesus healed a blind man by anointing his eyes and saying, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." (John 9:6-7). The blind man did not object by saying, "There's no power in the water." He knew the power was of the Lord and he had to obey the Lord to receive the blessing. He promptly obeyed and received his sight. Likewise, there is no power in the water of baptism. The power is of the Lord, but one must go to the water to receive the blessing.

ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB?

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#45 - God told Jonah to go to "...great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." Do you know the name of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Nineveh, Jonah 1:2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#46 - Herod, in seeking the life of Jesus, put to death all male children two years and under in and around Bethlehem. Joseph was warned by God to flee. Do you know where they went? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED?

By Jeff Smith

Has this question ever puzzled you? Have you ever thought about why Jesus came to John to be immersed? As religious folk, if we denied the necessity of water baptism for salvation (like most of the religious world), this question would be moot and a waste of time. However, since we are Bible believers, and since the Bible clearly teaches the necessity of water baptism for one's salvation (cp. 1 Pet. 3:21; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38), this question is an important one to consider.

What Was The Purpose For John's Baptism? Succinctly stated, John's baptism was "*a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*" (Mk. 1:4). Since he came as the forerunner for the Messiah, he was to blaze the trail for Christ whose gospel would later preach baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Did Jesus Need To Have Sins Remitted? Obviously not if we properly understand passages like Isa. 53:9, 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, and 1 Pet. 2:22. Jesus lived the sinless life on earth and was never in need of having sins remitted in the act of baptism.

Why, Then, Was Jesus Baptized? The only Biblical reason we have is found in Jesus' own words to John when He was baptized. In Mt. 3:15, Jesus had to convince John to baptize Him "*in order to fulfill all righteousness*." We must remember that later on, Jesus placed a high credibility on John's baptism in refuting the chief priests and Jewish elders (Mt. 21:25). Because these Jews had rejected it, they had, in effect, rejected God's will. How could Jesus refuse to accept what He would later expect all others to do? Even though He didn't need the outcome of John's baptism (remission), He did need to comply with His Father's "righteous" plan. A failure to be baptized would have made His later condemnation of the Jews very hollow and hypocritical.

Being the pure Son of God, what else would a faithful son do but obey the Father? Therefore, He sets the perfect example of submitting to the Father's plan for the salvation of all mankind.

Have you been baptized? Jesus was to "*fulfill all righteousness*." Won't you do the same?

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We invite you to visit our website where you will find a variety of Bible study helps:

**Audio sermons** - from past gospel meetings/studies.

**Bulletins** - Our weekly bulletin, Volumes 1-6.

**Bible correspondence courses** - Online and by mail.

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**Volume 6 November 23 2014 #47**



WE LOVE YOU THIS MUCH!

By David McPherson

Regarding the discipline that a parent ought to administer to a child, the word of the Lord says, "*He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes*" (Prov. 13:24). The worst thing a parent can do for an unruly child is to let him go unrestrained. True love of a parent is demonstrated in the correction of a rebellious child.

This principle applies in the church’s discipline (or lack of) toward disorderly members. If we love them we will discipline them. Paul told the Thessalonians, "*Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us*" (2 Thess. 3:6). To the Corinthians he noted that this is church action that should be taken "*when ye are gathered together*" (1 Cor. 5:4).

Brethren, when we fail to discipline the unruly of the church we are manifesting a lack of love. It is as though we are saying, "we love you THIS much" and the "this" is a centimeter. Fact is, to forgo withdrawing from the disorderly is evidence of hatred - not love.

May we grow in our love one for another!

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John 3:20-21 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Do you

come into

the light?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Obedience and Grace

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

Some think that the grace of God and works are incompatible. On the contrary, salvation is both by grace and works. Suppose a particular rich uncle said to his nephew, "I will give you a million dollars if and when you graduate from college, are married, and name your first child after me." When the young man meets those conditions, will he have actually earned the million dollars? No, it was a gift. He simply received it by meeting the conditions. So it is with the grace of God.

