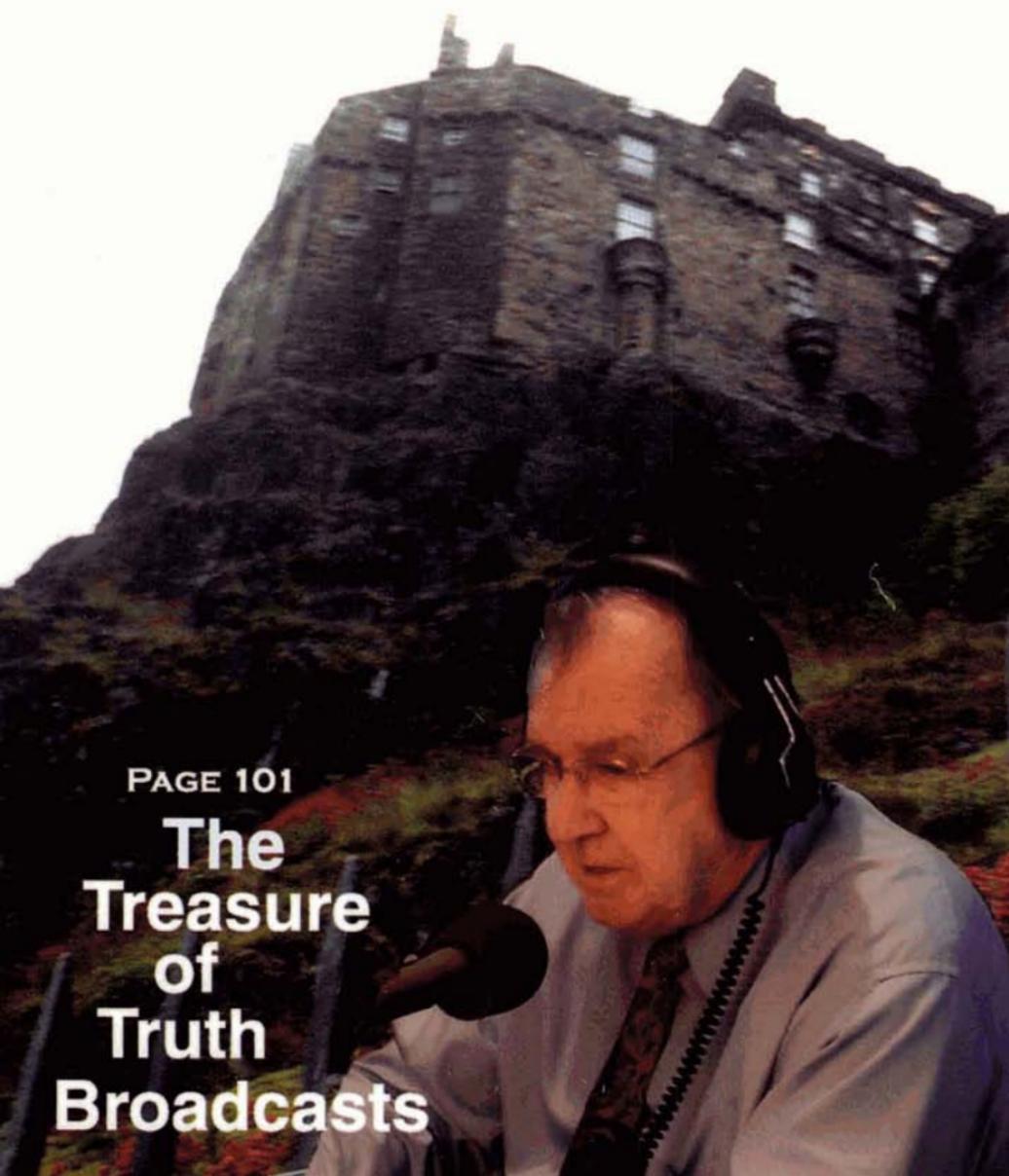


THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

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The
Treasure
of
Truth
Broadcasts



THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

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THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST SALUTE YOU

(ROMANS 16:16).

A Brief Introduction to the Church of Christ . . .

The church of Christ dates back to the days of the New Testament (Romans 16:16). It was founded by Christ on the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 33 (Acts 2), not long after His ascension back to heaven. In the years that followed, it rapidly grew to fill Jerusalem, then Judea, Samaria, and finally the whole Roman Empire (Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:23). In America, the first churches of Christ were planted in the late 1700s as the result of a movement to go back to the Bible and do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names (cf. 1 Peter 4:11).

We believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:30,31), that the Bible is inspired of God (2 Timothy 3:16,17), and that Christ will return to take His kingdom home to God (1 Corinthians 15:24). We emphasize sincere worship (John 4:24), every-member evangelism (Acts 8:4), godly living (Titus 2:11,12), love for each other (John 13:34,35), and helping those in need (James 1:27). We believe the Bible teaches that sinners are saved by learning of Jesus, faith in Jesus, repentance of sin because of Jesus, confession of Jesus, and baptism into Jesus (John 6:44,45; 3:16; Mark 16:15,16; Romans 10:9,10; Acts 2:38). The church of Christ is organized with elders, deacons, preachers, and other members, as in New Testament times (Philippians 1:1). It has no governing body on earth higher than the local congregation.

The church of Christ is noted for its emphasis upon returning to New Testament Christianity and for its desire to unite all Christians into one body (1 Corinthians 1:10). We believe that the New Testament is the only rule for faith and practice in religious matters (2 Timothy 3:17; 2 Peter 1:3), and that God's Word must authorize all that is done in Christian worship (Colossians 3:17, Revelation 22:18,19). Thus we try to strictly follow the New Testament. We believe that it is possible to have religious unity in a day of division by simply following the New Testament pattern and putting aside human traditions.

To put it simply, the church of Christ is seeking to be the same church one reads about in the New Testament. We aim to restore its doctrine, its practice, its lifestyle, and its zeal.

Allen Webster

D.R. (Reggie) Gnanasundaram

Reggie Gnanasundaram of Colombo, Sri Lanka, passed from this life on June 8, 2007, suffering a heart attack after surgery to remove a tumor from his kidney. His wife (Mahes), son (Chandiran), and daughters (Lilani and Cynthia) were with him in the hospital.

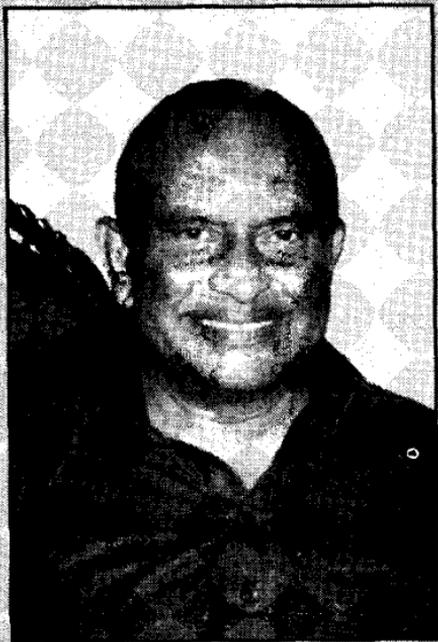
Reggie was born September 9, 1926, but his real birth was April 16, 1968 when he was baptized into the Family of God. From that day he never looked back.

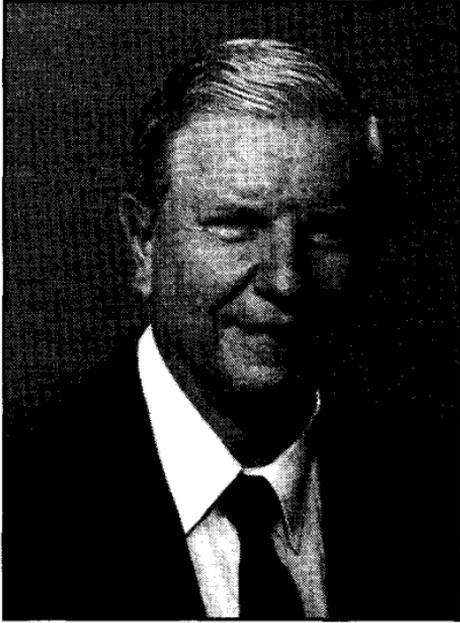
We had wanted to work in India but, providentially, God opened the door to Sri Lanka first. Reggie was among those converted during the short months we were in Colombo. He became a diligent student of the Scriptures, always arranging home studies with people he had known in the past or with strangers who showed an interest in God's word. Through his efforts several congregations were begun on the island, and prime property was bought and a building constructed as a meeting place for the church in Colombo.

When Radio Sri Lanka opened her short-wave station to religious broadcasting, we could see God's foresight in having Reggie in place to be responsible for the contracts and tapes. Through that diligence, alone, many in India have had opportunity to know the truth.

Through almost forty years of working together, we realize what a pillar of strength we have lost, and how difficult it will be for his family and the church to fill that hurting void. But — just think! — on Friday, Reggie opened his eyes in that perfect spirit world! He knows God in a new way now!

J.C. Choate





THE LORD'S INVITATION

J. C. Choate
Editor-in-Chief

Jesus extended his invitation by saying, *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”* (Matthew 11:28-30).

To let one and all know what He would expect of those who would respond to his invitation, Jesus commanded the Apostles to *“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen”* (Matthew 28:19,20).

Mark recorded the Lord's great commission in this way, *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* (Mark 16:15,16).

What is the gospel that the Lord is talking about? The word literally means “good news” (Romans 10:15), the message telling of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). In obeying the *commands* of the gospel, picturing what Christ has done for us, a person dies to his sins, is buried in the waters of baptism, and is resurrected from that watery grave to walk in newness of life. Read John 3:3-5 and Romans 6.

Because of the meaning of “gospel”, Paul said, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH”* (Romans 1:16,17).

Following the Lord's personal ministry on the earth, after He had died, been buried, resurrected, and had returned to the Father in heaven, on the Day of Pentecost the Apostles received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to begin the work of preaching that gospel to a lost world. A great gathering took place in the city of Jerusalem on that day, and the Apostles preached to the multitude. Many of those who heard the message became believers and they wanted to know what else they should do. *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off [Gentiles], even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them [the Apostles] about three thousand souls"* (Acts 2:38-41). And as they continued to teach and serve God, *"... the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved"* (Acts 2:47).

Now when I was growing up back in the 50's, I was blessed to hear the Gospel proclaimed by great Gospel preachers on the radio, in Gospel meetings, and in various worship services of the church. Those who were preaching always extended the Lord's invitation to those who were present, explaining what one needed to do to be saved and encouraging the erring Christian to return to God. All of this was done in a clear, kind way so that there would be no doubt as to what the Lord expected anyone to do.

In more recent years, however, many preachers have evidently decided that surely all those in the audience would have heard the Gospel enough times that it would not be necessary to take the time to tell the sinner what he must do to obey the Gospel or to tell the erring Christian that he needed to return to the Lord. As a result, we have generations growing up not hearing the commands of the Gospel presented in each sermon, and not hearing the exhortation to the erring to repent and to ask the church to pray that God might forgive that person.

While most preachers seem to have fallen in line with this practice, and elders evidently do not find any problem with this procedure, several important things are being overlooked. What about children and young people growing up without hearing the Lord's invitation presented, not being taught what one must do to be saved, or what the erring must do to return to the church? What about visitors being present, people who perhaps have never heard the message of the Gospel — how are they going to know what they

must do to be saved if they are not told while they are there? What if they never return? Might they, perhaps, die without ever hearing what they must do to have their sins forgiven?

When the preacher offers a blanket invitation, encouraging those who need to come forward to do so, but without explanation of what the Lord requires of them, with what sort of knowledge might they “go forward”? with only the knowledge they have from attending the meetings of denominations? In that case, they may respond with the expectation that the preacher will offer prayer that their soul may be saved, or they may respond with some other thought in mind that is equally foreign to the Scriptures. We have seen non-members respond, simply asking for prayers, and prayers were offered on their behalf for strength and for God’s help with the problems in their lives, but without anyone ever trying to help them realize that their need was to obey the gospel in order to be born into God’s Family, so that they would be in position to expect God’s help in response to their prayers.

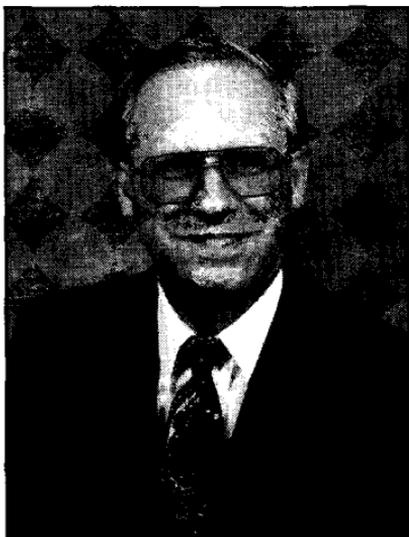
Then what about members of the church themselves, whether young or old: if they cease to hear the plan of salvation given, will they not eventually forget the importance of offering the Lord’s invitation, or will they not forget what the Lord requires of those who are lost, or what He expects of the erring member? Repetition is used in the Scriptures for a good reason: we remember what we hear repeated often.

My brethren, I know this sounds like an innocent thing, but it is so easy for us to begin to drift away from the Lord. This omission is something that has been recently introduced but the question is, what will come next?

As far as I am concerned I will continue to extend the Lord’s invitation after each sermon, explaining what one must do to be saved and what the erring must do to return to the church. I want no one’s blood on my hands.

Also, in preaching over the radio or in speaking on TV, I will also explain after each sermon what one must do to be saved and what the erring must do to return to the church. What if the Lord’s invitation is not extended properly after a sermon from the pulpit or by radio and TV, and that person does not return or listen again to the radio or TV message? It means that we did not use these opportunities to tell those who were listening what they needed to do to be saved. Our negligence could mean that they will be eternally lost.

What does the Lord’s invitation mean to you? Don’t you think it is worth repeating? Do you really think the repetition is a boring waste of time? Explaining that invitation, with the love and concern of the Lord, could make an eternal difference for someone in the audience. †



COMPETITION AND VICTORY

Byron Nichols
Managing Editor

I read once about an outstanding college football player who later played professional football. After his college graduation, his coach asked for his help in recruiting some players for the school. He asked the coach just what kind of players he wanted him to recruit to play there. The coach said, "Well, Mike, you know, there are some players that, when they get knocked down, they just stay down." Mike said, "We don't want that kind, do we, Coach?!" The coach replied, "No, Mike, we don't want that kind."

The coach then said, "You know, Mike, there are some other guys that, when they get knocked down, they get back up, you knock them down again, but they don't get up again." Mike said, "We're not looking for that kind of players either, are we, Coach?" The coach answered, "No, Mike, that's not the kind of players we are looking for."

Then the coach said, "You know, Mike, there are some other players that get knocked down and get up, get knocked down again, and get up again, and get knocked down again, and get up again." Mike's enthusiasm and football toughness and competitiveness started really coming alive, and he said, "**That's** the kind of player we're looking for, isn't it, Coach?!" The coach responded, "**No, Mike, it isn't. We're looking for the guy who is knocking everybody down!**"

In the game of football, regardless of the age level and the level of competition involved, we do want the guys who can knock everybody else down. We may even want to BE those guys! But, when it comes to spiritual matters, God isn't looking for that kind of performer, is He? The Lord doesn't want or need folks whose motive is to flatten every spiritual foe. There is much more to the "game" of eternal life than the merciless destruction of everyone who may get in our path as we strive for the victory.

Satan is the one who is busy trying to knock everyone down! "*Be*

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sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). He is fearless and intimidating! But in spite of his strength and agility, and in spite of his determination to defeat us, we cannot afford to be like the football players who get knocked down and just stay down.

The devil will win easily if we are willing to accept defeat because he sometimes knocks us off our feet and we just stay down, unwilling to get back up and try harder the next time. We will definitely be losers if we don't compete better than that.

What God wants is people who will keep on getting back up each time Satan knocks them down. The Bible provides us with numerous examples of folks who have been knocked off their feet by Satan, but who were sufficiently motivated and determined to get back up and continue to compete, even victoriously.

Just as players on a football team are able to encourage and motivate their teammates by their own determination and grit, especially in the face of adversity, so should we also be strengthened by the recorded examples of those characters of courage and resolve that we read about in the Bible. Is not our battle made easier for us as we compare our strife with Satan with what men of God like David, Joseph, Peter, Paul, and so many others refused to give in to?

Satan has never been known to compete fairly! The devil is wily (Ephesians 6:11); he is the ultimate deceiver (2 Corinthians 11:14-15); he is the liar of all liars (John 8:44); he is subtle and fraudulent (Acts 13:10); he is a murderer (John 8:44); and he is full of perversion (Acts 13:10).

Paul wrote a lot about the battle with Satan and the fact that it is a constant thing, but he proved that it is possible for us to win! He wrote, "*We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...*" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). His words in Romans 10:31 should also serve to keep us getting back up: "*...If God is for us, who can be against us?*"

Even when Satan knocks us down in death, God will enable us to get up one more time. "*...knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you*" (2 Corinthians 4:14). Indeed, "*...we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*" (Romans 8:37). Let us rejoice with Paul as he leads us in the anthem of thanksgiving and praise, "*But thanks be to God, who gives us the **victory** through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Corinthians 15:57)! †

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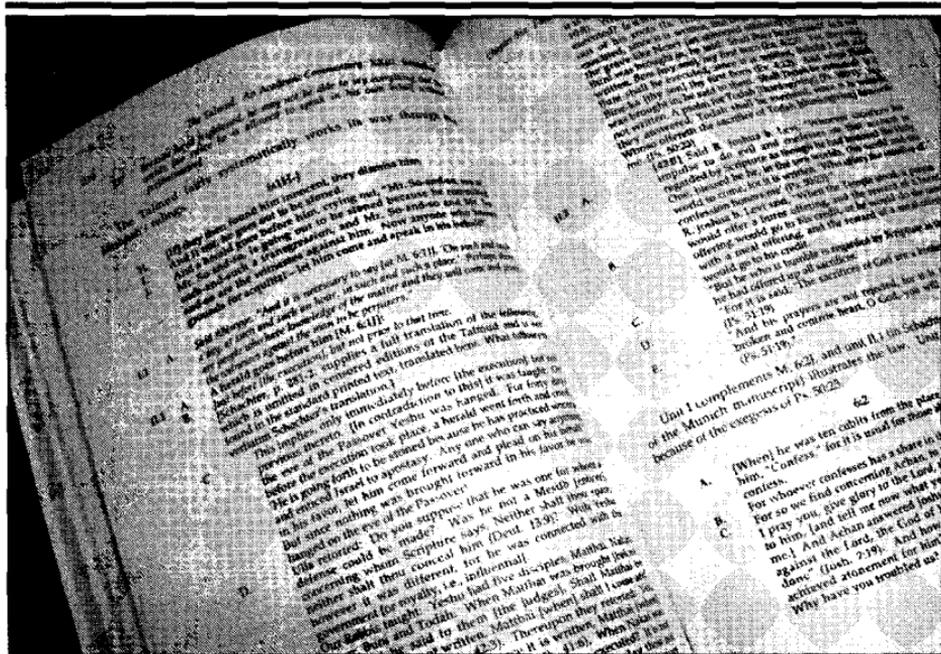
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INVITATION

THE PURPOSE FOR PRINTING THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL IS TO PROVIDE GOOD STUDY MATERIALS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH, AS WELL AS FOR THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY CHRISTIANS, BOTH HERE IN THE STATES AND AROUND THE WORLD. DESIRING TO BE INTERNATIONAL IN FOCUS, WE INVITE FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS TO SUBMIT ARTICLES (ALONG WITH PERSONAL BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION) FOR CONSIDERATION FOR PUBLICATION.

J.C. CHOATE, EDITOR



The Jewish Talmud and the Death of Christ

Wayne Jackson

There is an interesting passage in the Jewish Talmud that mentions the death of Christ. Though written from a negative vantage point, it nonetheless constitutes a marvelous confirmation of the biblical record.

In one of his epistles, Paul, lifting a text from the book of Job (5:13, LXX) to emphasize the folly of human wisdom in contrast to that which is divine, observed that God "... catches the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Corinthians 3:19). A fisherman "caught in his own net" is a pathetic sight. Or, as Chrysostom (c.A.D. 347-407) of Constantinople once expressed it, the soldier "is worsted with his own weapons."

An evil contingent within the Jewish nation influenced the Romans to put Christ to death. No serious student of history can deny this reality. This

is not to discount the culpability of all sinners in the death of God's Son; it merely acknowledges the historical events that occurred in the spring of A.D. 30 in the city of Jerusalem.

For nearly two millennia Jew-ish writers have been attempting to revise history in an effort to rationalize their role in the death of Jesus of Nazareth. In each attempt, they pitifully ensnare themselves. Better it would have been had they treated the awful history factually and simply moved on.

In this brief article we take note of a passage in the Jewish Talmud that speaks of the death of Jesus. It sought to explain the execution of Christ against the background of Hebrew law, with the contention that the Lord's death was implemented legally. The result, however, is a remarkable confirmation of the details of the biblical narratives.

The Jewish Text

The Babylonian Talmud is a commentary on Jewish laws composed between A.D. 500-600 (Neusner/Green, 69). Therein is a text about Jesus' death. The Tractate Sanhedrin (43a) contains this passage:

“Jesus was hanged on Passover Eve. Forty days previously the herald had cried, ‘He is being led out for stoning, because he has practiced sorcery and led Israel astray and enticed them into apostasy. Whosoever has anything to say in his defense, let him come and declare it.’ As nothing was brought forward in his defense, he was hanged on Passover Eve.”

An analysis of this paragraph is extremely rewarding. First, one must observe that the document is written from the Jewish viewpoint; thus, as expected, is hostile to Jesus, and is defensive of Jewish jurisprudence. This makes it all the more valuable as a document for the support of Christianity.

Jesus—A Real Person of History

The first fact readily apparent is that the Jews responsible for the Babylonian Talmud, who had every motive for wanting to eradicate Christ from history, did not. That is telling. The historicity of Jesus is conceded.

This is powerful testimony since a few modern skeptics (very much a minority within their ranks) deny that Jesus ever lived. G.A. Wells is one modern example; he has attempted to argue that Jesus was purely a mythical character, yet even he admits that “nearly all present-day scholars” do not agree with his thesis (Wells, 1.363).

The Manner of Jesus' Death

The mode of his death was by “hanging”. This is an expression that was used for crucifixion. Note Peter's description: *“The God of our fathers*

GOD

raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a tree" (Acts 5:30). Literally, the text reads, "... *whom you killed, having hanged him on a tree.*" The participle, "having hanged," is "coincident with that of the verb" (Lenski, 225). See also Acts 10:39.

There was divine planning in the manner of Christ's death. In His atoning act, He was bearing the "curse" of sin, i.e., the consequence of human sin — potentially available to the entire family of mankind. As Paul would later explain: "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree*" (Galatians 3:13; cf. Deuteronomy 21:23). More on this momentarily.

The Time of Jesus' Death

The time of His death is indicated: at the "Passover Eve." John the apostle, who was present at the time of Christ's death, writes: "*Now it was the Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he [Pilate] said unto the Jews, 'Behold your king'*" (19:14). For a study of the alleged problems associated with the time element of the Passover, the day of Jesus' crucifixion, etc., see Geldenhuys (649-670).

This timing, of course, was a perfect complement to the imagery of the Old Testament that made the Passover lamb a "type," i.e., pictorial preview, of the atoning death of the Savior (see John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Illegal Trial of Christ

The reference to a "herald" crying out for "forty days," proclaiming the guilt of Christ appears to be an obvious attempt to cover up the illegal malfeasance that occurred in connection with the Lord's trial and death.

Jewish legal procedure dictated that en route to an execution, a "herald" was required to: proclaim the victim's name, state his alleged crime, provide the names of witnesses against him, and call for any exculpatory testimony (see our article on the trial of Jesus, Part 1 and Part 2.) There is not a shred of evidence in the New Testament that such was done in connection with Jesus' death. Christ was not even in Jerusalem until five days before His crucifixion!

Accusation of Collusion with Satan

Christ was accused of practicing sorcery, which, in effect, was a charge that He was in league with the devil. The term "sorcery" represents a perversion of truth regarding Jesus; nonetheless, in a subtle way, it concedes that He was doing extraordinary things (His miracles) that were inexplicable from a strictly natural vantage point.

As support for the Lord mounted, the Hebrew leaders were frantic. *“The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, ‘What are we to do? For this man is doing many signs. If we let him alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation’”* (John 11:47-48).

Their ploy, therefore, was this: they would attribute His amazing deeds to the devil. After the Savior had healed a man who was both blind and mute as a consequence of being demon possessed, the Pharisees charged: *“This man does not cast out demons except by [the power of] Beelzebub”* (Matthew 12:24). This is what the Talmud characterized as “sorcery”. Sorcery indeed! Christ exploded the argument by demonstrating that if their theory was true, Satan would be divided against himself!

Stoning or Crucifixion—Which?

The Sanhedrin text notes that he was led away for “stoning” (as with the later cases of Stephen and Paul – Acts 7:58; 14:19). Stoning was a Hebrew method of execution. This is amazing since the same Talmudic text says Christ was “hanged”! See above on the “Man-ner of Jesus’ Death.”

From a legal standpoint, the Jews could not execute a person by stoning, for the Romans had taken from them the option of implementing capital punishment directly (see John 18:31b); they were required to go through the Roman judicial system for executions, and for a non-Roman, that meant crucifixion.

This, of course, ultimately was of divine planning. His “hands and feet” were to be “pierced” (Psalm 22:16b), and His “soul” [Heb. *nephesh*; “life,” resident in the blood; cf. Leviticus 17:11] was to be “poured out” (or “laid bare”; Isaiah 53:12b; cf. Zechariah 13:1). The Savior had to die in some fashion involving the profuse loss of blood. Crucifixion accommodated that requirement much more effectively than stoning (cf. John 19:34). It is incredible that the Talmud should provide such an unintended confirmation of the biblical record.

The Lack of Defense

The claim that Jesus lacked any “defense” is noteworthy in that it corroborates the prophecy of Isaiah. *“He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth”* (53:7).

Reflect upon the testimony of the Gospel records: *“And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered not a word And he*

GOD

gave him [Pilate] no answer, not even one word" (see Matthew 27:12, 14; cf. Mark 15:5; Luke 22:67; 23:9). These texts reveal that while Christ made a few brief comments in the course of His several "court" appearances, He offered no formal defense for His innocence.

Christ's Influence

This Jewish document also takes note of the influence of the Lord Jesus. He was said to have led "Israel astray ... into apostasy," a circumstance which the chief priests and Pharisees anticipated with fear (cf. John 11:48).

It has been estimated that by the time Stephen was martyred (Acts 7:60), the Jerusalem church consisted of no fewer than 20,000 souls (Kistemaker, 148). This represented more than one-third of the estimated 55,000 citizens in Jerusalem at that time (Jeremias, 83).

Conclusion

How strange it is (dare we say "providential"?) that Jewish writers of the post-apostolic age ended up providing the sort of evidence that does not undermine the New Testament accounts; rather, unwittingly it supports them! †

Wayne Jackson is a Christian writer and speaker, dealing primarily with Christian apologetics. This study concerning the historicity of Christ was a recent posting on his web site: www.christiancourier.com.

And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, *Place of a Skull*, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.

And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Matthew 27:33-37).

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).



SHEM, HAM AND JAPHETH

Rex Banks

According to Scripture only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives survived the Flood (Genesis 7:13). If this is the case, all the races upon the earth have descended from Shem, Ham and Japheth, as their families multiplied

and covered the earth. The aptly-called "Table of Nations" in Genesis chapter 10 purports to contain "*the records of the generations of Shem, Ham and Japheth*", providing information about the "*sons (who) were born to them after the flood*" (v 1).

Where Did the Races Come From?

Many critics of the Bible have expressed the view that the great variation of skin colour which we see in the world today is proof that the Bible is in error on this point since such diversity could not come about in just a few thousand years. However this objection is unfounded. Biologist Dr. Gary Parker, a one-time evolutionist, explains *why* in his very readable book **Creation Facts of Life**:

“How long would it take to get all the variation in the amount of skin colour we see among people today? A million years? No. A thousand years? No. Answer: **just one generation!**”

“Let’s see how that works. The amount of skin colour we have depends on at least two pairs of genes. Let’s call these genes A and B. People with the darkest skin colour have genes AABB as their genotype (set of genes for a trait); those with very light skins have aabb. People with two ‘capital letter’ genes would be ‘medium skin-ned’ and those with one or three such genes would be a shade lighter or a shade darker.

“Suppose we start with two medium-skinned parents, AaBb. Less than half (only 6 of the 16 combination) would be medium-skinned like their parents. Four each would be a shade darker or lighter. One in 16 of the children of medium-skinned parents (Aa Bb) would have the darkest possi-



Photo by Gary Roberts

Pictured above are twin girls, born to Kylie Hodgson and Remi Horder (both of whom have white mothers and black fathers). Reme and Kian provide the visible answer to the question, “Where did all the races come from?” proving that it is simply a matter of genes. Read the complete article in *Creation Magazine* (www.CreationOnTheWeb.com).

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ble skin colour (AABB) while the chances are also 1 in 16 that a brother or sister will have the very lightest skin colour (aabb)...

“Starting with medium-skinned parents (Aab), it would take only one generation to produce all the variation we see in the human skin colour today.”

In this context it is important to keep in mind that after the Flood “*the whole earth used the same language,*” (Genesis 11:1), and because of human disobedience God “*confused their language*” (11:8), with the result that the people were “*scattered ... abroad over the face of the earth*” (11:9). Parker explains that the isolation of various human groups which would have followed the confusion of the languages (Genesis 11:7) would have caused those groups to get “locked in” to producing offspring of a particular colour, giving rise to the various racial groups which we see today. There can be no legitimate objection raised to the Genesis account on this score.

Historical Remembrance of Ancestors

In 1995 after more than 25 years of research, Bill Cooper of the Creation Science movement published a fascinating book entitled **After the Flood** in which he demonstrates that many peoples of the earth have independently preserved the memory of Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their descendants. Concerning Japheth, Cooper says:

“The father of all the Indo-European peoples, it would be surprising indeed if his name had gone unremembered among them. As it is, we find that the early Greeks worshiped him as Lapetos, or Lapetus, whom they regarded as the son of heaven and earth, the father of many nations. Likewise, in the ancient Sanskrit Vedas of India he is remembered as Pra-Japati, the sun and ostensible Lord of Creation. As time went by his name was further corrupted, being assimilated into the Roman pantheon as Lupater, and eventually Jupiter. None of these names are of Greek, Indian or Latin origin, but are merely corruptions of the original name, of Japheth. Both the early Irish Celts and the early Britons traced the descent of their royal houses from Japheth, as did also the early Saxons who corrupted his name to Sceaf...”

The sons of Ham are Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. Cooper explains how history has preserved the memory of Ham’s four sons:

“**Cush.** Josephus writes that Cush reigned over the Ethiopians and reports that in his day the Ethiopians were called Cushites. ‘The name Cush (originally rendered Chus in Josephus) is preserved in Egypt’s hieroglyphic

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inscriptions as Kush, these records referring to the country that lay between the second and third cataracts of the Nile ... Some have claimed also that the name of Cush was likewise perpetuated in that of the Babylonian city of Kish, one of the earliest cities to be built after the Flood

“Mizraim. A collective name, these people settled in Egypt. Modern Israelis still use the name for that country; it is preserved as Msrn According to Josephus some six or seven of the nations descended from the Mizraim were ... (he) lists these nations as Ludim; the Anamin; the Lehabim; the Naphtulim; the Pathrusim; the Casluhim and the Caphtorim.

“Put. The country in which the descendants of Put settled is well known to us from the Egyptian records It is always spoken of as closely associated with Egypt, and its close geographical proximity to Egypt is confirmed by an inscription from the archives of Darius the Great, king of Persia from 522-486 B.C. Here the land of Puta is shown as lying in the proximity of Cyrenaica, ie. on the North African coast to the west of Egypt.

“Canaan. The posterity of Canaan settled in the land that was later to be given to Israel. At the time of the Israelite conquest of Canaan, the population consisted of all the tribes descended from Canaan.”

Cooper also gives examples of how the descendants of Shem preserved the memory of their remote ancestors. It is well worth reading his book in its entirety. †

Rex Banks preaches and works in Hamilton, New Zealand. His web site is <http://www.angelfire.com/80s/rjdb/coc.html>. This excerpt is from Banks' book, Archaeology and the Bible.

These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood (Genesis 10: 32).

Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there (Genesis 11:1,2).

Written by God

Hugo McCord

Seemingly inexhaustive are the lines of evidence proving "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God*". The book that stirs poets to their highest thoughts, that gives artists the most lasting scenes, that controls sculptors' hands — what is its origin? The same book demands

attention from the world's greatest intellects and is the sourcebook for the best literature that man can write. The same book fascinates a little child, and thrills an ignorant old man in the backwoods. It makes bad men better; it is the greatest moralizing force in existence. At the same time it tells the sweetest and most enthralling stories ever

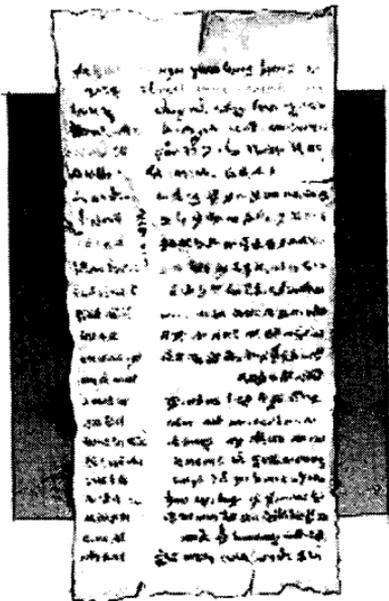
imagined. And the book is the basis of all good governments: high above the chair of the Chief Justice in America's Supreme Court Building is a sculptured image of Moses holding the Ten Command-

ments. And the same book reveals the grandest character ever in flesh, the only perfect Man. Answers to man's greatest and gravest questions are found in "the perfect law". No generation ever gets beyond the Bible; ever-fresh, it is a gripping

marvel to the sons of men and to their sons. What is its origin?

Books written by men are great in their special fields, but none is as great in its special field as is the Bible. And when all man's interests are concerned, there is no book to compare with the Bible. Educated and ignorant, crippled and whole, rich and poor, young and old, male and female — all find an interest in God's Book, and it has something to say to them all. No other book is so universally adaptable, fitting man as he is, where he is.

For this short article, I select only one proof of the Bible's inspi-



ration, and of course it is examined only partially: Its Results.

If the Bible is not inspired it is a hoax, an evil tree, and cannot bring forth good fruit. *"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."* What are the fruits of the book? What are its results? William Jennings Bryan declared, "I will make this proposition, that the Bible has done more for the world than all the books that man ever wrote. Is that strong enough? If it were necessary to choose between the Bible all alone, and all the other books without the Bible — we do not have to make the choice, and we would not want to, but it shows relative values — I think it would be infinitely better to keep the Bible all by itself and build the world anew on it and let all the rest of the books go, than to keep all the rest of the books, and let the Bible go."

An infidel, derisive of Christianity, asked a tribal chief on a South Sea island, "What good did those lazy parasites, Christian missionaries, do on your island?" The chief replied: "Had it not been for them, you would be boiling in that kettle right now."

W. L. Oliphant entered into public debate with the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism and challenged him, "Where are the schools that atheists have built? I saw,

without fear of successful contradiction, that every educational institution in the world is — directly or indirectly — the fruit of religion. Let Mr. Smith name an exception. Atheists have never built a school or a hospital. Atheism offers nothing constructive. It has no standard. What do you have to believe to be an atheist? Nothing. What do you have to do to be an atheist? Nothing. What do you have to be to be an atheist? Nothing. Atheism sets no standard for belief, action, or character."

C.R. Nichol and R.L. Whiteside have well said, "Christianity is not to be judged by wild fanatics, or moral perverts, who profess to enlist under its banner. The question is, Has it borne good fruit? When men and women live up to its demands and ideals, are they made better? Anyone, unless warped by prejudice and hatred, knows that it is elevating in its influences. Now Christianity is either true, or it is the greatest lie ever invented. Is it possible, then, that the greatest lie ever invented will reform and elevate character? A lie does not reform people, nor does it elevate them. Truth reforms and elevates. Christianity reforms and elevates." †

Before his death, Hugo McCord had been a long-time professor of Bible at Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond, Oklahoma, USA.



Throughout Scriptures there is an oft-repeated fact – the Almighty God *does not change!* (*Numbers 23:19; Psalm 119:89; Malachi 3:6; Romans 11:29*)

Even though this Truth is well founded in Scripture there is another paradoxical truth — God “changed” has many times throughout His historical dealings with man (*Genesis 6:6,7; Jonah 3:9,10*)! Although there appears to be a contradiction in these passages, there is actually complete consistency.

Even before the foundations of the world were established, the Almighty God had a perfect plan to redeem mankind from sin and to provide the blessings of eternal fel-

lowship (*Ephesians 1:3-5*). The unchangeable nature of God is evident in the way He refused to allow anything to detract from His goal.

Throughout history the changeless God allowed “changes” to occur. These “changes” were necessary in the development of the scheme of redemption, so that it could reach the point of completion.

The changes God allowed are many, but look at a few of the more prominent ones.

- ◆ God “changed” the ruling dispensations from the Patriarchs, to the great Lawgiver Moses, to the Son.
- ◆ God “changed” priesthoods from the father, to the Levite, to the Son.
- ◆ God “changed” the chosen peo-

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ple from fleshly Israel to spiritual Israel.

◆ God “changed” the worship from the fleshly family’s altar, to the Tabernacle’s altar, to the Temple’s altar, to the spiritual offering of those assembled together as the body of Christ.

Changes were permitted for one purpose: to allow the ultimate, unchangeable scheme of redemption to be achieved. And when the “perfect” plan had been provided, the allowance for change ceased.

The **perfect scheme** of God was fulfilled as the Lord’s sacrifice on Calvary provided the **perfect atonement** for sin and bought the **perfect church** so all sincere seekers of Truth could find salvation. When the Lord’s Church was established, all permitted change in matters relating to one’s saved relationship with God ceased (i.e. priesthood, sacrifices, worship, etc.).

After the establishment of the Church, God urged Christians neither to be “moved” from their faith, nor to “follow strange doctrines” in their belief system, nor to become anything but “steadfast and unmovable.” He specifically stated that “change” in regard to doctrine and to the New Testament belief system is wrong: *“So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us*

... Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6).

The “traditions of God” bind sincere hearts today with the obligation to obey exactly and follow completely the commands taught in the New Testament. A partial compliance is sinful. An incomplete compliance is rebellion to God’s revelation. A belief system that condones anything but the full and complete surrender and total obedience taught by the New Testament, is a belligerent arrogance that presumes to put man’s wisdom above God’s wisdom.

Man’s Presumptuous Changes

Tragically many today choose to follow their understanding of spiritual matters. These actually decide **THEY** know better than the Almighty God. **THEY** decide among themselves what commands are most important and what commands can be modified or relegated to a lesser value concerning salvation. **THEY** decide that what matters are “salvation issues” or what are “heaven and hell matters.” **THEY** claim a “wisdom” that distinguishes between “faith and law” or “traditions and grace.” **THEY**

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ruthlessly scorn as “ignorant, unlearned, unscholarly, and blinded by a traditional faith-heritage” the sincere Christian who seeks to obey the simple teachings of the New Testament. They relegate the New Testament to a category of “principles” to be loosely followed, but do not believe it to be the new **law of Christ** (Galatians 6:2) by which we will one day be judged: “*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*” (John 12:48).

that such changes are as easy to explain as the use of multiple cups in the Communion service set, or the changing of light fixtures, or air conditioning in the church building (or even the changes required in the building itself!). THEY next proceed to suggest that those who resist “change” to God’s traditions are as unlearned and legalistic as those who resist multiple cups or improvements to the building’s facilities.

THEY declare that it is “silly to insist that our worship today must be exactly as the worship in the first century, because Acts 20:7 shows

Who are we — mere humans — to stand in the face of God and dare to change one word of what He has commanded or required through inspiration of His Holy Spirit? Who can plead for such a person in the Judgment?

The eager “change-agent” must rationalize how THEY can change the time-honored and Bible based beliefs and practices. In order to re-define and replace the Biblical authority, the advocates of “modern changes” try to present a *reasoned* explanation as to why these “changes” must occur. It is soon exposed as *unreasonable* study.

Some suggest that changes to the traditions of God (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6) are simple to understand and accept. THEY suggest

worship in the first century was in an upper room with many lights.” The advocates of change suggest that if we do not assemble in an environment exactly like that described in Acts 20 then we cannot follow our “pattern theology”.

The *unreasonable* reasoning of these modern change agents becomes very clear when properly studied. THEY are confused. THEY fail to understand that God’s *commanded practice* must remain unchanged but the *expedients*

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involved in obeying the commanded practice can change. The command to observe communion every first day of the week (Sunday) is NOT changed by multiple cups. The command to praise God as a congregation in singing is NOT changed by the tuning fork. If we were to offer “peach juice” instead of the juice of the “fruit of the vine”

texture of the building where the congregation of God’s saints assembles but not changes in the **God-ordained structure of the congregation**. There may be *changes in the covering and table and utensils of the Lord’s Supper* but not **changes in the God-ordained emblems and purpose and observance of the Lord’s Supper**.

Change is **acceptable** to God as long as it does not **change the divine command and purpose**. Once one allows change to modify the divine command and to corrupt the divine purpose, he has left the commands and traditions of God and has substituted with his own.

then that would making a change regarding the divine command. If we decide to add a mechanical instrument or to have special music presentations that exclude the congregational singing or to shift the focus and object of our worship from God onto self, we would be disobeying God’s commands. Multiple communion cups and a tuning fork do not affect our obedience to the divine commands! They are simply a means of carrying out what God asks us to do.

There are acceptable changes involving the local congregation. There will be *changes of teaching methods*, but not changes in the **God-ordained message** taught. There will be *changes in the archi-*

Earthly living is filled with “change.” We must “change” in order to be most effective in spreading the Gospel throughout the world. Our *methods* may change. Our *communication devices* may change. However, **the message** must never change!

Change is **acceptable** to God as long as it does not **change the divine command and purpose**. Once one allows change to modify the divine command and to corrupt the divine purpose, he has left the commands and traditions of God and has substituted with his own. This deviation from truth must be corrected or else one must face eternal condemnation for “... *going beyond ...*” those things that were

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written (1 Corinthians 4:6). Whenever change is under consideration in our religious practices, let us all be willing to follow the divine pattern given in the Scriptures, and change ourselves to fit only what God has written. Let us quickly submit in humility to the God-directed pattern and refuse to follow any man-directed changes!