Eph. 2:8-9 is teaching that we have not been saved by boastful works which we might devise ourselves; however, we are saved by the works which God ordained. The very next verse which follows Eph. 2:8-9 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10)

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

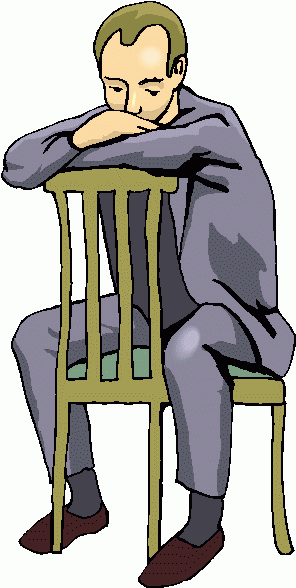
#46 - Herod, in seeking the life of Jesus, put to death all male children two years and under in and around Bethlehem. Joseph was warned by God to flee. Do you know where they went? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Egypt, Matthew 2:13\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#47 - Do you know the name of the King who exalted himself; and who God made to live as a animal in the field? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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Two Men Can't Agree on Religion

By Bill Hall

Two men are religious, and both seem to be sincere, but they never seen to agree on religious questions. A brief look at their applications of the Bible helps to explain their problem.

The first man views the Bible as the complete and final answer to all religious questions pertaining to salvation. For him, a clear statement from the Bible ends all controversy. His simple approach is well stated by a bumper sticker we have seen: "God said it; I believe it; that settles it." In fact, he would agree that God's word "settles it" whether he believes it or not.

The second man relies on several sources for his religious beliefs. He believes the Bible and many of his convictions are based on what the Bible says. But he also is convinced that he has been "led" into certain beliefs by the Lord. Some of those beliefs he could not defend by the Bible, and in fact, some of them seem to contradict the Bible, but he is sure that they are true, for the Lord would not have so "led" him had they not been true. One man frankly said to this writer, "I read the Bible, but I mostly just depend on the Spirit to lead me in what I believe." He has also had his beliefs verified by knowledgeable preachers, who might not be right in everything, but would hardly be wrong on any serious question of truth.

The first man reads the Bible seeking for answers from God. The second man reads the Bible for the same reason, but his perception is affected by what he has been "led to believe." He has difficulty being objective, and, in fact, he might hold to what he has been "led to believe" ahead of plain teaching of scripture. He frankly finds his likeness in the man of Colossians 2:18-19 who takes "his stand on visions he has seen" and is "not holding fast to the head" (NASV). His religious practices may be different from the man described in Colossians, but his approach to authority in religion is the same.

We do not hesitate to side with the first man in his approach. God indeed "leads" us into truth, but He does so through His inspired word. Consider the following passages: "Your word is like a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105); Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth" (John 17:17); "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17).

The two men of our article will come to remarkable agreement when they both approach the scriptures as the final word of God, but not until then. Religious differences are not the product of scripture, but of varying attitudes toward what constitutes final authority in religion. True unity is desirable, and it can be enjoyed by those who humbly submit to God's word and will.

**Volume 6 November 30 2014 #48**



On Our Way, Day By Day

By Dan Shipley

Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). The "outward man" is simply the house of the inward man. Day by day that house is "decaying" and wasting away. Who, past forty, needs reminding? Nevertheless, with relentless rapping on the door of our minds come the messengers of aging; the hoary head, the stooped shoulders, the wrinkled skin, the immed vision, and all the other infirmities that won't let us forget what Paul says.

All men know that much. But God's people know something else. They know that just as surely as the outward man is decaying, the inward man is being renewed day by day. They know that for the faithful Christian, growing older means growing better. He is growing better because he is growing in the knowledge of God's word. As the newborn babe, he continually longs for the "spiritual milk which is without guile" (1 Pet. 2:2). As he grows in knowledge of the word, he also grows in the faith that is produced by the word (Rom. 10:17). As he grows in knowledge and faith, he also grows in usefulness to the cause of Christ. He is renewed in his determination to live closer to the Lord, to do what is right and oppose all wrong. In his spiritual growth, the aging Christian has learned that death is not the end, but merely a transition to something very far better. The happy anticipation of being in the Father's house makes leaving this worn out tabernacle a welcomed blessing!