In Summary...

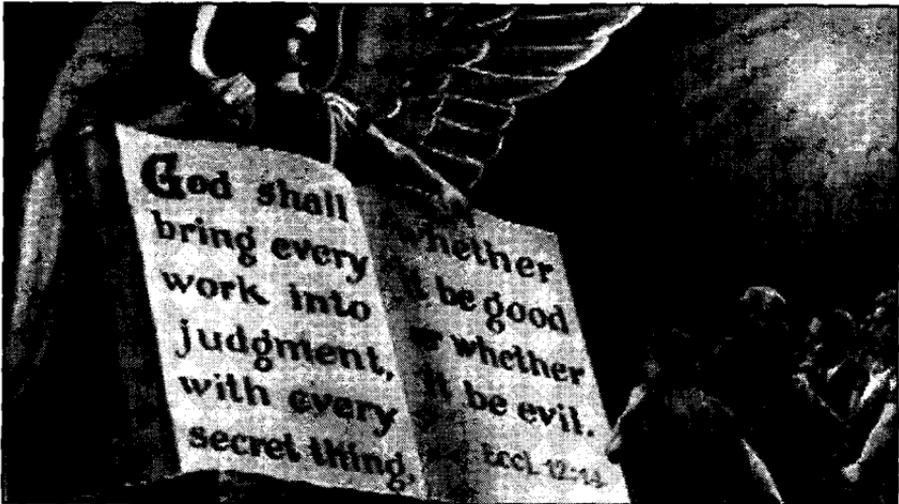
Throughout the history of God's dealings with man, changes took place for one reason: to allow the ultimate, unchangeable scheme of redemption to be achieved.

After the establishment of the church, God urged Christians neither to be "... moved ..." (Colossians 1:23) from their faith, nor to "... follow strange doctrines ..." (Hebrews 13:9) in their belief

system, nor to become anything but "... steadfast and unmoveable ..." (1 Corinthians 15:58). God specifically states that **change** in regard to doctrine and to the New Testament belief system is wrong.

Who are we — mere humans — *to stand in the face of God and dare to change one word of what He has commanded or required through inspiration of His Holy Spirit?* Those with the audacity to tamper with the message that affects the eternal life of their hearers will have much to answer for: *"My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment"* (James 3:1). †

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BIBLE FIND

Animals of the Bible

O L L B N M O C R G B D N I H
Y B X E E O R D A O U E Y L Y
L I A U Q H G H E A L A D J C
F L E A P Q E A B T L G J R G
W O R R A P S M R L O L V V P
S R K G V J R Y O D C E V E M
L E V I A T H A N T K F A D I
A D D E R K M Y S E H C R A Z
C A F A N O A U E E O R E O N
E A O L U I C B V C H E P M G
R A M S O O W O K A Y H A I U
T H E E L W D S R D D P V H W
A G A W L S G T Q F G O B J V
I K V L Z J L F A O J G J A H
I G K H Z J X M M X E A E O Q

ADDER

APE

BEAR

BEE

BEHEMOTH

BULLOCK

CAMEL

DOVE

DRAGON

EAGLE

FLEA

FROG

GOAT

GOPHER

HART

HIND

LEVIATHAN

LOCUST

MOUSE

PEACOCK

QUAIL

RAM

SPARROW

SWINE

WOLF



Jesus Christ, the Eternal Sacrifice

Betty Burton Choate

The Reigning Lord

Certainly, we recognize without doubt that God reigns in the spiritual world. Whether He reigns in this physical, sin-filled world is a debatable question in the minds of many. The Scriptures attest to the authority of God and they also exalt Jesus Christ as Lord, not only in heaven but in the earth as well:

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18).

... and behold, [there was] One like the Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed (Daniel 7:13,14).

... the Lamb ... is Lord of lords and King of kings... (Revelation 17:14).

But Jesus had told His disciples while He lived in the flesh:

... narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it (Matthew 7:14).

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

It is so easy for Christians, members of the church of Christ, living in the world and looking around at the religious groups whose members number hundreds of millions, to develop an inferiority complex. In comparison, we are so few; our strength seems so small. And, in measuring our own size, we tend to make the mistake of subconsciously measuring God's power. But the Scriptures teach clearly that it is not a weak or powerless or small Lord that we serve.

God Overrules in Nature

The Bible is the inspired history of God's dealings with the world. Although He allows man the choice of whom to love and obey — Himself or Satan — and although the majority of people have always chosen the gratification of their own desires in preference to listening to God, still God retains the authority as Lord over the universe. The laws of nature were created by Him and are sustained by Him. Illustrating His power, He declared in Job 38:8-11 that it was He who had fixed the boundary limits for the sea, saying,

This far you may come, but no further, and here your proud waves must stop!

When the Israelites forsook God (Amos 4:6-9), He told them what He had done, desiring to bring them back to Himself:

"I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities. And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me," Says the LORD.

"I also withheld rain from you, When there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, And where it did not rain the part withered. So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water, But they were not satisfied; Yet you have not returned to Me," Says the LORD.

"I blasted you with blight and mildew. When your gardens increased, Your vineyards, Your fig trees, And your olive trees, The locust devoured them; Yet you have not returned to Me," Says the LORD.

Throughout the Old Testament, God repeatedly said that He used any and all physical things as His tools. Why should we doubt that He does the same today? Hebrews 1:1-3 teaches that, even now, the Son is

... upholding all things by the Word of His power...

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

God Overrules in Government

In the affairs of government, the inspired record shows that, though God does not overrule to form good leaders or bad leaders, He does overrule in world events to bring to power those whom He can use for good and those whose evil natures can be used for discipline and punishment when people need correction. To Pharaoh in Egypt, while the Egyptians held the Israelites in slavery, He said,

... But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth ... (Exodus 9:16,17)

God had promised the Israelites, when they first became a nation:

Behold I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God [Elohim, plural: Godhead] which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods (Deuteronomy 11:26-28).

Israel practiced disobedience, however, and she suffered repeated correction at the hands of warring nations around her. Finally, God allowed the brutal empire of the Assyrians to rise in power to the point that Israel was conquered and the survivors were taken into exile. These words were written about Assyria:

Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will send him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Yet he [Assyria] does not mean so [to be a tool of God]; ... but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off not a few nations Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks. For he says, 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom' Shall the ax boast itself against him who chops with it? ... As if a rod could wield itself against those who lift it up" Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: "O My

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people ... do not be afraid of the Assyrian. He shall strike you with a rod and lift up his staff against you, in the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while and the indignation will cease, as will My anger in their destruction." And the Lord of hosts will stir up a scourge for him... (Isaiah 10:57,12,13,15,24-26).

From this text we can understand several things:

(1) God allows all people the freedom of choice.

(2) God's responsive dealings toward humans are governed by their relationship with Him.

(a) Those who belong to His family are dealt with on a Father-child basis. The obedient child can depend on His blessings and care. The disobedient child (as with Israel) can expect to be chastened (Hebrews 12:5-7) so that he will correct his error: or if he doesn't respond to the chastening, he will eventually be cut off from the Family.

(b) Those who are not in God's Family may seemingly be ignored and allowed to go on according to their own will; or their power may actually be increased so that they may be used as instruments in God's hands for the correction of His people. Always, though, when the cup of rebellion and evil runs over, God brings punishment to the ungodly nation.

(3) Regardless of the power a ruler or a nation may seem to have, God is the Ruler who allows, strengthens, or ends his authority.

In another important period of history, the strength of the kingdom of Babylon had been increased so that it could be used to discipline the faithless remnant of God's people and bring them back to Him. Nebuchadnezzar was the man raised up by God to accomplish this work, but in time Nebuchadnezzar's own haughtiness prompted him to boast:

Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty? (Daniel 4:30).

God punished Nebuchadnezzar for his attitude and later he said,

... I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have you done?" (Daniel 4:34,35).

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

At the trial of Jesus, Pilate had demanded,

Do You not know that I have the power to crucify You, and the power to release You? (John 19:10).

Jesus answered,

You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above (John 19:10,11).

Later in the inspired historical account, we read of the pride of Herod,

... So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died (Acts 12:21-23).

Romans 13:1-7 explains the system God has set in motion, as he allows authority or denies it to the rulers of the nations of the world:

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

So, from the beginning, man has been allowed to rule in his own world, but only under the authority from God. Whether he chose to be under subjection, in obedience, or whether in disobedience, he was used as a tool to help achieve God's overall purpose. **God, Himself, has been the One in actual control, and He gave that power and authority to Jesus Christ.** †

Betty Burton Choate is the author of the study, Jesus Christ the Eternal Sacrifice. This lesson, and the following lessons by sister Choate, are taken from that book. There is also a new version for youth studies.

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

“Do not be deceived,” said the apostle Paul in Galatians 6:7, *“God is not mocked.”* In other words, man cannot laugh at God or make fun of Him without consequences. Because God has appointed for every man both death and judgment (Hebrews 9:27), and no one can avoid either (2 Corinthians 5:10), all who mock God will face a fiery judgment. How does man mock God?

Bible, therefore, rightly says, *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’”* (Psalm 53:1).

Secondly, there are those who seemingly believe in God, but, instead of believing and following the one true God, they try to change His truth into an image made like corruptible man, birds, or four-footed animals and creeping things. They bow before such

God Is Not Mocked

Sunny David

Firstly, those who do not believe in God mock Him. They do not realize where everything comes from: what we see in the sky and on the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars; the vegetables, flowers, fruits; and all kinds of creatures — and man himself, with such a wonderful body! We see design in everything. Is there no designer? Man cannot successfully deny the existence of God, *“Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse”* (Romans 1:19,20). The

things and honor and worship them, instead of honoring and worshipping the one true God. They are making a mockery of God. Addressing such an audience, the apostle Paul said, *“Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Devine Nature is like gold or silver are stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising”* (Acts 17:29).

Thirdly, they mock God when they believe, accept the Bible as the true word of God, yet practice such things that God has not authorised in His Book. Speaking of them, Christ said, *“These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in*



vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." The Lord became so disgusted with such people that He asked, "But why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

Men need to remember that God will not be mocked, that those who do will indeed reap destruction from what they sow (Galatians 6:7). †

Sunny David preaches the Gospel in India, via Radio Sri Lanka. He lives and works in New Delhi, India.



How do you measure up?

But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me,
And my Lord has forgotten me."

"Can a woman forget her nursing child,
And not have compassion on the son of her womb?"

"Surely they may forget,
Yet I will not forget you.

"See, I have inscribed you
on the palms of My hands;
Your walls are continually before Me.
Your sons shall make haste;
Your destroyers and those who laid you waste
Shall go away from you.

"Lift up your eyes,
look around and see;
All these gather together and come to you.
As I live," says the LORD,
"You shall surely clothe yourselves
with them all as an ornament,
And bind them on you as a bride does. ...

"...they shall not be ashamed
who wait for Me."

Isaiah 49:14-18,23

"Good News!"

Neal Pollard

In Jesus' public ministry, He came to people filled with misery and all too aware of bad news, and He preached good news to them (Matthew 11:5). As His hope-filled

message must have seemed improbable to them, He was compelled to exhort, "... *repent and believe the gospel*" (Mark 1:15). The Lord never intended that His good news



SALVATION

should be a secret (cf. Mark 16:15). Everyone deserves to hear it!

The early Christians took quite seriously Jesus' command to make disciples by spreading the good news. Philip and many other saints carried this exciting message throughout the Samaritan community (Acts 8:25). Nearly 500 miles away, it was preached by Paul and Barnabas in Derbe and Lystra (Acts 14:6-7). It would be told across two bodies of water and over 1000 miles from that region of Lycaonia in Rome (Romans 1:16). It is little wonder that Paul would soon exclaim, "... *be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven ...*" (Colossians 1:23). The good news was too valuable and wonderful to tuck away and review only in the worship assemblies.

Why is the good news of the Gospel so important? Because it focuses upon the grace of God (Acts 20:24). This means that God did something for man which man needed and cannot provide for himself. The good news is that God made Christ — who did no sin (cf. Hebrews 4:15) — to be sin for every person in this world, so that any individual who goes where that grace can be found can be made right with God.

While sin is a weight (Hebrews 12:1), the good news lightens the burden (Matthew 11:28-30). While sin causes heartache and grief (Psalm 31:10), the good news brings joy (Romans 5:11). While sin destroys and separates (Isaiah 55:8-9), the good news offers new life (Romans 6:4).

Many people in desperate need of good news are out there anxiously waiting to learn that there is reason and purpose for their lives. Aimless and hopeless, they *need* the gospel. Christians hold that treasure in their hands. We enjoy the wonderful benefits of that blessing, and the same gospel will bless all others who have the opportunity to hear it (Acts 2:41).

Bad news seems to be snowballing into an ever-threatening avalanche of terror and unrest. Yet, much more powerful in this life, and in the one to come, is the powerful good news of Jesus and His love!

When more and more people hear the good news of the Gospel, less and less bad news will pervade. Truly, the Gospel brings lasting hope. Many will reject it, but let us renew our aim of getting out the good news! How many will find eternal joy because we did? †

Neal Pollard preaches in Denver, Colorado and serves as an instructor in the Bear Valley School of Preaching and extension schools internationally.

Is Baptism Essential For Salvation?

Jerry A. Jenkins

The majority of Protestants deny that one must be baptized in water in order to receive the remission of his/her sins. In view of this belief, one ponders why it is that in every passage which mentions *both salvation and baptism, baptism always precedes salvation* (see Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26,27; etc.).

Peter makes it emphatically clear that baptism is a prerequisite of redemption when he states, *"Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."* This verse obviously teaches that baptism is *"for the remission of sins."*

To lessen the force of this plain verse, Protestants have come up with two plans:

(1) "For" means "because of" or "on account of," i.e., be baptized because of the remission of sins which has already taken place. This phrase *"for the remission of sins"* is used by our Savior. When instituting the Lord's Supper He stated, *"For this is my blood of the new*

testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). This clear verse indicates that Jesus shed His blood, not because sins had already been forgiven, but in order to obtain forgiveness. This parallel passage of Acts 2:38 shows that one is baptized *in order to obtain salvation, not because he/she has already been saved.*

(2) A second plan devised is to affirm that "for" cannot modify both verbs, "repent" and "be baptized." In response, let it be noted that no recognized translation of Acts 2:38 is ever rendered "because of remission of sins." Furthermore, no recognized Greek-English Lexicon gives the preposition (Greek — "eos") the meaning "because of". Contrariwise, all render it as prospective, looking to an end to be reached, a purpose, or aim. Thayer, generally recognized as the best lexicographer, says of Acts 2:38: *"to obtain the forgiveness of sins."* In view of all this evidence, **baptism is for the remission of our sins!** †

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Is it wrong to gamble? Is it really “all that bad” to place a bet on the outcome of a contest, to play a game of chance, to buy a raffle ticket or to play the lottery? Gambling has its promoters and justifiers, especially our own state governments. There are also opponents who label it “immoral” and “destructive.”

What does the Bible say? While the word “gambling” does not appear in the Bible, there are numerous principles which, properly applied, prohibit the practice. Consider these:



Is It Wrong to Gamble?

Dwight Fuqua

1. Gambling violates God's design for man to earn his living by honest toil (Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11,12). Gambling is not “innocent fun,” but a violation of the fundamental principle of work.

2. Gambling is highly addictive and many become obsessed with it. The Bible teaches that we are not to be brought under the power of anything (1 Corinthians 6:12). The “It won't happen to me” argument has also been made by those addicted to alcohol, other drugs and vices. Gambling destroys lives!

3. Gambling is wrong because it causes people to lose their moral stamina. How often do those who gamble turn to other vices? Not surprising when they are part of the “gambling package”. Gambling, drinking, partying, indecent shows, cheating, stealing ... birds of a feather! The Bible says, “*Abstain from all appearance of evil*” (1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV).

ETHICS

4. Gambling violates the Golden Rule. The Master said, *“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them ...”* (Matthew 7:12, NKJV). In gambling, one tries to “beat his neighbor”. That’s the iron rule: “Yours is mine if I can take it from you!” Gamblers would not last very long following the Golden Rule. Think about it!

The fallacious arguments to justify gambling are too numerous and unworthy of time or space. One of the most common is that it is “okay” to gamble when the proceeds are given to a worthy cause — like education. But the end does not justify the means! It may be true that the Lottery is bringing large sums of money into the state coffers. What is not mentioned is the burden the lottery is placing on our welfare system, the children who are going hungry because the family paycheck was squandered, the lives that are being destroyed through addiction to gambling and the other related vices, and the spiritual consequences of living for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Recent studies indicate that those who win “the big one” end up the greatest losers, often being ruined financially within a short time because they did not know how to deal with money. I guess *“one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”* I read that somewhere (see Luke 12:15)!

That goose may not be so golden after all!

†

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When problems come, the question is asked, “Why did God allow that?” But why do people not suspect the real culprit — Satan — who is the underlying cause of all that is bad and wrong in this world?

Built into obedience to Satan are automatic consequences, not as a direct punishment brought by God, but as the inherent result of sin.

— Betty Burton Choate



Under the Influence

Brad Harrington, Ph.D.

Normally it is after 9:00 pm when their deadly behavior becomes most apparent. Most of us have observed the reckless driving, as their cars veer from the shoulder of the road to the centerline. Overlooking traffic signs and swerving across multiple lanes, drunk drivers routinely display behaviors that are easily recognized. These individuals are “under the influence” of too

much alcohol, and they are violating the law.

I recognize that drunk driving is not a sin which troubles the lives of the majority of Christians (although I strongly urge those who struggle with this to get help!). However, many Christians live their daily lives “under the influence” — under the Hollywood and media influence. They have ingested so much

“Hollywood” entertainment and media propaganda that their behavior and speech have been altered. Day after day televisions are tuned into shows like *Desperate House-wives*, *Sex in the City*, *The L Word*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, or soap operas. These vile shows encourage immoral behavior, and are filled with foul language and immodest dress. Oftentimes Christians watch so much that they become desensitized — similar to the alcoholic who feels nothing after just a few drinks. In addition, many Christians never think twice about viewing sexually graphic R-rated movies or listening to music with corrupt lyrics. These individuals receive a steady diet of **humanism, atheism, and immorality** as they constantly feed on the latest that Hollywood has to offer. They are indeed, **Christians under the influence**.

All of this Hollywood influence does not come without a price; just like drunk drivers, their behavior is altered. Language becomes laced with obscenities, mimicking the language they constantly hear from Hollywood. Marriages dissolve as individuals follow after fleshly passions — passions that have been kindled and fed from weekly television dramas. Honesty and integrity are abandoned as individuals seek to fulfill their own desires. Moral behavior is jettisoned as fun-seekers

imitate activities glamorized on the silver screen. Even human life becomes devalued as people become desensitized to things like abortion, euthanasia, human cloning, embryonic stem cell research and organic evolution. These Christians have become common members of a society that is practicing the “rule”: **Eat, Drink, and Be Merry!** They are *in* the world, and now, they are **of the world**. People who were once an influence for good have become overtaken by a steady stream of negative stimuli.

These Christians have been so influenced **by** the world that they can scarcely be recognized **from** the world. Their desire to emulate some Hollywood lifestyle is not only negatively affecting their own lives, but also the lives of individuals with whom they come into contact everyday. **Their own influence has now become hazardous**, as they teach non-Christians that a life of fun and pleasure in sinful practices is perfectly acceptable. Sadly, this negative influence also impacts **other Christians**, causing some to believe that worldly ideals and pursuits are in accordance with God’s Will. Through their actions they propagate an attitude that religious tenets are not really important and that the church is primarily a “religious social club”, all the while

wearing the name “Christian”. What could have been a positive influence — an influence for good — is often the exact opposite.

What can we do to ensure that: (1) we are not allowing the world to influence us in the wrong way? and (2) that our own influence is for good? First and foremost we, like those drunk drivers, must admit there is a problem. If we refuse to acknowledge the negative influences of Hollywood and the media then we can never cure the problem. Accepting and buying into the world’s “standards” is not a part of the Christian life. After we recognize the problem we must then take proactive steps to cure it — we should try to rid our lives of as much “Hollywood” influence as possible. **Stop** tuning into deplorable shows, **stop** supporting movies that contain filth, **stop** listening to demoralizing jokes.

As we begin to reduce the amount of negative influence, **we should seek to replace it with good**. Paul, in writing to the Christians in Rome admonished them: *“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God”* (Romans 12:2).

God knew the danger of negative influences. Observe what He

told the children of Israel when they were taking possession of the Promised Land. He said: *“You shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the Lord will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire. **For you are a holy people to the Lord”*** (Deuteronomy 7:2-6, emphasis added).

Moses went on to admonish: *“When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations”* (Deuteronomy 18:9). God did not want the negative influences of those inhabitants to distract the children of Israel. They were to be “in the world” but not “of the world”. Tim LaHaye, in his book, **The Battle for the Mind**, suggested: “Our present society is in a state of moral decay, not because the majority of Americans love degeneracy, but **because the influence of**

humanism has been greater on our culture than the influence of the church" (1980, p. 189, emphasis added).

The time has come to reverse that trend! We can once again turn this world upside down (Acts 17:6; 1 Peter 2:9). Christ said: *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven"* (Matthew 5:13-16).

The only sermon that some individuals will ever "hear" is what they see you do day-after-day, week-after-week. Your Christian influence should demonstrate the proper attitude and the priorities set forth in God's Word. **People should look at our lives and see something different** — because, after all, we are supposed to *be* different.

We understand that our sins have been washed away by the only spotless Lamb — Jesus Christ — and therefore, we desire to live a life devoted to Him. As such, our Christian lights should stand out as

a beacon in a world of darkness. How many of us have had the pleasant feeling of doing good and having a total stranger recognize that our behavior is above the standard of the world? Opening doors, lending a helping hand, caring for others, going the extra mile, helping a co-worker with a project, or befriending someone at school — "natural" things we should be doing as Christians, because we realize the potential of our Christian influence.

Allow me to suggest a challenge. Take one week in the coming month and determine to drastically reduce the Hollywood influence on your life. Instead of sitting in front of a godless television show, spend time playing with your children or grandchildren. Replace godless material with spiritual material. Exercise your body and your mind. Replace the negative influences with positive ones. At the end of that week you will be rewarded by knowing that for one solid week your influence for good has outweighed Hollywood's negative influence on you. You can rest assured that during that time you have made a difference, your Christian light having reflected the heavenly Father.

Are you up to the challenge? †

Brad Harrub is co-editor of Think magazine, from which this article was taken. www.focuspress.org

PROVERBS 17:22



The other day I dialed a number and got the following recording:

“I am not available right now, but thank you for caring enough to call. I am making some changes in my life. Please leave a message after the beep. If I do not return your call, you are one of the changes.”



A male acquaintance who is no longer married told me that God made man before woman so as to give him time to think of an answer for her first question.

A pickpocket was appearing in court for a series of petty crimes. “Mr. Brewster,” the judge said, “you are hereby found guilty and fined the sum of \$150.00.”

After consulting with his client, Mr. Brewster’s lawyer stood up and

said, “Your Honor, my client is a little short of funds at this time. He has only \$125.00 in his pocket, but if you would allow him a few minutes in the crowd....”



Two friends met in the street. One man looked rather forlorn and down in the mouth. The other man asked, “Hey, how come you look like the whole world caved in?”

The sad fellow said, “Let me tell you. Three weeks ago, an uncle died and left me \$10,000.”

The other man said, “I’m sorry to hear about the death, but a bit of good luck for you, eh?”

“Hold on, I’m just getting started. Two weeks ago, a cousin I never knew kicked the bucket and left me \$20,000, free and clear.”

“Well, you can’t be disappointed with that!”

“Yep. But last week my grandfather passed away. I inherited almost \$100,000.”

“Incredible! So how come you look so glum?”

“Well, this is Friday, and so far there’s been nothing this week!”



My friend told me, “My wife and I had words, but I didn’t get to use mine.”

PROVERBS 17:22

Susie, age 4, was drinking juice and she got the hiccups. She told her mother, "Please don't give me this juice again. It makes my teeth cough."



A career military man, who had retired as a Master Sergeant, was telling the new recruits how he handled officers during his years of service.

"It didn't matter a hoot if he was full bird Colonel, a Major General, an Admiral, or what! I always told those guys exactly where to get off!"

"Wow, you must have been something," the admiring young soldiers remarked. "What was your job in the service?"

"Elevator operator in the Pentagon."



At pilot's training back in the Air Force they taught us: *"Always try to keep the number of landings you make equal to the number of take-offs you make."*



Little Stevie hugged and kissed his mother goodnight and told her, "I love you so much, Momma, that

when you die I'm going to bury you outside my bedroom window."



Some say that if you lined up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try and pass them.



It is said that one day God was walking through the Garden of Eden. After a short while, He came across Adam. Adam was in low spirits this particular day, and God asked him what was wrong. Adam told the Lord that he was lonely.

God responded that He would create Adam a companion. She would walk by his side for all eternity. She would listen to his problems. She would wash his clothes. She would keep his house clean. She would cook his meals. She would do anything to keep him happy. Most importantly, she would never complain or nag him.

Adam was ecstatic. His spirits lifted immediately. The Lord hated to tell him that this creature would come at an expensive price. God finally told Adam that this new creature would cost him an arm and a leg.

Adam replied, "**What can I get for a rib?**" ... The rest is history.

If You Are Christ's ...

David Riley

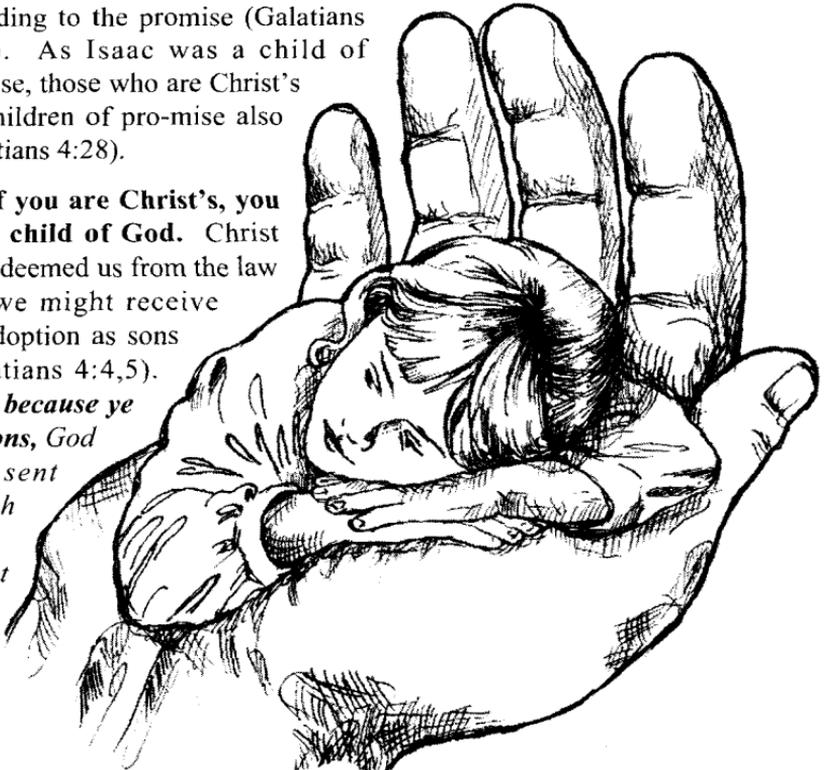
"If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

The greatest blessing a man or woman can enjoy is that of belonging to Christ. The blessings are many and sufficient for every spiritual need of mankind.

If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed. Christ is of the seed of Abraham. *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).* Therefore, if you are Christ's you are Abraham's seed. This makes you an heir according to the promise (Galatians 3:29). As Isaac was a child of promise, those who are Christ's are children of pro-mise also (Galatians 4:28).

If you are Christ's, you are a child of God. Christ has redeemed us from the law that we might receive the adoption as sons (Galatians 4:4,5).

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your



hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:6).

If you are Christ's, you have received the promise of the Spirit. "...That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive **the promise of the Spirit through faith**" (Galatians 3:14). Jesus promised the Spirit to those that believe (John 7:37-39) through obedience of the gospel (Acts 2:38,39).

If you are Christ's, you are justified by faith. "*Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.'* So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Galatians 3:7-9). "*But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, 'The just shall live by faith'*" (Galatians 3:11).

If you are Christ's, you have crucified the flesh. Paul lists both the works of the flesh and fruit of

the Spirit in Galatians 5:19-23. He then comes to this conclusion, "*And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another*" (Galatians 5:24-26).

If you are Christ's, you have been baptized. "*For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*" (Galatians 3:26-29). If you are in Christ, clothed with Christ, then you are Christ's. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If you are Christ's you are also a child of God. You became a child of God when you entered Christ and were clothed in Him.

Are you Christ's?



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If you are Christ's, you wear His name, as a part of His bride, the church of Christ (Romans 16:16).



A Daily Test

Mike Baker

When Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt they all faced difficulties. As slaves in Egypt they had a variety of food to eat. But as free people in the wilderness that was not the case.

So God provided them with food on a daily basis. This food was called "manna". We are told that it was white and tasted like wafers made with honey.

Now, everyone needs nourishment in order to survive. And God was providing that nourishment. But He was also providing this bread as a test for the people.

DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

After hearing their complaints the Lord said to Moses, *"Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not"* (Exodus 16:4).

So for six days God would provide this food, free for the taking. Some gathered a great amount while others gathered only a little. But all those who gathered were able to have enough.

Moses also cautioned that they should eat all that they gathered. None should be left over until the morning.

Of course, some tried to cut corners and gather enough on one day and hold it over until the next. But this didn't work. Their leftovers bred worms and stank. God wanted His people to gather this bread on a daily basis. This was His test.

The exception to this was the Sabbath. On the day prior to the Sabbath each person was to gather enough for two days and then prepare the manna and set it aside for the Sabbath. On this day the bread did not spoil.

Have you ever thought about the fact that God was testing His people by having them gather the bread on a daily basis? This is such a simple command, yet many people did not wish to follow it.

For forty years the children of Israel ate this manna. They sometimes complained and longed for the days of slavery when they had a wider variety of foods to eat. But if they wanted to be nourished, they ate the manna. The daily test was whether or not to choose God.

Jesus referred to this in John 6:48-51. He said, *"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."*

The manna was a daily ration and also a test to see if the people would be faithful to God that day. Today, some struggle daily with that choice: God's way or my way?

Let us decide that we will feast on the word of God on a daily basis. Let us remember the test from Jesus who said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"* (Luke 9:23).

Let's make sure we can pass the daily test of feasting and following. †

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What Difference Does It Make, Really?

Lance Cordle

If you are obstructed on your path to marry someone who says, “I want to marry a Christian”, and you are baptized merely to remove that obstacle, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you are present at worship services, yet you leave each one only to live as the world dictates, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you profess to believe that the Bible teaches that a Christian should sing without the accompaniment of instruments in worship, yet when in attendance, you refuse to sing (even though you are able to do so), *what difference does it make, really?*

If, as a parent, you instruct your children to read the Bible and honor the Lord in their lives, but you make no effort to do the same, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you profess to be a Christian, and thus to “*seek first the kingdom of God*”, yet most times, when the kingdom and the world battle for priority in your life, the activities of the world take precedence over those of the kingdom, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you believe that the gospel is the “good news” and the power of God to salvation, yet you make no effort whatsoever to lead even your loved ones to Christ, *what difference does it make really?*

If you are a leader in the Lord’s church and your attitude and actions contradict the very Bible passages you are supposed to fulfill, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you profess to be a Christian and, before God and witnesses, promise to stay with another person for the rest of your life, but your marriage ends because of you and your sinfulness, *what difference does it make, really?*

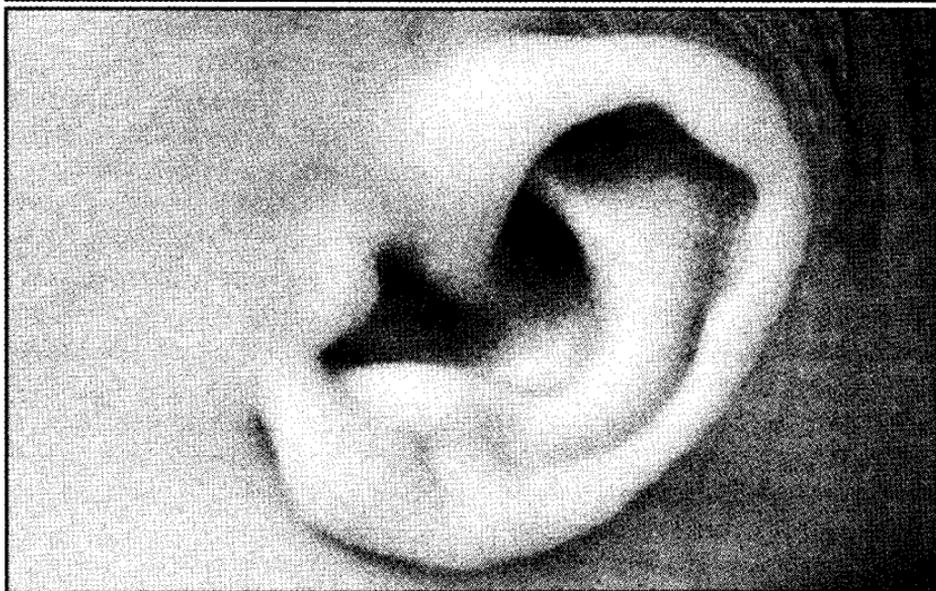
If you are a Bible class teacher and fail to provide the proper example in preparation and responsibility, *what difference does it make, really?*

If you profess to believe in heaven and say that you want to go there when you die, yet you make no provision for spiritual things while on earth, *what difference does it make, really?*

Are you a Christian?

What difference has it made, really?

Lance Cordle works with the church of Christ in Calvert City, Kentucky, USA.



Your Home Is Bugged!

Dalton Key

Parents, grandparents, do you realize your home is bugged? No, I'm not referring to insect infestation, but to near-constant verbal surveillance. You don't believe it? You seriously doubt your home is bugged? Read on.

In your home you will find, if you look carefully, highly sensitive receivers. Some are randomly positioned; others carefully placed. Look around. Open your eyes and pay close attention. Yes, there they are. The receivers are the ears of children — usually provided in sets of two. These receivers pick up sounds and tones and words of all

kinds, good and bad, godly and ungodly, upbuilding and downgrading, and transmit them to young, highly-impressionable minds.

A child's ears do not discriminate. The prayers offered around the dinner table are heard, but marital arguments and constant bickering are taken in as well. Encouragement for a job well done is heard, but verbally caustic and hurtful put-downs are received and recorded as well.

Whether we like it or not, whether we agree with it or not, one fact is both clear and irrefutable: our children are slowly but surely

becoming what they hear. (And we might add that they are becoming what they see as well. If you will look more closely, you will observe small but wide-eyed cameras around the house. They come connected to the receivers.)

The words of Paul in Ephesians 4:20 are most appropriate and much

needed: *"Let no unwholesome word come from your mouth, but that which builds us, as the occasion requires, that it may give grace to the ones who hear."* †

Dalton Key is the editor of *Old Paths* and preaches for the North Amarillo Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas, USA.

Parents' Ten Commandments

By My Example:

1. We shall teach our children respect for their fellowman.
2. We shall teach them good sportsmanship in work and play
3. We shall instill in them an appreciateion of Christianity and family.
4. We shall strive for companionship and mutual understanding.
5. We shall impart to them a desire to love and honor their country.
6. We shall encourage them to apply themselves to difficult tasks.
7. We shall teach them the importance of participation in community affairs and local government.
8. We shall teach them self-reliance and help them develop an independent spirit.
9. We shall help them develop a sense of responsibility in planning for the future, both spiritual and financial.
10. We shall, above all, prepare them for the duties and responsibilities of membership in the church of my Lord.

Some Things You Can Do for Your Children

Ken Tyler



It is true that some are "*without natural affection...*" (2 Timothy 3:3). This is evident by the way some parents treat their children. It is only natural that parents love their own. Sadly, we have all heard of babies being deserted and abuse taking place. Surely none of us want to be a part of such ungodliness. The "*aged women*" are to teach the "*young women...to love their children*" (Titus 2:3,4). All parents should have a deep love for their children and do certain things for them. Below is a list of the most important ones.

- 1. Bring your children to all worship services and Bible classes.** Church attendance sets the standard for priorities in the home. It deeply saddens me to see young parents miss on Sunday nights and not get up for Bible classes on Sunday mornings. Time is short and you must realize what is really important in the priorities you are teaching your children.
- 2. Pray with your children each day.** This will cause your children to trust God and rely upon Him. Prayer before meals will cause your children to be thankful and know where their blessings come from. Prayers will keep you close to God and one another. It just doesn't make sense for parents to not pray with their children.
- 3. Read a passage of Scripture or tell your children a Bible story every day.** Emphasize to your children that the most important thing in the world

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

is to do what the Bible teaches. This constant reminder will instill within your children great respect for the Word of God. Sadly, many parents do not have the interest to teach their children the Word of God.

4. Make sure your example is right. Beer

in the refrigerator and cursing and fighting will not get the job done. Your example before your children is the single most important factor. Children are like their parents. That's just the way it works. The fact of the matter is that some parents do not care. How sad!



5. Take time for your children. The great sin of our day is that someone or something else is raising our children. In many homes, Daddy and Mama are never around. Families that sit down at the table together do better. *Together* is a very important word. I am afraid we have forgotten this in our families. Your children need you now. Don't forget!

What are you doing for your children? This is an important question for now and eternity. †

Ken Tyler is a gospel preacher working with the church of Christ in Arab, Alabama, USA.

“Let Your Conduct Be Worthy of the Gospel of Christ”

Owen B. Moseley

“Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me” (Philippians 1:27-30).

In this short passage, Paul identifies five things that we can use to determine whether or not we are conducting ourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ.

First, Paul says that we are to “stand fast in one spirit”. When we “stand fast” we are firm, fixed in our position, immovable, and secure. Does an examination of our lives indicate that we are fixed in our position relative to the teachings of Christ? Do we rigidly adhere to the Word of God as we attempt to live as He would have us to live? Are we staunch defenders of the Gospel of Christ?

Secondly, Paul says that we are with one mind to strive together for the faith of the Gospel. For our conduct to be worthy, we must work, but not only work — we must work together as a group. Are we of the same mind, intent, and understanding concerning the teachings of the Gospel? Do we put forth effort to reach agreement, and then struggle together to demonstrate our faith in the Gospel of Jesus? Are we active in trying to convince others of the need to accept and to obey the Gospel, and to share in the resulting blessings and service that come from being a Christian?

Thirdly, Paul says that we are not in any way to be terrified by our adversaries. How many of us have adversaries because we are Christians?

TEXTUAL STUDIES

Is not Paul suggesting that if our conduct is worthy of the Gospel of Christ, then we will have adversaries? If we don't have adversaries, does this suggest that our conduct is not worthy of the Gospel of Christ? Paul states that Christians should not in any way be terrified by adversaries. Showing fearlessness in the face of adversaries serves as a sign to the adversaries of their doom and of the Christian's salvation that comes from God.

Fourthly, Paul says that Christians show that they are worthy of the Gospel of Christ when they believe on Him. It is our faith in Christ that enables us to stand fast in the face of adversaries and to successfully suffer for the sake of Christ.

Fifthly, Paul says that Christians show that they are worthy of the Gospel of Christ when they suffer for His sake. As Christians, we must bear up under all the trials that beset us on account of our loyalty in following Christ. In 2 Timothy 3:12, Paul said: *"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."* In 2 Timothy 2:12, Paul said: *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, He also will deny us."* In Matthew 5:11,12, Jesus said: *"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."* For the faithful Christian, suffering on behalf of Christ is to be expected. Also to be expected are the rewards that result from such suffering.

As we try to determine if our conduct is worthy of the Gospel of Christ, we each need to ask ourselves the following questions:

1. Am I standing fast in one spirit?
2. Am I, with fellow Christians, of one mind as we struggle to understand and teach others of Christ?
3. Am I fearless in the face of adversaries who attempt to oppose me in my efforts for Christ?
4. Is my faith in Christ strong enough to allow me to successfully stand up for Christ and endure trials and persecutions because of my attempts to follow Him?
5. Am I, because of my faith and trust in Christ, suffering?

A "no" answer to any one of these five questions suggests that we have work to do as we attempt to let our conduct be worthy of the Gospel of Christ. †

Owen B. Moseley serves as an elder in the Nettleton Church of Christ in Jonesboro, Arkansas, USA.

The Breaking of Bread

Kerry Holton

“...devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Luke recorded that the early Christians “*devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*” (Acts 2:42). From this passage it is clear enough that these first Christians gave attention to what the apostles taught, to their relationship to one another, and to prayer. But, what does Luke mean by “*the breaking of bread*”?

He is not referring to a common meal. When Luke speaks of a common meal, he uses the standard Hebraic phrase, “*eat bread*” (Luke 7:33; 14:1,15; Genesis 3:19; 31:54; Exodus 2:20; Leviticus 22:11; 26:5; Jeremiah 41:1; 52:33). But, when he uses the phrase “*the breaking of bread*” he means the Lord’s Supper.

Jesus instituted the Supper while He and His disciples were



eating the Passover meal. Note carefully the wording of Luke 22:19: "*And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me'.*"

Earlier, our Lord fed the five thousand. He had not yet instituted the Supper we now celebrate every Lord's Day, but He must certainly have anticipated it. Notice how closely the wording of Luke 9:16 follows Luke 22:16: "*And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.*"

We are seeing a pattern that surfaces again in Luke 24. There, Luke tells us that Jesus joined two disciples who were going to Emmaus on Sunday, the day of our Lord's resurrection. When the two constrained Jesus to stay with them, Luke records, "*When he was at the table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight*" (Luke 24:30,31). Surely, this must have reminded the two of the Supper in Luke 22.

Acts is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke, if you please. It is part two of the story of Jesus. So,

when Luke's readers come across the phrase "*the breaking of bread*" in Acts 2:42, they know what it means because they have seen it before in the Gospel of Luke. "*The breaking of bread*" in Acts refers to the Lord's Supper.

The phrase is found again in Acts 2:46: "*And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.*" Here again is "*the breaking of bread.*" This time, Luke adds that it was done in "*their homes*". A contrast, here, is being made between what was done in the temple (a gathering enabling the Apostles to further teach the gospel to believers and those who had not yet heard) and in their homes (private worship, including the memorial supper). If Luke had been referring only to common meals, there would have been no need to specify that they were eaten in their homes. Of course they were!