That's why the apostle Paul saw death as gain. But death is gain only when living is for the Lord. Every living man knows that he will keep his appointment with death (Heb. 9:27). He should know that living for the Lord is living at its best because it is living that prepares for death. Though the outward man is perishing and bound for the dust, we nourish and cherish him; we spare no expense to care for him and tend to his needs. Will we neglect the needs of the inward man that we know will survive the grave? With every tick of the clock and every beat of the heart we are getting closer to the end of this life.

The question is: are we getting closer to heaven?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Beware of covetousness

"Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15)

There's an old legend about two very covetous men who were granted a wish upon the condition that whoever made the first wish, the second would receive a double portion of what the first requested. The first greedy man would not make his wish because he wanted the double portion for himself. The second covetous man felt the same; thus, he was also unwilling to make the first wish. After a long while, the first, who was strongest of the two, grabbed the second by the throat and said he would choke him to death if he didn't make his wish. As the second man was about to die, he said, "I wish to be made blind in one eye." Immediately, he lost the sight of one eye, and his companion went blind in both eyes!

The moral of this old story is, "Beware of covetousness."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#47 - Do you know the name of the King who exalted himself; and who God made to live as a animal in the field?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4:33\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#48 - There was a prophet who, "...took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet,..." Do you

know the prophets name?

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THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED - Part 1

By Donnie Rader

In This Day Of Uncertainty, One Thing We Can Know Is That The Bible Is The Inspired Word Of God. -- Understanding inspiration is fundamental to all else we believe and do in our service to God. If the Bible is not of God, what value is it to us?

What Is Inspiration? -- Inspiration is "the supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine trustworthiness" (B.B. Warfield, ISBE, III, 1473). Perhaps David said it best: "*The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His Word was on my tongue*" (2 Sam. 23:1,2). Paul said that all Scriptures is given by the "*inspiration of God*." (2 Tim. 3:16). The terms "inspired of God" means "God breathed" (A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures of the New Testament, Biblesoft). This does not have reference to the effect that the Scriptures have on the one who reads it, rather it tells us of its Divine origin.

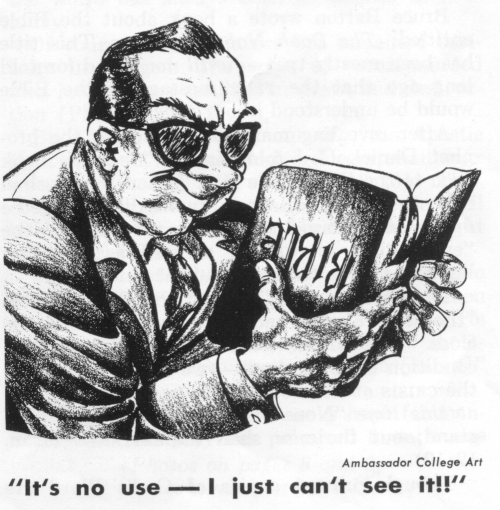
Old Testament Writers Were Inspired: —

1. Moses spoke and wrote as God directed. When giving the Ten Commandments, Moses said:  "*And God spoke all these words, saying*…” (Ex. 20:1). After the return from Babylon Ezra was told to bring the “*Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel*” (Neh. 8:1). Later in the same book we find the statement:  "*God's Law, which was given by Moses*" (10:29). Later when Moses reiterated the Law to Israel he attributed every word of the Law to God: "*And Moses called all Israel and said to them: 'Hear, O Israel the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive. The Lord talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare to you the Word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. He said: 'I am the Lord your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*'" (Deut. 5:1-6).

2. The prophets spoke as God directed: Isaiah was preaching what the "*Lord has spoken*" (Isa. 1:1,2). Chapter 6, tells of his call to be a prophet. God also called Jeremiah to be a prophet saying: "And whatever I command you, you shall speak...Behold I have put My Words in your mouth" (Jer. 1:4-9). God told Ezekiel: "*But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus saith the Lord God,' He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house*" (Ezek. 3:27). Zechariah spoke of the inspiration of prophets before him and how the people refused to hear: "*Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the Law and Words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the Lord of hosts*" (Zack. 7:12).