It is unlikely that Luke would give this phrase a different meaning from the one he gave it just four verses earlier. To do so would surely confuse his readers. Because of the large number of Christians in the city or Jerusalem, it is unlikely they ate the Lord's Supper in one large assembly. It is more likely that they met in house churches and ate the Lord's Supper there. "*Day*

by day" in Acts 2:46 probably modifies "attending the temple together", not "breaking bread in their homes". (The punctuation dividing the sentence into parts was not in the original Greek.) Christians, then, met together daily in the temple, but ate the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week in their homes.

Another reference in Acts to "the breaking of bread" is this one: "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread..." (Acts 20:7). What is Luke's meaning? Surely it is that Christians in Troas assembled on the first day of the week for the purpose of communing around the Lord's Table. On this occasion, Paul preached until midnight and raised Eutychus, who had fallen from the third-story window. Then, the disciples broke bread and ate (verse 11). That is, they ate the Lord's Supper and shared a meal together.

The purpose of this entire article has been to show that, for Luke, "the breaking of bread" had religious significance. It was a reference to the Lord's Supper. But, the point I initially wanted to make was that according to Acts 2:42, the Lord's Supper was of great significance in the early church. The first Christians were devoted to the Lord's Supper. It was a very important part of their week and their

assembly.

This should compel us to ask: How much significance do we place upon the Supper today? "None at all!" would be the answer of the Christians who have forsaken the Sunday assembly altogether.

But, what about the rest of us who do assemble with the saints? How important is the Lord's Supper to us? Surely, the observance of the Supper every Sunday should be a significant time in our week, just as it was to our first-century brothers and sisters! Is it? †

Kerry Holton teaches in the Bible Department at York College in York, Nebraska, USA.



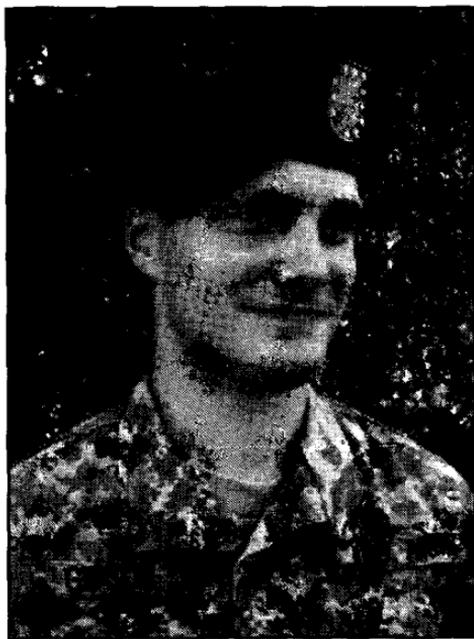
Another Look at the Lord's Supper

(1 Corinthians 11:26-29)

- ❖ A look Inward, "A man ought to examine himself".
- ❖ A look Outward, "You do proclaim the Lord's death".
- ❖ A look Backward, "Do this in remembrance of me".
- ❖ A look Forward, "Until he comes".

— Jim Martin

HEY! YOU KIDS!



I'm about to hit a very unpleasant subject, so all you slackers... be ye warned! The word of the day is **responsibility!** That's right, boys and girls, the thing that we all should take but don't want to touch. Here's another word that comes with it: **discipline.** Aw, man, that's two in less than a paragraph! Well, how about a third one? Let's try **freedom.** Hey now, that last one is talking about something good! So, what's the connection here? I mean "responsibility", "discipline", and "freedom" are separate from each other, right? Our survey says... "Wrong! They're all connected!"

You're Not Going to Like This...

PFC Alex Gibson

When you have the *freedom* that a car brings, you can do almost anything. . I mean, you can drive to the movies, or to a friend's house. Hey, I can come down from the Army base where I'm stationed to see my family on the weekends only because I have my truck. Not many friends would drive me the six-hour trip to visit my grandparents. I can do these things because of the freedom that truck gives me.

But there is another side to it as well. I own that truck and, trust me, it's a needy little bugger. I have to fill it with gas, change the oil, keep an eye on the tires, check the fluids, pay the insurance, wash it now and then (otherwise my sergeants would have my hide). Oh, yeah, then I have to drive on the roads at the proper speeds. The cops have a problem with someone going 150 through a park filled with joggers, and my Grandmother is always

HEY! YOU KIDS!

reminding me that I have to stay within “the prayer limit”, obeying the laws of the land so God will hear her prayers for my safety! It’s starting to sound like I’ve got some *responsibilities* if I want to use my truck for very long.

Ok, so I’ve made a loose connection between responsibility and freedom for some of you, but what if Mom and Dad got your car for you, and what if they take care of all those things? Well, I have but two things to say to you: First off you’re part of a privileged bunch, not to have to take care of those responsibilities yourself, *yet*. But if you really think that they will continue to shoulder the cost of your driving for your entire life you need more help than I can give! Your time for being responsible *will* come! And, second, you still must drive correctly, so you didn’t dodge that one.

Right on to the other nasty word: **discipline**. I remember our drill sergeants telling us at the start of our training that they had a mammoth task in front of them: to do in 14 weeks what our parents had failed to do in 18 years — to instill discipline in us! The sad thing is that they were right, in general. Most of my generation wasn’t raised by parents at all. Too many Moms and Dads were off making money or just not being there, so we

were left to the mercy of video games and TV for our education. If you think I’m wrong or being dramatic, consider that there are *many* high school graduates who cannot read their own diplomas! After 12 years of going through a school system that supposedly demands reading by the end of the 1st grade, I find it astounding that there is even *one* graduate who can’t read. I’d blame it altogether on the schools, but where were the parents during those twelve years of failure? Why didn’t they notice?

Nay, the bottom line is that it’s *the parents’ fault*, because they should have realized early on that something different had to be done, even if the kids had to be taken out of the system and home schooled. If I ever become a parent, you can be sure that I’m going to be involved with my kids. I’ll read to them and have them read to me. I’ll do their homework with them, no matter how simple it is. I’ll make sure they can think for themselves and that they have the tools to continue their education on their own, so that they can someday stand on their own feet, financially, as well as in every other way. I don’t mean that the most important goal is to have a fat bank account, I mean they need the ability to read and reason, to use logic and figure life out. In other words, I fully intend to instill

HEY! YOU KIDS!

mental discipline in them — as my parents tried to do in me.

Oh yeah, and have you noticed how people are taking on a more spherical shape now-a-days? Yeah, in the 30's and 40's kids weren't overweight. Do you know why? Because they worked in the fields with their parents. And because they played physical games like hopscotch and jump rope and basketball. No one thought much of boys racing or fighting or swimming. Today, though, fun is sitting down and watching TV or playing a game on the computer. Fine things, but kids've gone overboard and now most aren't doing anything in their spare time but sitting around all day. If you think I'm wrong, just ask yourself how often you sweat from exercise during your *average* day. Again, if I ever have kids I'm going to get out and play with them. I'll make sure they get some exercise every day and that they don't get sucked into being couch potatoes. I'm going to instill a little **physical discipline** in them along with that mental discipline!

Great! Hopefully, now you see some of my point, that in order to *give discipline* parents must take the *responsibility* to raise their kids so that their grown-up kids will have the *freedom* not to be fat stupid ditch diggers. Oh, I'm sorry — that was almost politically incorrect of me!

What I meant to say was that parents need to be *responsible* for their kids so they can amount to something in life. I'm not going to lie — I'm very afraid of my generation taking control of the future, because most of the people who are in their 20's are acting like they just hit puberty! They haven't been taught to *work* and to be *responsible*.

Yeah — that's what I'm saying — many don't have the *self-discipline* to take *responsibility* for their *freedom*. **They just want to do whatever they can get away with.** It shows most when they leave home for the first time. I'm not saying it's wrong for people to *enjoy themselves* when they get out on their own, but **I personally see people ruining their lives every day** by getting married before they really know the person, or burying themselves in debt, or drinking themselves blind, or having sex with anything that moves, or ... you fill in the blank: _____.

Ok, so I've made my point and ranted for a bit. How should we gain **discipline** and **responsibility** so that we can enjoy our **freedom**? Well, the best way is the Christian way. If you want to argue with me, consider that there have been many generations who have thrived on this method, so forget your "new age" ideas that have led to the moral death of millions. They don't work.

HEY! YOU KIDS!

I'd first like to say that Christianity is a religion that pulls no punches. Have you noticed that God, *even in the New Testament*, killed people when they screwed up bad enough? There's a standard of right and wrong, of morality, and of responsibility in the Scriptures, and God expects us all to study it out and to live by it. If we don't, it's our fault, because He wrote it there in His word, and it's there to be our guide. So let's stop saying people who are screwing up are just confused and not to be held responsible. Let's come to grips with the fact that they are wrong and need to learn how to get their lives right.

Let's start with something simple: how about God's moral law, written in the ten commandments and then further defined by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount? To make it easy, I'll just use one as an example for now: "*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth*" (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Kids, you may have to reach back to your grand parents to get good morals today, but honor your entire family. In fact it would be better if you honored anyone at least 10 years older than yourself. They lived to be older than you, so they

may have done something right. But go with Proverbs on this one, "*The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness*" (Proverbs 16:31).

So, in Christianity we should learn from our elders. "*And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord*" (Ephesians 6:4).. Ah ha, I see! This means that you older folks, you need to be *responsible* and *disciplined* in actively teaching your kids, because they will one day be the elders themselves, living by — and teaching their kids — *whatever you taught them!*

So, you see, these three — freedom, responsibility and discipline — *do* go together, and neither of them works well when separated from the others. Freedom is an exciting new world for kids fresh out of high school and about to start their life's adventure. But I warn you now: you'll wreck and burn if you don't guard your *freedom* with *discipline* and *responsibility*. Whether or not your parents taught you to respect the Bible and to go to it for your rules of life, that ought to be your first freedom-learned lesson: you're not smart enough to make the right decisions without God to help you. Let His word be your guide. †

Alex Gibson is a young Christian, stationed at Ft. Campbell, KY, USA.

Is Anybody Persecuted Now?

Kimberly Waggoner

I know the preacher at the McRaven Road church of Christ. He had a bush next to his front door that he didn't want, so he cut it down. But it came back larger and stronger!

When a Christian is cut down — persecuted — he will come back stronger if he is firmly grounded in the faith. As we see in I Corinthians 16:13, it states; *"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."*

We also read in Acts 16:16-24 that Paul and Silas were imprisoned in Phillipi with charges of removing a spirit of divination from a slave girl who brought her masters much profit by fortune telling. At midnight they were praising the Lord by praying and singing hymns. A great earthquake struck and all of the prison doors were opened. The jailer thought they had left so he was about to kill himself, but Paul said, *"Do no harm to yourself, we are all here."* And the jailer asked, *"What must I do to be saved?"* Paul told him, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household. Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.*

And he took them that same hour of the night and washed their stripes and immediately he and all his family were baptized."

Many Christians fled from their homes during that time to avoid persecution, but they spread the word about Jesus wherever they went. So the church grew. Still, to this day, around the world many who believe in Jesus are persecuted. Just a few days ago, a missionary in India was attacked by masked people. He was found unconscious with a broken leg.



HEY! YOU KIDS!

The persecution of Christians is growing in Africa. Local Muslims in a place called Benin destroyed a church building three days after it was built. In another country in Africa, a church building was burned, with the people locked inside. One young man in another place was asked if he was one of those "Christian sinners"? When he answered that he was a Christian, they killed him.

Outside the country we live in, Christians are brutally persecuted, but even in America, there are forms of persecution. In public schools you are not allowed to pray. You are not allowed to have any Biblical symbols on government buildings. Yet our country's motto is "In God We Trust".

We don't know what we may face in the future, if there is one. So we must be firmly grounded and always on the alert.

Even temptation is a form of persecution. If you are tempted, you must be watchful and firmly grounded so that after the tempta-

tion you will be much stronger than you were before.

I attend a "Christian" school, and I am sometimes tempted in the programs they have. They try to teach us to sing and praise God with musical instruments. I know it is wrong, so I don't sing. My teacher scolded me, and told my mother that I don't sing. Mom explained, and now they let me just sing the songs that are not religious.

So, when you are tempted, remember: *watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong*. Because if you can *live* that verse you can **stand firm in the faith.**

Also, in Matthew 5: 10, it states, "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" And in I Corinthians 4:12 "*And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we endure it.*"

Kimberly Waggoner, age 9, takes part in the Lads to Leaders training program for young people. She wrote this article for her speech. Kimberly lives in Clinton, Mississippi, USA.

HEY! YOU KIDS!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND BIBLE KNOWLEDGE WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WHO READ THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL? SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE, ALONG WITH YOUR PICTURE, FOR POSSIBLE PRINTING IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

The Faith We Treasure

Out there on Golgotha
I could see someone suffering in anguish
Though He did no wrong but told the truth,
Yet He was nailed to the cross *for the faith we treasure.*

I saw people burned alive,
Some tied up in bags and thrown into the sea,
I saw some executed upside down
And some beheaded.
I saw torture, mutilation and other horrors human minds conceived
For people not accused as evil men,
Who died in anguish *for the faith we treasure.*

I see young men and women, abandoned by their families
And others — as dregs and outcasts of society, rejected;
I hear pronouncements — anathema, curses — on those who stand alone
Refusing conformation to its norms.
The word they preached was *transformation*
But they were hated *for the faith we treasure.*

Yes, I could see Peter, James, and Paul — all save John —
Die a martyr's death;
I could see disciples tortured, imprisoned
And ordered not to speak the blessed name of Christ;
I saw Paulicarp, a disciple taught by Paul,
Perish victoriously in the burning flame of fire
I saw beautiful Rufina and Secunda, deserted by their husbands,
Dying bravely *for the faith we treasure,*

We may not live in fear today
With persecution, abuse or terror in our hearts;
We are not forced to the catacombs or some secluded place to worship ...
But
How strong is our conviction in the truth of God? How determined,
How dedicated
Are we to spread the Good News *of the faith we treasure?*

O precious faith, ,
Wondrous and uplifting as ever before,
Producing hope and joy to the disheartened and hopeless,
Paving a straitened way
Where there was no way,
Giving peace to the weary!
You are beautiful — *this faith we treasure.*

Most loving father, the ALMIGHTY, King of all kings,
Through the mercy you had on us in your Son Christ Jesus,
May we, in all submissiveness, surrender and serve you,
Enjoying the benefits you give us *through the faith we treasure,*

Come, all ye that wait for the blessed proclamation,
Enter, faithful servant — Welcome home at last!
Let us publish the good news on the mountaintops and down the valleys deep:
Wherever man is found, *let us share the faith we treasure.*



— F.O. Aniamalu, preacher of the Gospel in Anambra State, Nigeria.

The Changing Face of America: A History of Christian Missions

Jeremy Barrier

I remember the first time I traveled to India. I was 15 years old, wide-eyed, and curious as to the new smells, sights, and sounds I experienced all around me. One of the curious facts that I learned after being on this trip in India was that Christianity was perceived by many people in Asia as a religion of the “West”. More specifically, it was clearly a foreign “American” religion, in contrast to the numerous religions of the “East”, which included Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and Sikhism, to name a few (all of which are firmly established in India).

I found this thinking to be puzzling when I considered that Christianity was born in Palestine, its roots embedded in Judaism, a religion of the Ancient Near East, not the West. It took me ten years to put some of the history of Christianity together, and to finally understand how these historical movements are now affecting global Christianity. Allow me to explain.

As primitive Christianity — born in Jerusalem in approximately AD 33 with the outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit on the Apostles — was continuing to grow, in a short time

it swept through the whole of the Roman World. Constantine, as the emperor of Rome, embraced the new religion in the year 313 AD. Christians had come out of persecution and were no longer worshipping in their homes. Instead, impressive church buildings were being built everywhere, in Palestine, North Egypt, Italy, Asia Minor, Persia, and even in lower Germania (modern day Germany).

Sadly, along with rapid growth in numbers came an increasing weakening of commitment to the



CHURCH HISTORY

teachings of the New Testament. Factions — heresies — arose because of differences in doctrines and beliefs, and much of the original church moved toward apostasy.

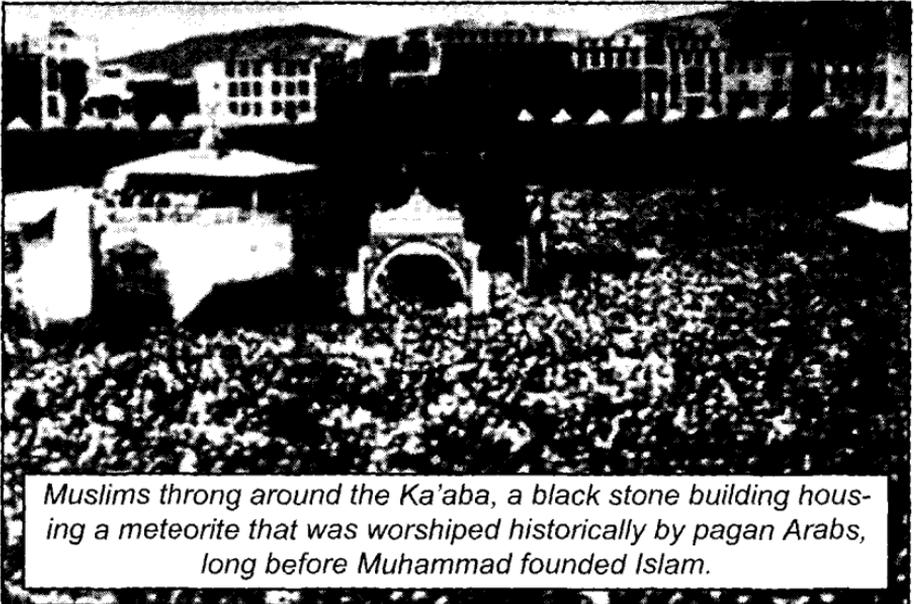
Naturally, as doctrine was adapted to suit the people, and often to incorporate surrounding pagan beliefs, it became increasingly popular to convert to “Christianity”. This incredible and unceasing growth continued to the point that centers of Christianity were emerging everywhere throughout the known world. The expansion continued unchecked until two major factors arose:

One, the Roman Empire was diminishing, and with it, the governmental tool influencing the spread of

Christianity. Undoubtedly, as the larger part of “Christianity” moved further from God, God’s providential support of its spread was changing.

Two, in the year 622, a very important religious, military, and political figure began uniting the Arab world. His name was Muhammad, and in the year 622, he left Mecca on his Hijra, eventually residing in modern-day Medina, and beginning the Muslim community. United under their one god, Allah (originally, one of the pagan gods of the tribal Arabs), Muslims professed the belief that “there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of God.”

As Islam began to spread, it did not take long for the centers of



Muslims throng around the Ka'aba, a black stone building housing a meteorite that was worshiped historically by pagan Arabs, long before Muhammad founded Islam.

CHURCH HISTORY

Christianity to be affected by this growth. In 638, Jerusalem fell. In the year 640, Caesarea fell. And then Alexandria, Egypt (642), Persia (650), Carthage (697), the greater part of Spain (715), only to be checked by Charles Martel of Tours (France) in 732. In the year 846, Rome was sacked by Muslims, Sicily became a Muslim state in 902, and finally Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453 AD.

During these years, the apostate form of Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church, had dominated the Western scene, while true Christians and churches of Christ were a small, scattered minority, persecuted by the Pope of Rome as "heretics" because they refused to acknowledge him as head of the church.

The continued rapid expansion of Islam did two things: **first**, Christianity in the East dwindled down to ashes and smoldering embers, struggling to keep from becoming extinct in those parts of the world. Even the great strongholds of the Faith in Egypt diminished. A testimony to this is the death of the Coptic language, a language developed in the 3rd

century AD by Christians as a new form of the Egyptian language, Demotic.

This extreme and overwhelming growth of Islam largely destroyed most of what is known as "Eastern" Christianity, leaving the faith to survive primarily in Europe. The only direction for Christianity to grow by the beginning of the Middle Ages was North and West, at least until the 15th century. Therefore, Christianity became a "Western" religion, learning to adapt and make a new home outside of Persia and Palestine, and settling firmly in the modern-day nations of Spain, Germany, and France, and eventually being strengthened again in Italy.

But the history doesn't stop there. In the year 1492, the First Catholic Missionary Movement



"Heretics" were persecuted.

CHURCH HISTORY

began with the launch of Christopher Columbus to accomplish several things for Ferdinand II of Aragon (modern-day Spain) and Isabella, his wife and queen.

Columbus' goal was (1) to spread the Catholic faith, also (2) to find Christians that had become disconnected from the church universal (Roman Catholic Church), and (3) to politically and economically expand the reach of the Catholic Church

into unknown regions. Therefore, the Catholic Church allowed Spain to have everything to the West, and Portugal could have everything to the East. It didn't take long for Roman Catholicism (along with Colonialism) to overtake the West, but there was less success in the Far East.

The momentum for the spread of the Christian faith had become so great in the Americas, though, that by the time the Reformation Movement had been firmly established in the world, American missionaries along with European Protestant missionaries were able to launch a Second Protestant Missionary Movement. This effort to reach the world began 300 years

after Columbus, with William Carey's decision to move to India to do mission work in 1792.

As I consider the facts that I



have presented in a sweeping survey, I begin to reflect upon the contemporary face of the world, and I see a "western" Christianity, and an "eastern" world of other religions. But as time continues to pass, the world balance continues to shift. Change is in the air, and something is happening. I think this change had not become fully apparent to me until I read an article by Evertt W. Huffard in the *Restoration Quarterly* that taught me several things:

The dramatic shifts in Christianity are now undeniable. It is estimated that the entire body of believers, defined loosely as "Christian", is increasing in Africa at a rate of 23,000 per day, while

CHURCH HISTORY

the numbers of church members in North America are decreasing by 6,000 per day. During 2003, the Roman Catholic strongholds of Spain, France, Italy, and Poland had fewer new Catholic converts than the Philippines alone. Some estimates are even projecting that China, with a population of over 1 billion people, is going to be one-fourth “Christian” in 50 years. If that becomes the case, then China will be the largest “Christian” nation in the world!

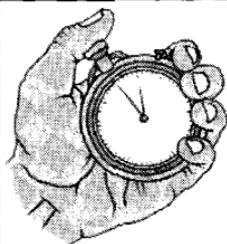
In combination with these statistics is the fact that Europe, the traditional home of Christianity for 1000 years, is covered with beautiful and magnificent church buildings — raised in the honor and praise of Yahweh — that are now being turned into museums because few people are coming to worship in their auditoriums. One must admit that Europe is now what we call a “Post-Christian” society, and North America is only a step behind. Godlessness, in the form of humanism and gross immorality, has become the new religion of the Western world.

As I reflect upon the growth of the church of Christ, I have heard estimates of 1 million-plus Christians in India, passing 1 million Christians in Africa, and now 1.1 to 1.3 million Christians in North America. The apparent facts form a

discouraging picture. But I do not think that I truly understood the dire condition of the North American Church until I heard it in October 2006 from the mouth of a powerful and effective man of God in South India by the name of P.R. Swamy. Brother Swamy boldly stood before a room full of 200 local evangelists and international preachers and teachers and brought us to tears when he cried out that the Christians of South India intend to begin sending missionaries to North America by the year 2010!

As I think back to the first time I heard that Christianity was a “Western” religion, I was somewhat offended that the “East” had denied its Christian roots. Now, this is no longer the case. The “East” is embracing the Christian faith, while Europe and North America have become the accepted home to thousands of second and third generation Hindus and Muslims as the face of Christianity continues to shift. If the indications are correct, Christianity is in the process of leaving the Western world to find another home. My question is this: If this is what I see in my lifetime, what will my children see in the next generation? Let us work and pray. †

Jeremy Barrier is a missions evangelist for the North Carolina Church of Christ and an Instructor in Bible at Heritage Christian University, Florence, Alabama, USA.



5-MINUTE BIBLE STUDY ON GOOD SPEECH

Ephesians 4:25 “Therefore, putting away _____, each one speak _____ with his _____, for we are _____ of one another.”

Matthew 5:37 “But let your _____ be _____ and your _____ be _____. For whatever is _____ than these is from the _____.”

Colossians 4:6 “Let your _____ always be with _____, seasoned with _____, that you may _____ how you ought to _____ each one.”

James 1:26 “If anyone among you thinks he is _____, and does not _____ his _____ but deceives his own _____, this one’s _____ is _____.”

Matthew 12:36 “But I say to you that for every _____ men may _____ they will give _____ of it in the _____ of _____.”

James 1:19 “Therefore, my _____, brethren, let _____ man be _____ to _____, _____ to _____, slow to _____.”

1 Peter 3:10 “He who would love _____ and see good _____, let him _____ his _____ from _____, and his _____ from _____ guile.”

Ephesians 4:25: lying, truth, neighbor, members
Matthew 5:37: yes, yes, no, no, more, evil, one
Colossians 4:6: speech, grace, salt, know, answer
James 1:26: religious, bride, tongue, heart, religion, useless
Matthew 12:36: idle, word, speak, account, day, judgment
James 1:19: beloved, every, swift, hear, slow, speak, wrath
1 Peter 3:10: life, days, refrain, tongue, evil, lips, speaking



Satisfaction

Graham Walker

Too often we feel like things are not progressing at a favorable rate. I don't know about you, but I believe that more can be done to further the Lord's cause. Yet it seems the more you do, the less of an impact you have. For instance, you study with people in regard to how the Holy Spirit works in men's lives today. It seems the more you get involved, the deeper their heels dig in with regard to their position of miraculous intervention. You come away with the feeling, "Was it worth it?"

Well, the answer to that question is a resounding yes! You see, you may be there only as a laborer preparing the soil, sowing the seed (Luke 8:11ff) for someone who comes along later, reaping what you have sown. In John 4:34-38, Jesus instructs His disciples in this very principle. After coming back with physical food to sustain them, the disciples request that Jesus eat of this food. But the Master uses this as an opportune time to teach why He came to this earth. That is, to *"do the will of Him who sent*

{Him}." He tells them that the fields are white for harvest, meaning that someone has been doing some sowing of God's Word, and the seed has sprouted to maturity.

In this case, Jesus means that the Baptizer and others have indeed prepared the paths well (see Mark 1:2-4). They have sown the seed that requires men to repent and turn their minds toward the Christ. Now the disciples are reaping the benefits of that superb preaching. Verse 38 of the text applies just as much to us today as it did to the disciples. We

are treading the ground that needs sowing; that through the efforts of our labor, someone — who may be our own progeny — may come and reap the mature harvest.

Often he who sows and he who reaps are not the same; both, however, will share in the joys of reaping. The teacher who sows, though humble, and the preacher who reaps, though talented, will share alike in the joys and the rewards of harvest.

So, don't be disheartened if the work is not to your satisfaction; it may well be to the satisfaction of those who fol-

low in your footsteps. Remember, your labor will culminate in men and women partaking of the "*bread of life*" (John 6:35). Thereby they will walk according to the "*light of the world*" (John 8:12) that is only possible by entering the correct "*door*" (John 10:9). This will lead to subjection to the "*good Shepherd*" (John 10:11), a result of someone's satisfactory labor. †

Graham Walker works with the church of Christ in Timaru on the South Island of New Zealand.

THE CHURCH MUST GO

While here below, the church must go
As servants of the Lord
With God's command, to every land
And sow the precious Word.

Tho oft refused, if rightly used,
The Kingdom's precious grain,
Its life imparts to fainting hearts,
Reviving them again.

The gospel pour to all, before
The cup of time is spilled,
The golden bowl of precious souls
Is waiting to be filled.

The lamp of love from heights above
Will never cease to give
The light we need to sow the seed
That other souls may live.

— Harry Presley

Actual Faith Is Active Faith

Danny Cline

Faked faith is a fantasy — it doesn't exist. Actual, factual faith is the only kind God recognizes. The Holy Spirit inspired the appraisal of a man who had "*unfeigned faith*" (1 Timothy 1:5; 3:16, KJV). It was not pretended, as an actor on a stage would suggest that he was a person of faith. Faith has substance that lies at its foundation, and it has evidence that demonstrates its presence (Hebrews 11:4).

Actual faith is active faith. It has both substance and evidence. The Holy Spirit also inspired the appraisal of every man's faith as being alive and working, or it's dead. *'Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... or "... as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also"* (James 2:17,26)

Proof of faith's actual presence is seen in its present activity. A person without a faith that is alive cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6). People who come to Him must necessarily believe that He exists (is actual and real) and that He rewards all who diligently seek Him. The

believer and the **Object of belief** are *real*; the **Rewarder** and the **rewarded** are both *active*.

As God seeks those who are faithful, He Himself is faithful (1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13; Romans 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 2:17). Those who have agreed with (professed) God's requirements — to believe His existence and diligently seek Him out — must hold firmly to that agreement without wavering (bending, giving way). Why? Because God is faithful in His promises, as we should be faithful in ours (Hebrews 10:23).

God's promises are fulfilled in those who are diligent in their active faith. When we are buried (immersed) with Him in baptism we are also risen with Him through faith in His active power (Colossians 2:12). Have you expressed **your faith** so that God can express **His power**?

We are sanctified (set apart) by Him for His holy use (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Acts 26:18). "*Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it*" (1 Thessalonians 5:24). God dwells in the Christian's heart

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

through faith (Galatians 3:14; Acts 2:38,39; 5:32). "... *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God* (Ephesians 3:17-19).

He expresses His faithfulness as we express ours. Jesus said, as He grieved over Jerusalem, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!*" (Matthew 23:37). Our own faithlessness often blocks the good that God desires to do for us.

Our Father is faithful in not allowing us to be tempted beyond our ability to bear it, and He makes a way of escape from for us (1 Corinthians 10:13). Through faith He protects the Christian by His divine power (1 Peter 1:5). The living hope (a close relative of faith) within *us* activates the power within *Him* (verse 3). The Christian's prayer of faith avails in the removal of sickness and confessed sin (James 5:15,16). "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*"

(1 John 1:9). Suffering? "... *let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator*" (1 Peter 4:19).

In our walk and work of faith there is joy (2 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; Philippians 1:25). Joy ascends above all that would challenge it. As personal faith grows up in its owner, he becomes spiritually healthier, built up and stronger (2 Corinthians 10:15; Titus 2:2; 1 Timothy 1:4; Jude 20). Firmness and steadfastness of faith allow it to become more complete (1 Thessalonians 3:10; Colossians 2:5). By earnestly following after faith, one can draw near to God in the full assurance it gives (Hebrews 10:22). Guesswork in what pleases the Father can be eliminated.

Access to God's grace is gained by faith (Romans 5:2; Ephesians 2:8). Does Romans 3:25 explain man's greatest gift — grace — from God? God actually and actively justifies receptive mankind through faith in Christ's blood. Whose faith, God's or man's? It obviously requires the faith of both. Faith's substance and evidence are clearly shown in the faithfulness of God toward man, and in man's faithful response to God. †

Danny Cline preaches for the church of Christ in Blue Ridge, Georgia, USA.

Soldiers of Jesus Christ

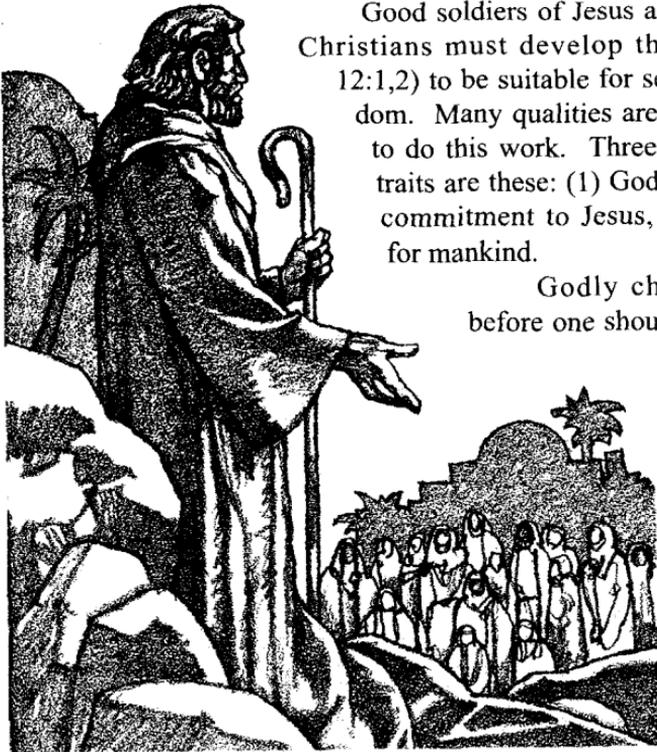
Wayne Barrier

The apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3) as he did the work of teaching others the message of hope and salvation. The Gospel is the greatest news that could be heard by any person. The last command given by Jesus before He ascended to heaven following His resurrection from the grave was for His followers to take the Gospel to everyone in the world (Matthew 28:18-20).

Paul's instructions to Timothy indicate that the work of spreading the Gospel would entail sacrifice and hardship, and that the successful person would be required to have special skills and traits.

Good soldiers of Jesus are still needed today. Christians must develop themselves (Romans 12:1,2) to be suitable for service in God's kingdom. Many qualities are necessary to be able to do this work. Three especially important traits are these: (1) Godly character, (2) total commitment to Jesus, and (3) compassion for mankind.

Godly character is required before one should even consider representing the cause of Christ (Matthew 7:1-5, 2 Peter 1:6). Godliness involves being a person of holiness, one who has learned to partake of the nature of his heavenly Father. It requires having unwavering faith, courage,



CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

obedience and the ability to submit to God's will. He who would be a soldier of Christ must exemplify humility, integrity, a knowledge of God's will. His attitude must radiate love, thankfulness, patience, strength, wisdom, total devotion to God, constant study, prayer and honor. Good soldiers of Jesus must train themselves in the development of this type of spiritual character, just as secular soldiers must undergo intense physical training to prepare for combat.

Next, the soldier of Christ must be totally committed to the proper objective — **Jesus and His work.** The level of commitment needed to follow the Lord is described in Luke 9:23-25: "*... If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?*"

Commitment to Christ must be more than any other commitment in life. One must give up one's own desires and pursuits of this world in order to truly follow Jesus. He must be willing to sacrifice whatever is most dear to himself, whenever the choice must be made between Christ and all else.

Finally, one must passionately

desire to help others to know the way to please and obey God. Jesus provides the example for this trait as illustrated in Matthew 9:35-38, which reads, "*Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'*"

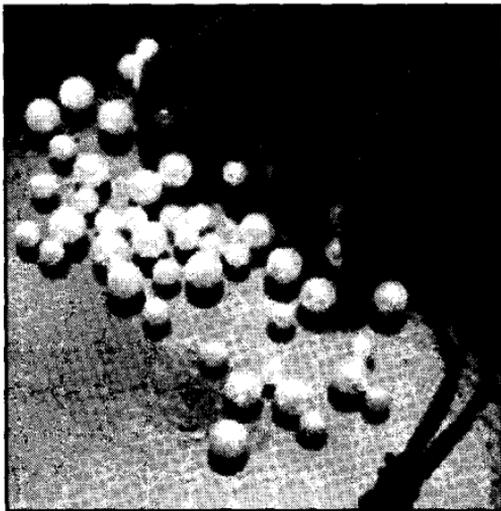
Jesus had genuine compassion for the lost and hurting. He wanted to be their Rescuer and Savior then, and — even today — He wants all to know the Gospel and to obey it and be saved. His followers must have His vision and love for the lost, love which will motivate them to do this work of teaching others.

A good soldier must be a person of Godly character, with total commitment to Christ, and deep compassion for mankind. Only with these traits can one be qualified to do the most important work in the world. †

Wayne Barrier lives in Florence, Alabama, USA, and is involved in taking the Gospel throughout the world.

You hear of it every once in awhile. Somebody has something of inestimable value that he virtually gives away. Years ago I read of a man who bought one of the classic Stradivarius violins at a rummage sale for ten dollars. The instrument was later appraised for over \$200,000. Some very rare antique may be sold for a fraction of its worth. Many of life's most precious things are virtually thrown away.

Jesus often taught about



DO YOU KNOW WHAT CHRISTIANITY IS WORTH?

Owen Cosgrove

facts — facts that are indispensable to life and salvation. He taught about **skills** — skills in worship, in living with oneself, in getting along with others, in managing one's life. He taught many lessons about **attitudes** — ways of thinking about people, things, and relationships. And much of His teaching was about **appreciation** — the ability to assign values to people, to things, and to life.

Without proper appreciations, people can hoard things of little importance while throwing away many of life's most precious treasures. Adam and Eve sacrificed a paradise for a moment's reckless folly — for a taste of that which was forbidden. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas betrayed his greatest friend for thirty pieces of silver. The Prodigal Son wasted a fortune for foolish pleasures in a life that left him starving in a pig pen.

One of the most amazing things about much of humanity is the very low value it sometimes places on virtue, and morality, and hope. There are a few

things in life that are exceedingly important. The wise person would not think of throwing these away for things that, by comparison, are virtually garbage.

Jesus taught that His words and His way are like the pearl of great price, worth everything else that one may give up in order to possess it. Christianity is like the hidden treasure that a man found, and he sold all that he had so that he would be able to buy it. It is worth self-denial, taking up one's cross, bearing whatever burden he must, and suffering whatever privation necessary in order to have that which deserves to be first in one's life. Christ's words resound through the ages: "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness ...*" (Matthew 6:33).

Satan is the most ruthless criminal of all time. **For mere pennies he can buy off souls that Christ gave His life to save** — all because many are poor, poor traders; they never truly learned the value of Christianity and their own life. The Savior asks, "*For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?*" (Mark 8:36). Do we often think of what Christianity is worth? One word sums it up: **everything!** †

Owen Cosgrove is involved in printed evangelism in many countries and preaches for the Northside church in Waxahachie, Texas, USA.

Sodium Chloride

David H. Johnson

Sodium is an extremely active element found naturally only in combined form; it always links itself to another element. Chlorine, on the other hand, is the poisonous gas that gives bleach its offensive odor. When sodium and chlorine are combined, the result is sodium chloride — common table salt — the substance we use to preserve meat and bring out its flavor.

Love and truth can be like sodium and chlorine. Love without truth is flighty, sometimes blind, willing to combine with various doctrines. On the other hand, truth by itself can be offensive, sometimes even poisonous.

Spoken without love, truth can turn people away from the Gospel. When truth and love are combined in an individual or a church, however, then we have what Jesus called "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), and we are able to preserve and bring out the beauty of our faith.



Romans 2:17-29

J. Robert Swain

1. If the Gentiles were judged apart from the written law of God, how were the Jews to be judged? (*vs. 17*)
2. In general, did most Jews consider themselves superior to Gentiles because they possessed the written law? (*vs. 18,19,20*)
3. What do you call someone who claims to be a person of integrity but their actions prove the opposite?
4. Although the Jews took great pride in having the written law of God, what had that same law done to them? (*vs. 21,22,23*)
5. When we choose to break God's commandments, what do we do to God? (*vs. 23*)
6. What would the Jews do to cause the Gentiles to blaspheme the name of God? (*vs. 17-23*)
7. Circumcision was the outward sign of what covenant?
(*see Note*)
8. How could a Jew become uncircumcised to God? (*vs. 25*)
9. How could a physically-uncircumcised Gentile become circumcised in God's eyes? (*vs. 26*)
10. What two "outward" things had the Jews put their misplaced faith and confidence in? (*vs. 27*)
11. What is meant by circumcision of the heart, in the Spirit, not the letter? (*vs. 29*)
12. Is God pleased with those Jews or Gentiles who strive to keep the promise behind circumcision? (*vs. 29*)
13. What lesson should this reading teach Christians today?

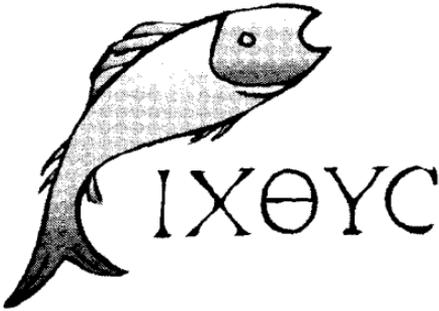
(See inside of back cover for answers.)

Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, **18** and know *His* will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, **19** and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, **20** an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. **21** You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? **22** You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? **23** You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? **24** For "*the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,*" as it is written.

25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. **26** Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? **27** And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? **28** For he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. **29** But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not from men but from God.

New King James Version

Note: *The church in Rome was made up of Gentile and Jewish Christians; two groups coming from different backgrounds with different ideas about God. Paul has explained how the Gentiles had not been able to keep the unwritten law (Romans 1:18-32). Now he is addressing the Jews who had not kept the written law or the covenant of circumcision. Circumcision was the removal of the foreskin of the eight-day-old male Jewish baby. This procedure was performed so that the child would be included in the blessings of the covenant that God made with Abraham. (Genesis 17:10-14)*



Being the first organized body of any religious group makes them unique (one of a kind). Such is true of the church you read about in the New Testament. The Jerusalem church was the first church authorized by Christ. Its beginning is recorded in Acts 2, and reference is made to that event in Acts 11:15. From its beginning until it was scattered by the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, about 40 years had passed.

Many things are revealed concerning this unique church in the New Testament: (1) Its establishment and guidance were under inspired men (Acts chapters 2 and 11); (2) Early Christians were unusual in their liberality (Acts 2:44,45; 4:32); (3) They were unusual in their evangelistic fervor (Acts 5:42; 11:19); (4) They were unique in the number of converts the first day of

their existence (Acts 2:41), and in a short time, the number grew to 5,000 men alone (Acts 4:4); (5) Their first problem in the church was resolved by inspired men (Acts 6). May we suggest three other distinctive characteristics from the inspired record:

It Was a Church Converted to Christ. This may sound trite and not very original, but Luke's record is so specific regarding the preaching that was done which resulted in its beginning (Acts 22:26). In verses 22 and 23 Peter announced that his subject would be "*Christ and Him crucified*". Those who responded were not converted to preachers, not even to Peter, whose message was recorded. Later, after the church was established at Corinth, it was reported to Paul that some of its members had become followers of certain teachers — Peter, Apollos, and Paul (1 Corinthians 1:12). Paul rebuked such partyism in a plain and forceful way (1 Corinthians 1:13-17).

Too many now are converted to preachers rather than to Christ. We know the members of the Jerusalem church were converted to Christ by their response and conduct (Acts 2:41,44,45; 8; 11:19ff). All of this

the jerusalem church

W. Douglass Harris

THE CHURCH

(their primary obedience, liberality, and evangelistic spirit) was the result of doctrinal preaching, not philosophical dissertation, ignoring of sin, feel-good sensitizing speech, or ear-scratching sermonizing.

It Was a Convicted Church.