>>>

**Volume 6 December 7 2014 #49**



>>> 3. New Testament writers said the Old Testament was inspired. Peter said: "*knowing this first, that  no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never  came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*" (2 Pet. 1:20,21).

Jesus endorsed Old Testament stories. Jesus believed what was recorded in the Old Testament to be fact and not fiction. He endorsed the story of creation (Matt. 19:4), Noah and the flood (Matt. 24:37,38), Sodom's judgment (Matt. 11:24), Lot's wife (Lk. 17:32), and Jonah and the whale (Matt. 12:40).

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HOW TO HAVE A MISERABLE DAY, WEEK, MONTH, YEAR, LIFE!

1. Worry A Lot: -- Drag out of your memory book several of your past failures.

2.   Focus Your Attention On Getting Rich.

3.  Always Compare Yourself With Others.

4.  Lengthen Your List Of Enemies.

5.  Set And Cling To Unrealistic Expectations.

6. Be Perpetually Ten Minutes Late To Every Appointment.

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Joshua 24:15 - "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



If Today Was the Last Day

By Matt Adams

Imagine that today was the last day of each person you see today. Everyone you associate with at work, school, where you attend worship, your family, your friends, your acquaintances. If you knew today was their last day in this life, what might you do/say differently? How would your conversation, your actions, your thoughts with/toward that person change?

Now, imagine it's your last day on this earth. How might you treat people differently, what would you leave them with, how would your last day on this earth change people for the better? What would others' last memory of you be? Who would you try to lead to heaven with each word spoken, each action carefully considered, each thought soberly weighed and chosen?

Treat today as if it were your last time seeing everyone in this life, and conduct yourself accordingly, honorably, honestly, and righteously. Take this day seriously, friend, for we will answer to God for every moment of it.

-----------------------------------------

Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#48 - There was a prophet who, "...took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet,..." Do you

know the prophets name?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Agabus, Acts 21:10-11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#49 - Jesus said of a church, "...because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth..." Do you know the name of this church?

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THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED - Part 2

By Donnie Rader

New Testament Writers Were Inspired: --

1. The apostles claimed to speak and write by inspiration. Paul said: "*now theSpirit expressly says*" (1 Tim. 4:1). Peter referred to Paul's writings as "*Scripture*" (2 Pet. 3:15,16). Paul explained that the apostles and prophets were guided by the Spirit of God to write down the things that were in the mind of God (Eph. 3:3-5). The same apostle claimed that what he spoke at Thessalonica was the “*Word of God*" (1 Thess. 2:13). He told the Galatians that he received his gospel, not from men, but God (Gal. 1:11,12). What he wrote to the Corinthians and others was the "*commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. 14:37). These writers could make this claim because Jesus said the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth (Jn. 16:13).

2. The apostles were directed in What and How to speak. The apostles were told: "*But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaks in you*" (Matt. 10:19,20). Notice that they would be told both what (the content of the message) and how (the words to express the message).

The Nature Of Inspiration: --

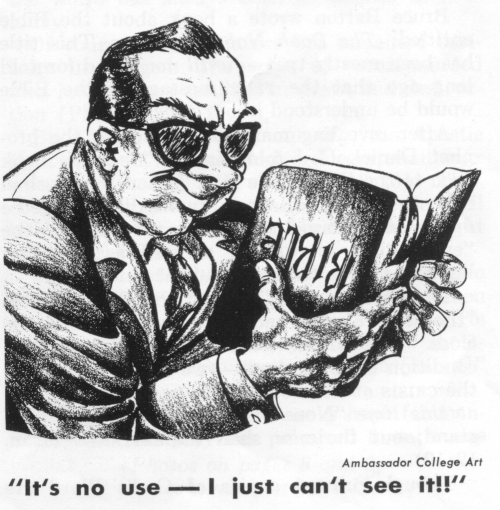
1. Plenary inspiration:  This refers to the fact that all of the Bible is inspired. Paul said: "*all Scripture is inspired of God*" (2 Tim. 3:16). The Psalmist said that: “*All of God's precepts are right*" (Psa. 119:128). Peter's reference to the prophets included all the Old Testament prophets (2 Pet. 1:20, 21). Thus, what is true of one prophet (inspired of God) was true of others. One Bible writer was just as inspired as the others.