We know this from Peter's indictment of his Jewish audience on the day the church began, and their response. He charged them with the greatest crime in human history — the crucifixion of Christ (Acts 2:23). He said some direct things that resulted in conviction. Luke says, "*Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart*" (Acts 2:37, NKJV). Those words could be translated: "They were smitten in conscience." Such is the basis of real humility and conviction. There is no true conversion without such conviction. Peter's lesson deeply disturbed them about their spiritual condition. Is this not one of the purposes of gospel preaching? Conviction of our own sinfulness will not assume the attitude that if others had been present to hear the lesson, **they** would surely have felt guilt-ridden. There is a danger of having too much sense of other people's sin, rather than our own.

It was a Church Convinced of the Reality of Heaven. Peter affirmed to his Jewish audience that the One they had crucified was at the right hand of God in heaven

(Acts 2:33). When Peter and John were threatened for preaching the resurrection of Christ, the church united in prayer, seeking the help of heaven (Acts 4:23-30). As Stephen was being stoned to death, he asked Jesus to receive his spirit (Acts 2:28). Peter's vision from heaven as he prayed on his house top, and his obedience thereto, indicate that he had no doubt of the reality of heaven (Acts 10:9-24).

Early Christians were so convinced of the reality of heaven that no sacrifice was considered too great to attain it. So should it be with us. Our adversaries might take away our property without our consent, but they cannot take away our home in heaven. Or, if they put us in solitary confinement, we will not be alone — the Lord has promised to be with us. If they torture us, they cannot destroy the "*life that is life indeed*" (1 Timothy 6:19). If they burn us at the stake, they cannot deny us that eternal body in heaven. In the early days of the church, many Christians paid this price because they were convinced of the reality of heaven.

Christians today, members of the church of Christ, must share the convictions of our brethren of the first century. Are these *your* convictions? †

Before his death in 2004, for many years, W. Douglass Harris had been the editor of *The Caribbean Messenger*.

Is One Church As Good As Another?

Marvin L. Weir

The words "Attend the church of your choice" often greet readers who are searching the newspapers for church advertisements. If one church is as good as another then it is also true that one may confidently attend the church of his choice. Let us now search the scriptures and see if this is so.

Is one founder as good as another? Jesus promised He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). Christ, not a man or a group of men, is the founder of the church of Christ. The apostle Paul affirms this truth: "*For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Think of all the different foundations that have been laid by religious groups. Will one accuse the Christ of laying different foundations?

Our Lord is neither the author of division (1 Corinthians 1:10-13) nor of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). Christ has made it clear that "*... every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*" (Matthew 15:13). If one founder is as good as another then one can confidently attend the

church of his choice!

Is the shedding of any person's blood as good as the shedding of the blood of Christ? The church that Jesus promised to build was purchased by the shedding of His blood (Acts 20:28). The Lord's church was not redeemed or bought with the blood of "bulls and goats" (Hebrews 10:4), nor by the blood of any human being! Who will presumptuously proclaim that his shed blood purchased the church of Christ? Who will arrogantly boast that his blood can cleanse one soul of his sins? If it is true that anyone's blood can be shed for our sins, then the shedding of Christ's blood was unnecessary, and we certainly have the freedom to attend the church of our choice!

Is Christ the only head of the church or is one head as good as another? Do those who attend man-made denominations really believe that Christ is the head of a church that was begun by some man or woman? Christ is only the head of His church "*which is his body*" (Ephesians 1:22,23). How many "heads" are there? Only one — Christ! *How many bodies should*

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exist if there is only one head? Only one! The apostle Paul affirms this truth: “*There is one body*” (Ephesians 4:4).

Do folks who claim to believe God’s Word really believe it? The prophet Jeremiah taught, “*O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*” (Jeremiah 10:23). The wise man stated, “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death*” (Proverbs 14:12).

Do folks really believe that Christ can be the head of a church that some man has founded? Do, people have good reason for believing that the one head (Christ) has spawned hundreds of different religious groups (bodies)? Is He a religious freak? No, the Bible does not so teach; thus, one church is not as good as another, and we do not have the freedom to make our own choice.

Is one kind of worship as good as another? The reason for different churches is to accommodate different kinds of worship, organization, and different doctrinal beliefs! Can you tell me why a “Baptist” is not a “Methodist”, or why a “Presbyterian” is not a “Catholic”? It is precisely because each has different doctrines and kinds of worship that attract those who desire to “worship” in those

different ways. Jesus said, “*God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth*” (John 4:24). Is truth that which comes from man or that which comes from God? The Bible says, “*Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth*” (John 17:17). If people do not engage in true worship, the worship they enter into is “*vain worship*” (Matthew 15:9). If one kind of worship was as good as another, then one church might be as good as another. The Bible, however, does not allow us this freedom to choose for ourselves what we want to be pleasing to God.

Instead of the church of your choice or my choice, we must attend the church of God’s choice! God gave His Son to die for and establish the church — not **a** church, **some** church, or **just any** church! Let the Bible be your guide and you will not be a member of some man-made denomination. The church of Christ was begun on the first Pentecost after His resurrection. It is His body, His bride, His family in this world. He promises that He will return for it at the end of time. (Acts 2; 2:48; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 1:18).

No, one church is not as good as another. There is not one verse in the New Testament which supports such a statement. That is the devil’s doctrine, not God’s. †

Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

Matthew

5:38,39,43,44

Romans 13:3,4

38. You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

39. But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

43. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

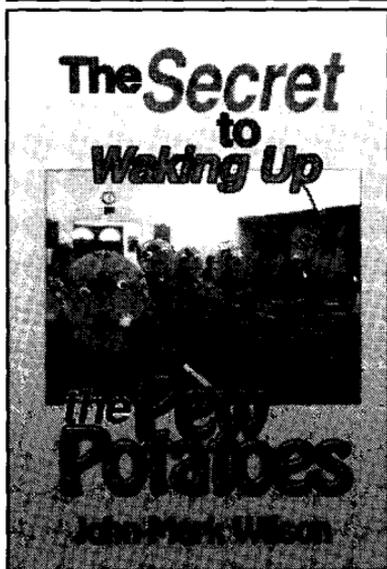
3. ...rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

4. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

When there is war in the land, many who categorize themselves as "Christians" feel that our government is wrong to take up arms. They are torn between what they feel is the carnal impulse for revenge, and Jesus' command that we are to turn the other cheek when we are wronged. How can these opposing views be reconciled?

As with all scriptures, there is no contradiction when they are properly understood. To whom was Jesus speaking in Matthew? To His followers; to those who would become His church. To His church, He says, "As my spiritual family, love your enemies ..." Christians are to do that. We must desire the good of all men; we must bring God's saving Gospel message even to those who would kill us.

The work of God's spiritual family — the church, Christians — is to bring the message of love and salvation to the world. But the work of secular governments is another thing entirely. They also, According to Romans 13, are tools in God's hands, but not to show love in the face of hatred, or to turn the other cheek when attacked; governments are God's sword to execute wrath on evil-doers. The purpose of government is to curb the violence, crime, and evil that would run rampant in the world without its control. There is no conflict between these two reactions to evil, if we keep in mind that two different groups of people are being addressed.



Section Three of Your Personal Work Notebook

You may copy and enlarge the following pages to compile in a folder for ready use! Some of the charts are taken from Mid McKnight's booklet of **Personal Work Charts**. Some are from booklets by Dillard Thurman.

When you use this notebook, you are obeying Acts 20:18-21: *"You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Jesus said plainly in John 15:2: "... every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." While it is true that not every Christian can preach, and not every Christian makes a good public teacher, too many in this age and in this country are content to "teach" by their "good" but *silent* example. The primary reason that more Christians do not make any effort to teach their friends, relatives and co-workers is that they are not equipped with the necessary knowledge. It is comfortable to spend the evenings relaxing, cutting the lawn, watching TV, or shouting oneself hoarse at a ball game. But where is the awareness of lost souls that is so prevalent in the New Testament?

We fully expect the reward of an eternal home with God when we die, just as the Christians of the first century expected. If a Christian of that time were suddenly dropped down into today's world, can you imagine how he/she would react to the apathy of the people who call themselves the church of Christ? And how would you react if you suddenly found yourself in the streets of first century Ephesus... or Jerusalem... or Rome...?

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

OLD TESTAMENT

NEW TESTAMENT

PROMISES MADE (GENESIS 3:15; 12:3)

PROMISES FULFILLED (GALATIANS 3:16)

- 1. KINGDOM TO BE ESTABLISHED (DAN. 2:44)Matt. 3:1,2; 10:7; 16:18,19 ; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:47; CoL 1:13
- 2. LORD'S HOUSE TO BE BUILT (ISA. 2:2,3).....Heb. 3:6; 1 Tim. 3:15
 WILL BE IN "LAST DAYS"Acts 2:16,17; Heb. 1:1,2
 WILL BEGIN IN JERUSALEMLuke 24:46,47; Acts 1:4-8
 ALL NATIONS ADMITTEDActs 2:39; Rom. 1:16
- 3. CHRIST WILL BE KING (JER. 23:5,6).....Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:29-33
- 4. NEW COVENANT BINDING (JER. 31:31)Matt. 16:18,19; Acts 2:36-38; Heb. 9:15-17; Heb. 8:8
- 5. HOLY SPIRIT TO BE GIVEN (JOEL 2:28)ACTS 2:16-21

ALL PROMISES MADE ARE FULFILLED IN ACTS 2

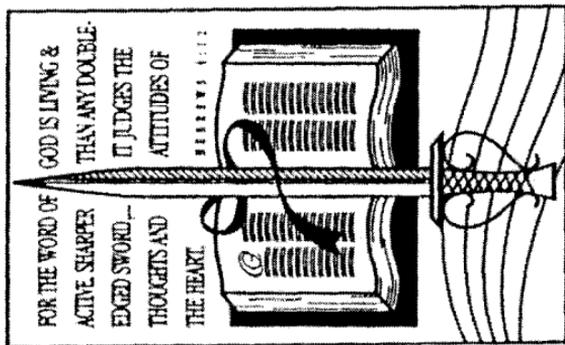
(ACTS 2 GIVES THE ACCOUNT OF EVENTS OF ONLY ONE DAY - PENTECOST)



THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD!

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than a two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." —Heb. 4:12

Converts the Soul..... Psa. 19:7
It is Able to Save..... Jas. 1:21
Saved by Gospel..... 1 Cor. 15:2
The Power to Save..... Rom. 1:16
Begotten by Gospel..... 1 Cor. 4:15
Born by the Word..... 1 Pet. 1:23
Quickened by Word..... Psa. 119:50
Saved by Words..... Acts 11:13-14
Seed of Kingdom..... Luke 8:11
Sword of the Spirit..... Eph 6:17



Word Gives Light..... Psa. 119:130
It Produces Faith..... Rom. 10:17
Sanctified by Word..... Jno. 17:17
Cleansed by Word..... Jno. 15:2
Word Makes Free..... Jno. 8:32
It Works in Us..... 2 Thes. 2:13
Saved by Preaching..... 1 Cor. 1:21
Word is Complete..... 2 Tim. 3:16-17
Gives All Needed..... 2 Pet. 1:3
Needs No Revision..... Gal. 1:6-8

Dillard Thurman

Salvation By Grace Through Faith

1. Not of Works

Merit? Romans 3:10, 23; Luke 17:10

Law? Galatians 2:16; Rom. 3:20,28

Obedience? John 6:29; James 2:24

11. Saved By grace

God's Gift — John 3:16; Romans 5:8

Death, Burial, Resurrection:

John 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

111. Saved Through Faith

Man's Part — John 6:29; 20:30,31;

Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:10,17;

Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30,31; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16.

God's
Part

By
Grace

DEATH — Romans 5:8

BURIAL — 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

RESURRECTION — 1 Pet. 1:3

Are You Saved

Man's
Part

Through
Faith

Ephesians
2:8,9

DEATH — Colossians 2:12

BURIAL — Romans 6:2-6

RESURRECTION — Rom. 6:11

20/20 Vision

Raymond Elliott

It is suggested that we have our eyesight checked at least every two years. The ideal vision is 20/20. Most of us, as we grow older, need some assistance to enable us to see. Thus, we are fitted with glasses from time to time.

There is a visual infirmity called 'myopia', the inability to see clearly those things which are far away. In the matter of evangelism, Christians often suffer because of 'myopia' in their spiritual vision. So many can see only that which is near. We are not looking into the distances of the world. We are confined within the walls of our church buildings.

Near-sighted Christians are in need of having our eyesight improved by the Great Physician who can heal our partial blindness. We desperately need some "eye slave" to anoint our eyes so that we may see the fields "*... that are white already unto harvest*" (Revelation 3:18; John 4:35). He whose eyes are as "*... a flame of fire ...*" (Revelation 1:14) has written us a prescription that will give us 20/20 vision. It is recorded in Acts 20:20: "*... how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and*

teaching you publicly, and from house to house."

First of all, it needful that we teach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Second, note the methods used by Paul in the proclamation of that which was profitable. He said that he taught the Gospel of Christ both publicly and privately. The persecuted prisoners of the Lord had earlier utilized these avenues in preaching Jesus as the Christ every day "*... in the temple and at home...*" (Acts 5:42).

Personal evangelism and the public proclamation of the gospel go hand in hand. This formula was very effective in the first century. The church grew rapidly in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:1). In contrast, today we rely greatly on the public teaching of the Gospel, generally ignoring the second half of the formula used by our brethren during the infancy of the church.

The truth is that the body of Christ is not growing in many locales simply because the members do not have proper 20/20 vision. The word of God is not increasing and the number of disciples is not multiplying (Acts 6:7) in our society

today. Oh, we do 'swell' our numbers periodically due to the moving of members from one place to another, but true numerical growth comes about when souls are being added to the church as they obey the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2:38, 47). The fact is non-Christians seldom frequent our assemblies, even during special efforts such as Gospel meetings. There are individuals who hesitate to

come to our church buildings. We must go to them. (Isn't that what the Lord told us to do in the great commission, as recorded in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15?)

The congregations that are experiencing the numerical growth of disciples are those that are complementing the public proclamation of the gospel with the individual/ private teaching of the word. It may be through the showing of filmstrips, an open Bible study, or it may be conducting a Bible class in one's home. The method is a matter of judgment, as long as it is in harmony with the

principles of the New Testament. What we need is a genuine commitment from Christians to become more involved in instructing sinners to come to Jesus Christ where they can find salvation from sin and where there is the hope of eternal life (2 Timothy 2:10). †

Raymond Elliott preaches for the Prattville Church of Christ in Prattville, Alabama, USA.

Today

**I shall do so much in the years to come,
But what have I done today?**

**I shall give out gold in princely sum,
But what did I give today?**

**I shall lift the heart and dry the tear,
I shall plant a hope in the place of fear,
I shall speak with words of love and cheer
But what have I done today?**

**I shall be so kind in the after while,
But what have I been today?**

**I shall bring to each lonely life a smile,
But what have I brought today?**

**I shall give to truth a grander birth,
And to steadfast faith a deeper worth,
I shall feed the hungry souls of earth,
But whom have I fed today?**

-author unknown

Christ's Body, the Church

Jerry Humphries

When you think of the word "church" what comes to mind? A physical building? An organization? A religious social club? A political action group? A denomination? A conglomeration of denominations?

1. The Word "Church"

The word "church" in the New Testament is a translation of the Greek word **Ekklesia**. While "called out" is in the etymology of the word, its basic meaning is "assembly". It was used in the first century to refer to practically any type of assembly. Jesus and the inspired writers of the New Testament gave **Ekklesia** a special spiritual significance by using it to refer to saved people — those in fellowship with God and Jesus Christ.

Some references are to the church universal — Christians everywhere. An example is Matthew 16:18. Romans 16:16 and Galatians 1:2 are examples of references to a plurality of congregations in an area. 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1 are examples of references to a particular assembly or congregation of Christians in a specific location.

Unbiblical, sectarian, denomi-

national terminology is sometimes used with reference to the church. This makes it more difficult for many people to see the church as it really is. Examples are: "I am a Church of Christ", "Congregations of the Church of Christ", "Church of Christ beliefs", "Church of Christ preachers", etc.

2. Images of the Church

No exclusive name for the church is found in the New Testament. There are various designations which emphasize different aspects of the church. These include:

Church of God *"To the church of God which is at Corinth ..."* (1 Corinthians 1:2).

Churches of Christ *"... The churches of Christ greet you"* (Romans 16:16).

Bride of Christ *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything"* (Revelation 21:2,9; Ephesians 5:22-32).

God's Building *"For we are*

God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22).

The House of God "... *that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God ...*" (1 Timothy 3:15).

Kingdom of God, of Christ, of Heaven "... *on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven ...*" (Matthew 16:18,19; Colossians 1:13,18; John 3:3-5).

Family of God "... *you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God ...*" (Ephesians 2:19; Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 3:15).

Paul's favorite designation for the church was "the body of Christ". He was inspired by God to refer to the church this way thirty-two times. "... *so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another*" (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22,23; 3:6; 4:14-16, 25; 5:23-30).

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. ... I now rejoice in my suffer-

ings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church ..." (Colossians 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15).

3. Important Truths Concerning the Church.

A. The church is unique. Its mission is also unique. Some strategies and techniques that are appropriate for other organizations are inappropriate for the church. The success of a church of Christ cannot be evaluated by material, worldly standards.

B. The church is not a mere institution or organization. It is the living body of Christ.

C. Jesus' church is not a denomination or a conglomeration of denominations. Believers in Jesus Christ who obey Him in repentance, confession of faith in Him and baptism are promised salvation (Mark 16:15,16; Romans 10:9,10; Acts 2:38). They are united with Christ in one body (Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

In contrast, each of the many denominations is a separate, distinct body. Each has its unique doctrines and requirements for membership. In order to be a member of a denomination one must do something different from Biblical teaching.

D. There is only one true church of Christ. Every Biblical reference

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to the church as the body of Christ emphasizes its singularity. Jesus is the head of His one body, the church (Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18). Since there is only one true Christ there can be only one true body or church.

E. There is no assurance of salvation outside the church. Does the church save? No! The church *is* the saved! Through the cross, Jesus reconciles people to God in this one body (Ephesians 2:16). Those who are in this one body are in Christ and enjoy God's provisions and promises (Ephesians 3:6). Jesus is the Savior of the church, His body. (Ephesians 5:23).

F. Members of the church have a very vital and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another. Our union with Christ and our union with other members of His body are inseparably connected (Romans 12:5). True Christianity is not as individualistic as many believe.

Questions for thought and discussion

1. How does our concept of the church affect our attitude toward it?
2. What is the meaning of the word "church"?
3. What is meant by "universal church" and "local church"?
4. What are some examples of sectarian, denominational usages of "Church of Christ"?
5. Why should such terminology not be used?
6. What was Paul's favorite way of referring to the church?
7. How does one become a member of Jesus' church?
8. What is the final act that puts one into Christ?
9. What must one do to join a denomination?
10. Does the church save?
11. Can one be saved outside the church, according to the Bible?
12. Why, or why not?
13. What makes the church of Christ unique?
14. The "house of God" is called the _____ of the living God.
15. Jesus promised to build His _____ and to give the keys of the _____.
16. If the church is the bride, who is the Bridegroom? (Matthew 9:15)
17. Picturing the church as the body of Christ tells us what about relationships between Christ and the members, and among the members?
18. List the seven "ones" in Ephesians 4:4-6.
19. Do names divide believers in Christ? Do doctrines divide?
20. How can we be united, as Christ prayed in John 17:20,21? †

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SEARCHING FOR LEADERS

J.J. Turner

As the race for the presidential nominations heats up across the country, both parties appear to be in trouble. The rhetoric is hot and heavy; the promises have no limits. In the mean time, those in power are struggling to maintain credibility. As a nation, our eyes are focused on leadership. *Where are the leaders? Who are they? How do we recognize them? What are the essential qualities of leadership that define a leader?*

In the March 2, 2003 online catalog of the Library of Congress there were approximately 6,707 titles registered on leadership. That number is obviously higher four years later, as leadership books continue to roll off the presses. With this excess of information and training on leadership, one would think that all our leadership issues would be settled. Not so! In many large corporations, the bottom has fallen out of leadership. Every organization, from mega corporations to the local family unit, is where it is because of leadership or lack thereof; and where they go today, tomorrow and next week will depend on the capabilities of the leaders.

Sadly, the church is not exempt

from leadership problems. Most of the power issues in business exist in one form or another in some churches. We are looking for superstars, big names, and media personalities to lead us to the Promised Land. Yet, it appears in some congregations we have turned back toward Egypt.

Jesus came into a world with a leadership crisis. He had but a short time to find, appoint and train leaders for a global mission. Where did He find them? Not among the ranks of the Generals, Senators, Orators, Business Gurus and such like. He found them on the fishing docks, at tax tables, and among outcasts. He sought two basic qualities: **(1) servant-mentalities** and **(2) integrity**. He sought men whom He could trust to be real from the inside out. Gone are the days, in any organization, when power, position and dictates secure leadership. A new awareness relative to leadership has evolved in our culture. People are more informed on the subject, so "leadership" is not a status which guarantees followers. *Effective* leadership moves through the character of the leader. It's the old adage,

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“What you are speaks so loudly I can’t hear what you are saying.”

Whatever leadership is, it relates to the **integrity and moral quality** of the person who ventures to wear the tile of leader. At twelve years of age, Jesus had these essential qualities: *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man”* (Luke 2:52).