2. Verbal Inspiration: This refers to every word being inspired of God. Some believe in "thought inspiration." That theory says God gave the writer the thought to teach, but the writer was left to choose his own words. Such thinking would make the Bible subject to error. The Bible claims that not only is the entire book inspired, but that every word was chosen by the Holy Spirit. Paul said: "*These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual words*." Notice that the words were chosen by the Holy Spirit. That is a verbal inspiration.

3. The Scriptures are reliable down to the smallest detail. Jesus said: "*For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled*" (Matt. 5:18). A "*jot*" is the smallest Hebrew letter. A "*tittle*" is the small stroke distinguishing one Hebrew letter from another. A jot and tittle is much like our dot of the “i" and the cross of the "t." Jesus said that there would not be one jot or tittle to pass until all was fulfilled. His point is that the Scriptures are true and reliable down to the smallest detail.

>>>

**Volume 6 December 14 2014 #50**



>>> Evidence Of Inspiration: --

1. The resurrection of Christ: If Jesus was raised from the dead, that proves there is a God. Jesus is Divine and what He says is true (Rom. 1:4). The empty tomb (Matt. 28:6) is just one of many proofs that Jesus indeed arose from the dead. This assures us the Bible is indeed from God.

2. The Unity Of The Bible: The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years with forty different writers from different parts of the world. They used three different languages. Yet, there is not a single contradiction. Thus assures us there is one mind (the mind of God) behind the Scriptures.

3. Prophecy and Fulfillment: Man cannot foreknow the future only God can. Thus, if men foretold the future, they had to be speaking by the inspiration of God. There are over 300 prophecies concerning the Messiah that were fulfilled in every detail. Thus, the prophets of old were inspired of God.

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Healthy, Wealthy And Wise?

"Wealth makes many friends, but the poor is separated from his friend." (Prov. 19:4) "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep." (Eccl. 5:12)

Bill Curry of south Boston worked most of his life as a cafeteria cook for the Merit Food Company on a modest income by which he managed to provide for his wife, son, and daughter. When Bill Curry won the state lottery, 3.6 million dollars, his first thought was to buy a Dalmatian puppy for the youngsters. That was the extent of the celebration, but when the parasites converged -- lawyers, investment advisers, accountants, and financial analysts -- he was overwhelmed by them, and by people wanting handouts for all manner of charities. He returned to his job in the cafeteria, but even there financial advisers were everywhere. His nearest relative says there's no doubt about it, in the weeks since he won the lottery, it was not the money that caused his stress but it was all of those people who wanted to deal themselves in. Bill Curry died of a heart attack at age 37. (Associated Press, 9-25-90)



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



THE INSIDE

"Do not let your adornment be merely outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." (1 Pet. 3:3-4)

The world puts emphasis on one's outward appearance. Millions of dollars are spent each year on diet, exercise, clothing, and cosmetics, most of which are designed to improve one's outward appearance. Many of those things are superficial measures to make people appear more beautiful than they really are. It is empty and vain to beautify only the outward person. Prov. 31:30 says, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." 1 Sam. 16:7 says, "...The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#49 - Jesus said of a church, "...because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth..." Do you know the name of this church?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Laodiceans, Revelation 3:14\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#50 - At one time all the people of the earth spoke one language, but the Bible tells that change in a certain city, do you know the name of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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What Are You Looking For?

By Frank Himmel

Many people are looking for a “new church home.”  Perhaps they have recently moved to different community. Perhaps they feel a desire to make religion a part of their lives, either for the first time or a renewal of earlier interest. Having children sometimes prompts parents to seek spiritual training for their family. Often, people are looking for a new church because they are dissatisfied with their old one.

Whatever the motive, people are looking for a new church. But what kind of church? What are they looking for? What are you looking for?

-    Some are looking for a traditional church, just like the one they left behind or the one they grew up in.

-    Some are looking for an innovative church, one completely different from anything they have ever experienced.

-    Some are looking for a convenient church, one which is located nearby that will minimize their travel time.

-    Some are looking for a friendly church, one that will quickly welcome them and make them feel special.

-    Some are looking for a large church, where they can get lost in the crowd.

-    Some are looking for a small church, where they can get to know everyone well, or in some cases where they can be more prominent and exert more influence.

-    Some are looking for an exciting church, one with emotionally stirring assemblies.

-    Some are looking for an entertaining church, where the music is like a concert and the preacher is part comedian.

-    Some are looking for a tolerant church, where no one will rebuke them if they (or a family member) live a sinful lifestyle.

-    Some are looking for a providing church, one with all kinds of programs and services such as day care, schools, recreational outings, exercise classes, etc.

-    Some are looking for an elite church, where they will be able to make a name for themselves or make some good business contacts by mixing with the upper class.

Something’s missing here, isn’t it? What we ought to be seeking is a truthful church, one that follows the New Testament pattern, upholds God’s revealed truth (1 Timothy 3:15), and keeps the emphasis where He put it: on man’s spiritual needs.

What we are looking for in a church says a lot about us. Honestly, are we trying to please God or ourselves?

**Volume 6 December 21 2014 #51**

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

By E.R. Hall, Jr.

The majority of religious denominations, which I am familiar with, believe that salvation from sin comes through the blood of Christ. In this respect, they are correct. If salvation could be had without His blood, there would have been no need for Christ coming to this world and dying on the cross. Thus, the blood of Christ is absolutely essential when it comes to our being cleansed from sin. Jesus Himself said, "*For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*." So, while there is agreement in the religious world concerning the need of Christ's blood for the remission of sins, there is much discord over the question: How do we contact the blood of Christ?

Ask yourself: Are you willing to accept the Bible's answer to this question? If so, read on. If not, read on anyway! "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection*:"(Romans 6:3-5). Christ shed His blood in His death. When we are baptized into His death, we contact the blood which He shed in His death. Is that not simple to understand? It is so simple we would have to have help to misunderstand! We are baptized INTO His death and we are buried WITH Him by baptism. Baptism relates to BOTH the death and burial of Jesus Christ. Yes, His blood was shed on the cross sometime before His burial but the plain words of Romans 6:3 are: "*baptized into his death*"

From what Romans 6:3-5 teaches, what possible conclusion could anyone reach than we are to contact the blood of Christ in baptism? Have you contacted the blood of Christ?



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Of Confidence...

The Besetting Sin

By  R. L. Whiteside

The besetting sin of the human family is a lack of confidence in God, manifested in every kind of departure from the word of God. If our confidence in God were what it should be, we would never want to turn aside from his way.

Eve lacked confidence in God, and so she followed the devil; Adam lacked confidence in God, and so he followed his wife. Why did Abel do what God said and why did not Cain do what God said? Abel had confidence enough in God to follow his commands; Cain did not.

No man today would depart from the plain word of God if he had full confidence in God; and the elders of Israel would not have asked for a king, had they not lacked confidence in God's way.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#50 - At one time all the people of the earth spoke one language, but the Bible tells that change in a certain city, do you know the name of the city?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Babel, Genesis 11:1-9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This week's question:

#51 - The story of Ruth is a wonderful story of love and commitment. Ruth's mother in law's name was Naomi, do you know her father in law's name? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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**Regular scheduled services:**

Sunday:

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday:

7:30 PM

**Everyone Welcome To Attend.**

**Chapman Highway church of Christ**

7604 Chapman Hwy.

Knoxville, TN. 37920

865-573-6638

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KEYS TO A HAPPY NEW YEAR

By Steve Klein

How many times have you been wished a "Happy New Year" over the past week? If you're like me, you've heard those words a few times at least. It is a nice sentiment. But wishing for it won't make it happen. Have we ever stopped to consider what it would take for us to actually have a happy new year? Do we realize that, apart from God Himself, the one person who has the most control over how happy the coming year will be for us is the person we see when we look in the mirror? What can you and I do to make a happy new year. The Scriptures give the following suggestions:

1) Serve God and others. Jesus taught that happiness is found in serving. After He had washed the disciples feet he said, "*I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*" (John 13:15, 17). The wise man said, "*He who has mercy on the poor, happy is he*" (Proverbs 14:21).

2) Control Your Thoughts. We can change our lives by changing our attitudes. We are what we think (cf. Proverbs 23:7). If we think happy and wholesome thoughts, we will be happy. This is the secret to happiness that Paul shared with the Philippians in Philippians 4:8-9 when he said, "*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you*."

3) Avoid sin and guilt. Sin promises pleasure but brings misery. When David was entangled in sin he described it this way: "*There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger, nor any health in my bones because of my sin. My iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me*" (Psalms 38:4). If we fail to avoid sin, all is not lost; we can still find happiness by finding forgiveness. This is exactly what David did. In Psalm 51:7-8 he prayed, "*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice*."

4) Learn to be content. Those who trust God learn to be content with their current physical circumstances. They do not desire more than or other than what they have. The Scriptures teach, "*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you*.'" (Hebrews 13:5).

5) Keep focus on spiritual things. Earthly things will always fade away and disappoint. Our earthly achievements and possessions cannot provide lasting happiness. Faith, hope and love are three things that bring abiding joy. So, "*Do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are heavenly, but the things which are not seen are eternal*." (2 Corinthians 4:18).

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The Lord Spoke to Me

By Keith Sharp

At one time the word of God was found in human vessels, inspired men, the apostles and prophets of Christ (2 Corinthians 1:1; 4:6-7; Ephesians 3:1-5). The Holy Spirit revealed to them God's thoughts and God's words (1 Corinthians 2:9-13). The holy apostles and prophets worked mighty signs, wonders, and miracles to confirm the divine message they brought (Mark 16:17-20; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4).

But these same apostles and prophets wrote down these inspired - God-breathed - words in books (Ephesians 3:1-5). These books were gathered together in one, the New Testament, which, along with the Old Testament compose the Scriptures, the writings from God commonly called the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 5:18; 2 Peter 3:14-16). Now the word of God is found in an inspired book, the Bible, which is completely sufficient to supply all our spiritual needs (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

When someone claims, "God spoke to me," he is claiming the gift of prophecy. But that gift has ceased, and all divine truth for men has been revealed, confirmed, and recorded in the Scriptures. If you're having a hard time making a difficult decision, look for guidance from the Scriptures and pray for wisdom to do what's best (James 1:5). But don't confuse your opinions or feelings for divine revelation. Divine truth doesn't come from a human mind; it's found in an inspired book. Your feelings are just your feelings, and all they prove is that you feel that way.

This reminds me of a true story Robert F. Turner used to tell. A woman came to him asking him to perform her wedding ceremony. Upon discussion he found she was unscripturally divorced. He said he couldn't perform the ceremony. She left but later returned and announced, "Brother Turner, God spoke to me and said it's OK, you can perform my wedding ceremony." Unfazed, he inquired, "Well, did He write it down for you?" "No," she replied. "Well," Brother Turner announced, "God spoke to me too. But He wrote it down for me." And He read to her Matthew 19:9. If God didn't write it down for you, He didn't speak to you.



**KIDS**

**COLUMN**



Fly off the handle

"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (Prov. 16:32)

The expression, "Fly off the handle," is used when one quickly loses his temper. The original expression comes to us from the use of tools. After tools have set in the shed for months, the wooden handle becomes dry and shrinks. When various tools such as an ax are used, the iron can easily fly off the handle because of the shrunken wood. When the blade of an ax flies off the handle, it is very dangerous to the user and everyone standing nearby. Similarly, when one, "flies off the handle" (has a violent explosion of anger), it endangers everyone.

Let us learn to rule our spirits.

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Question of the week!

Last week's question:

#51 - The story of Ruth is a wonderful story of love and commitment. Ruth's mother in law's name was Naomi, do you know her father in law's name? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Elimelech, Ruth 1:2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

One year ago we started a segment in the kids column of our bulletin entitled "Question of the week." This was directed toward our young people but all were encouraged to get involved.

We were blessed with a wide range of ages, and we wanted all to get involved. So some of our questions were very simple, while others were a challenge; But it was all about digging into our bibles for the answers. We hope you enjoyed it!



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