In His search for leaders, Jesus was looking for men who would accept **the role of slave**, which role He had taken (Philippians 2:4-8). To His followers who were vying for leadership positions, Jesus said: *“... If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all”* (Mark 9:35).

Remove **trust** from the equation of leadership and what do you have? You have a character flaw so great that it destroys one’s influence as a leader. And without influence it is not possible to successfully lead anyone. The apostle Paul wrote this about trust: *“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”* (1 Corinthians 4:2).

In searching for leaders Jesus was looking for men who would **crucify their egos**: *“... If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”* (Matthew 16:24). This requirement doesn’t sound like fun and games! Jesus didn’t say **get in your rowboat and you’ll have**

smooth sailing. Leadership as one of His followers was to be **a way of self-denial, hardship and suffering**. That’s what the Master’s own road to leadership was paved with, and that is the road His leaders must take. Few dare walk on it!

In His search for leaders, Jesus placed a priority on **love**: *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”* (John 13:34,35). This badge of leadership is displayed through the attributes of love described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. Love is positive, Christ-like actions toward all.

In an age when such books as Dr. James Hunter’s, **The Death of Character**, creates pessimism, do we dare wonder what lies ahead for the church? Church leadership is on a slippery slope, with participants wondering how to prevent going over the edge in efforts to stem the tide. How can we develop leaders who are trustworthy? What are the character qualities that are non-negotiable? What would a servant, Jesus-type, leader look like in the twenty-first century world? Where are the men who will trade their positions in the tower for the towel of servant-hood (cf John 13:1-17)?

In our search for leaders to move the church forward in the mis-

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sion assigned by God, we must pay careful attention to these:

Ten Basic Principles that Create Trust

1. That what one teaches matches what one does (James 1:22-24)?
2. That the truth is bought and never sold (Proverbs 23:23; John 8:32).
3. That one's word is kept regardless of consequences or circumstances (Acts 5:28,29)
4. That equal treatment and acceptance is extended to all (Romans 12:9-21).
5. That faithfulness is demonstrated in all things (Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 11:6).
6. There is a consistency in words and deeds (Romans 2:19-23).
7. There is a display of wisdom from above (James 3:13-18).
8. There is an unwavering commitment to the priority of the kingdom (Matthew 6:33).
9. There is clear evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in one's life (Galatians 5:22-26).
10. Every thought, attitude and action is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21).

There are other character traits that create trust in a leader but these ten will serve as a foundation upon which to build. Remember, first of all, that Jesus is that one true and lasting foundation upon which we must build all leadership (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:9-13). †

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This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1 Timothy 2:1-7).

FROM THE HEART OF ...

The Treasure of Truth Shortwave Broadcasts

Joe D. Gray

EVANGELIZE THE WORLD NOW!

A PERSONAL WORD

Each week on five giant antenna, I am privileged to talk to people all over the world about Jesus. Each recording session is an awesome experience. As we tell the simple story of God's love — of the wonderful salvation through the gospel of the cross — we marvel at the thought that millions — even billions — of strangers can listen by the wonder of short-wave radio! We thrill to tell of the wonderful nature and fellowship of the church of Christ to people who otherwise would never know!!



An enthusiastic and joyful welcome for follow-up workers.

FROM THE HEART OF ...

There are over a billion short-wave sets in use in the world. Many isolated homes and villages have no other way to hear from the outside world. As people turn their dials, many have happened upon the **Treasure of Truth Broadcast**. Doubtlessly, many have moved on in their search for news and entertainment; but many thousands have become regular listeners. This reminds of the time when our families gathered around our one radio to hear whatever we could.

We have heard from listeners in about 50 nations on every continent, as well as 14 states in our country! They include a Russian merchant marine on a Philippine ship in the Indian Ocean, a lighthouse keeper in Belgium, a law student in Togo, a handicapped 12-year-old in Canada, a weather observer with the German Weather Service, a man in prison in Eastern Europe, a wayward Christian now restored to spiritual vigor in Costa Rica, and scores of denominational preachers who gladly distribute our printed materials.

More correspondence comes from Africa than any other continent, though we do hear from many in America. Many write of their obedience and their determination to share the simple Gospel of Jesus. Tens of thousands of pieces of literature have been sent all over the world, explaining the love of God, the sacrifice of Jesus, the perfection of the Spirit's inspired word, and the simplicity of the church Jesus built. We constantly need unused materials from churches, book stores, publishing houses, and individuals. There is always a demand, and our brethren are thoughtful and generous. Perhaps, you have access to materials that would be a blessing to someone far away.

I am humbled at the opportunity presented through the **Treasure of Truth**. For many years, Germaine Lockwood, a late effective and humble servant of the Lord, encouraged me to do this. Over 10 years ago we began broadcasting, with the planning of the elders of the church in Altamont, Tennessee. I truly admit that this is one of the most inspiring opportunities ever afforded me by my Lord. I am grateful to the wonderful church in Altamont for making it initially and continually possible, along with numerous friends, congregations and even strangers.

Radio Experience

Joe D. Gray began full-time preaching in the fall of 1952 in McMinnville, Tennessee. Coincidentally with his arrival in the area, other preachers moved away, so for awhile he taught on the radio each day and

twice on Sundays (8 times weekly). His Friday question and answer program became very popular. In 1956, he moved to Durham, N.C. where he taught weekly on the radio. In Valdosta, GA, from 1958 to 1969, he was the speaker on two programs and for a number of years the Sunday morning sermon was broadcast live. In New Zealand, radio was government controlled, but he was frequently a guest on the air on national radio. In some of the years he taught at Lipscomb and preached in Nashville, TN, he was the speaker on a syndicated radio program, "Straight Talk". From 1994, he has conducted a weekly radio program over the station in Grundy County where he lives. His Sunday morning sermons are also seen on local television in the area.



Joe D. Gray

Since 1995, Brother Gray has spoken weekly on the world wide short-wave program, "The Treasure of Truth".

"YOU ARE LISTENING TO THE TREASURE OF TRUTH"

"Churches of Christ bring to you the marvelous treasure of God's truth."

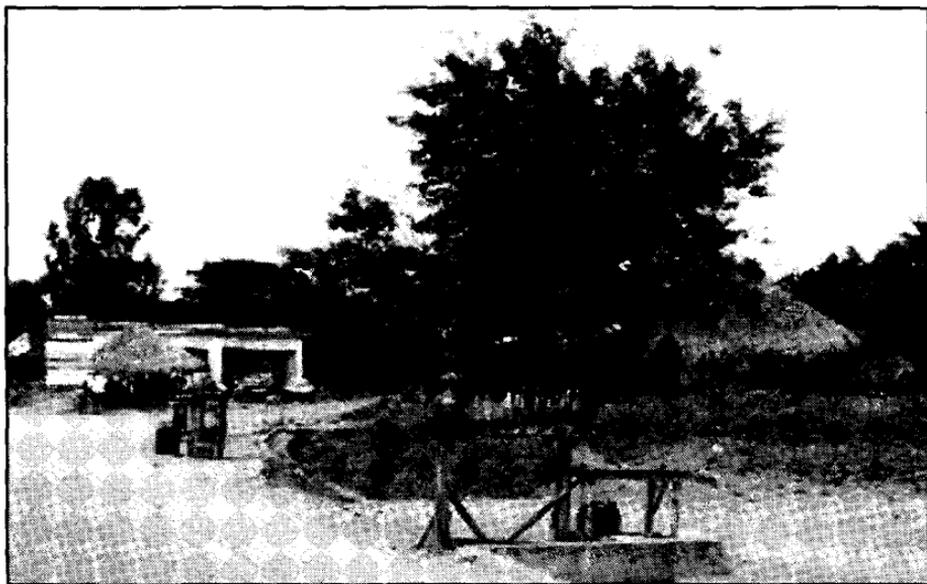
For 11 years these words, or similar ones, have introduced to the world a simple presentation of the Lord and His gospel. The program began at the urging of Germaine Lockwood, with the involvement of brother Joe D. Gray, with the help of friends and a few churches, and with the determined oversight and financial support of the elders and members of the church in Altamont, Tennessee. This congregation has always been the largest contributor to the work. The program has been broadcast world-wide every week since its beginning. Initial emphasis was on the Pacific area, where the Grays have lived as missionaries. It quickly expanded to 3 directional antennas blanketing the entire world. For the last 3 years it has been heard 5 times weekly, with half the world receiving messages twice. In May of 2006, the 6th and 7th antennas were added so that the world is blanketed

FROM THE HEART OF ...

twice. Many individuals will have at least three opportunities in any given week to hear the gospel. We are now negotiating with another organization that has five antennas covering the world.

The Lessons

From the beginning, the program has presented basic lessons relating to Christ while pleading for unity based on His Word. Lessons center upon the Biblical explanation of the nature of man and his world, with evidences to aid the listeners' understanding. Also emphasized is the Gospel story of the magnificent love of God for man through the ages, culminating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The offer of God to forgive man's sins and make him new is constantly included. The nature of the church as designed by God and built by Jesus is also emphasized. Lessons on how to convert neighbors and worship locally are also taught.



Through short-wave radio, the Gospel goes into isolated villages such as this one.

Mail response was disappointing at first. The lack of letters caused questions about the validity of the program in my mind. However, as time went by, the mail increased and requests for correspondence courses, material on various subjects, Bibles, articles for denominational publications, etc. became quite exciting. One inspiring feature of the program is answering

FROM THE HEART OF ...

some of the questions sent in by listeners. You know, of course, that God's perfect Word answers every inquiry of men. It is through questions that we are best able to deal with the aspects of Christian living and to make comparisons with other religions in our teaching. These inquiries from 50 countries and 14 states in the United States come from every section of the world.

One beauty of short-wave radio is that it reaches everywhere quickly. Those lost in the maze of massive megalopolises can cut through the noise of their neighborhoods and listen to the message of eternal peace. Families in little mud bush villages or in giant gulfs of imposing mountains can hear the same message of salvation. Illiterates and highly educated alike may well hear and learn. We have had letters from professors, engineers, scientists, as well as many whose writing is barely legible. Bedouins in desert tents or millionaires in their mansions can learn of our blessed Savior and His Gospel without ever meeting you or me.

It is obvious that personal contact properly conducted is the best means of conversion. We urgently need to find, train and send more and more workers in an effort to reap the Lord's harvest. I was taught when young that we could personally reach every creature. I fully anticipated that goal being reached in my lifetime. When I decided over 65 years ago to be a missionary, I envisioned myself as one of a vast army of Christian teachers who would swamp the world with Truth. The Lord has used me, and for that I am humbly grateful. My family and I lived and taught in the South



Campaigners for follow-up efforts.

FROM THE HEART OF ...

Pacific for a number of years. Since beginning **The Treasure of Truth** broadcasts, Harriette and I have become deeply impressed with the value of short wave radio, as we have traveled in response to the programs and have observed the many who are listening through their only contact with the outside world. I have been privileged to visit with the saved and the lost in 80 countries.



Refugee camps can hear the Gospel through short-wave radio.

When Germaine first approached me in the 1970's about teaching by short-wave, I rejected the idea. I did not have time, I thought, to detract from our efforts to reach the world personally. Our search was for ways to reach more and more, one-on-one. We attempted to evangelize a nation that might help with outreach in their immediate area. We organized numerous international campaigns on four continents in an effort to expedite the harvest, using people as mass media. A school was established in New Zealand to train national workers. I taught missions and established two apprentice programs which resulted in over 100 young people going to teach for 2 years in 22 nations. The vital need for building strong churches at home in order to plan and implement world-wide teaching programs was central in our thoughts and activities. The weaknesses of some of our methods became evident. The paternal plateau became a reality rather than a theory. Changes were attempted; the efforts went on.

Of course, we were only a few among many who worked feverishly to reach every person. I grew to love those whom I knew only by name

FROM THE HEART OF ...

because of their care for the lost through their love for the Lord. Noble men, women, and children sacrificed much for His great cause. Yet, the world remained lost and largely untaught. Populations increased much faster than our teaching outreach. The actual work-force in mission areas actually decreased as the need for workers increased dramatically!



A baptism in Iraq because of teaching through short-wave radio.

Belatedly, it dawned on me that many would have to be reached by mass media. And, it became evident that the best of all media with which to reach the entire world was shortwave. Germaine's wisdom was finally understood. By short-wave we can evangelize now! The Central Avenue church in Valdosta, in 1962, adopted a 30-year program to evangelize New Zealand. A Nashville church some years ago had a 20-year plan for local and world evangelism. There is a plan today to place a Bible in the hands of every person in 15 years. I pray for these and all that are pointing toward the lost of the world.

And through years of involvement in missions and over a decade on short-wave airways (although I have preached on AM and FM radio since 1952), I am convinced that, in our day, short-wave is a necessity. It must be included if we truly hope to reach everyone — especially those who will never see a missionary or receive printed material through general outreach.

STEWARDSHIP — HOW TO REACH THE MOST LISTENERS?

Those billion short-wave radios in the world cannot be directed by us to one frequency. Most do not listen to one station very long, as short-wave listeners are avid frequency surfers. But if we will scatter our message on many frequencies offered by numerous stations, the world can hear! Constantly, we are learning of new frequencies, many of which are unbelievably economical! The cost is so small and requires minimal investment or upkeep by the church. Good stewardship demands we use our means prudently.

‘ There is much demand today for big programs with large staffs and modern facilities. Some of these, like the missionary societies of old, are not overseen by the church. We must do things in God’s way. We must be used by Him to do His work!!

We will be happy to provide radio or television teaching tapes at no cost to any church that needs them for local or mission broadcast!!

Biblical Autonomy

The Treasure of Truth is under the oversight of the elders and the church in Altamont, Tennessee. We are assisted by a number of individuals and congregations that have decided autonomously that they would like to have a part in this work. We do not believe that a world-wide outreach of the simple gospel can be found that is more cost-effective. Your inquiries are welcomed and your prayers are earnestly solicited.

INEXPENSIVE STAFF.

A Dollar Given Equals a Dollar Used Directly To Teach The Lost

The operating costs of the **Treasure of Truth Broadcasts** are among the lowest anywhere. Local members do much of the work. Harriette writes the newsletters. The bookkeeping, treasury work and computer specialty labors are done voluntarily by Stew Galus. Betty Laskowske is provided part-time-support by the church for secretarial work, and she goes far beyond her assigned duties. Wayne Hammond voluntarily helps spread the word of these opportunities through this program of outreach, and we hope to use him more widely soon. Jody Kimble is setting up a website without cost to the program. Y.B. Ashby helps with program leads voluntarily. The ladies of the church often fold papers or address materials gladly. Most of the materials distributed to listeners are donated by churches, individuals or publishers. Expensive printing is rarely used. The church here meets this expense and more.

WHY SHORT-WAVE RADIO IS SO USEFUL!!

- ◆ THERE ARE OVER 1,000,000,000 SHORT WAVE RECEIVERS IN THE WORLD!
- ◆ ONE STATION CAN REACH WHOLE CONTINENTS WITH ONE BROADCAST!
- ◆ IT GOES WHERE MAIL WILL NOT GO. NO E-MAIL ADDRESSES ARE NEEDED. THE AIR OF THE WORLD IS LITERALLY FILLED WITH TRUTH TO BE HEARD IN HUGE CITIES OR HAMLETS.
- ◆ ITS BROADCASTS ARE HEARD IN COUNTRIES THAT ARE HOSTILE TO THE UNITED STATES AND THAT DO NOT ALLOW MISSIONARIES TO ENTER!
- ◆ FOR MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IT IS THE ONLY MEANS OF CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
- ◆ SOME WHO HEAR CANNOT CONTACT US, BUT THEY CAN LEARN ABOUT JESUS AND BELIEVE AND OBEY.
- ◆ IT IS THE MOST ECONOMICAL WAY TO PREACH TO THE ENTIRE WORLD. WE DO NOT HAVE TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN COSTLY FACILITIES.
- ◆ A LOCAL PROGRAM HERE ON FM THAT REACHES ABOUT 20,000 PEOPLE COSTS THE SAME AS A PROGRAM ON SHORT WAVE THAT BROADCASTS TO TWO CONTINENTS AND 1,250,000 PEOPLE!
- ◆ SUCH A WORK CAN EASILY BE DIRECTED BY AN ELDERSHIP WITHOUT THREATENING BIBLICAL TEACHING OF CONGREGATION AUTONOMY.
- ◆ THERE ARE OVER 1500 SHORT WAVE STATIONS OPERATING IN 160 NATIONS. Using a number of these increases the number of listeners far above what any single station will attract. Listeners may not come to us, but by the use of multiple frequencies and stations, we can find them and we can go to them.

THE TREASURE OF TRUTH

Joe D. Gray

P.O. Box 156 Altamont, Tn.

manor@blomand.net www.treasureoftruth.org

Two opportunities through World Bible School!

Are you looking for an opportunity to be a branch, bearing fruit to God? *World Bible School teachers* have that opportunity. Why not call the WBS office (512-345-8190) or write to wbsinfo@wbschool.org for full information. Make your time count for souls!

Are you looking for a Bible correspondence course that will teach you the word of God in an honest and easy-to-understand way? Many have learned how to be saved and to live with the expectation of an eternal home with God through World Bible School courses. Write for yours today. It is free for any who want to learn.

World Bible School
P.O. Box 2169
Cedar Park, Texas 78630-2169 USA

GOSPEL BROADCASTING NETWORK

Support the satellite cable network being developed by churches of Christ for the preaching of the Gospel throughout the USA and ultimately to the world. Let us work together to see this accomplished.

I WANT TO BE ONE OF THE *7,000!

(7,000 x \$25/month = \$2,100,000 required by GBN annually)

Please send your contribution to GBN, P. O. Box 23604, Chattanooga, TN 37422.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Member of what congregation? _____

Amount of contribution: _____ Onetime Monthly Annually

Comment: _____

GBN, A WORK OF HIGHLAND CHURCH OF CHRIST, 901 CHESTER STREET, DALTON, GA 30721
CALL (423) 893-7807. TOLL FREE: 1-866-525-GOSPEL. VISIT US ONLINE: www.gbn.tv.org; E-MAIL: office@gbn.tv.org

We Are Calling for Your Help Now!

It is Urgent!!!

“I am a Christian, preaching and teaching the word of God to others. I have one of your books here, entitled BIBLE THEMES, which I have read for almost 6 times. I have no other book to read apart from the Bible. Please, I kindly request for more books that you may have at the moment — even second-hand books I will appreciate very much. Martin Mazzai (from Zambia)”

Brethren, are you listening? We are getting many calls from our brethren in Africa and Asia, begging for **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** and other books. Those people are starved for Christian literature. Will we hear them or will we deny them the spiritual food they crave? It is up to you.

With our editions in English, Spanish, (Telugu and Tamil in India), we are printing around 70,000 copies of this quarterly magazine, but our goal is to reach 100,000 copies of each issue (we wish it could be a million or more!). With that volume they will cost only 50 cents a copy. Our printer will package and address them for \$3.00 per bag, and then the postage for 35 copies in an M-Bag is \$11.00. This means that we can print and ship one box of 35 copies to a foreign address for approximately \$35.00, providing literature for 35 people. If you send \$35.00 a month, covering the cost of 12 boxes a year or 3 per quarter — 420 magazines — you will be enabling 420 X 10 people to read 112 pages of Gospel message in a year. That's 4200 people you can be instrumental in teaching with this small contribution and small effort on your part! Think of the good that would do! Surely, most individuals and congregations can spare that much for the spreading of the Gospel.

To help with this particular need, please send your checks to

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL
Box 72, Winona, MS 38967**

To speed up your announcement that you want to help, call us at 662-283-1192 or send your E-Mail to

Choate@WorldEvangelism.org

[Web site: WorldEvangelism.org](http://WorldEvangelism.org)

Dear Brethren:

I want to subscribe to the quarterly magazine, **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**. Enclosed is my check for \$12.00 for four issues, or \$20.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume _____. **My address is given below.**

I want to order the complete set of volumes in print (52 issues) for the reduced price of \$2.00 per copy. **My address is given below.**

Please send special prices for WBS teachers and their students.

I want to **MAKE A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION** of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**. Enclosed is my check for \$12.00 for four issues, or \$20.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume _____. **The address is given below.**

I want to send \$25.00 per month (or a multiple), for a box of 35 copies (or multiples) of each issue of the magazine as they are printed. Churches are also urged to use boxes in this way. Or you may send one payment of \$300.00 per year for four issues. This will help us to send more copies to the mission fields.

We want to give \$_____ each month to help send this magazine to mission fields of the world, including the USA.

As a congregation we want to help print and circulate 100,000 copies of each issue of this magazine by making a special contribution to this effort. We can specify where the copies we pay for will be used, whether in our personal work, in jail ministry, overseas, or . . .

(Return this form in an envelope, along with your check, to the following address, stating your wishes.)

THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

Box 11218

Springfield, MO 65808

Att. Byron Nichols

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

Verse Search (from page 82)

1. by the law
2. yes
3. a hypocrite
4. made them lawbreakers
5. dishonor God
6. break the law
7. God's covenant with Abraham
8. by not keeping the law
9. if they keep the righteous requirements of the law
10. written code and circumcision
11. God blesses the person who commits his heart and soul to a covenant with Him
12. yes
13. that God is more interested in our hearts being pure than in our traditions and actions

Bible Find

(from page 26)

O	L	L	E	N	M	O	C	R	G	B	D	N	I	H
Y	B	X	E	E	O	R	D	A	O	U	E	Y	L	Y
L	I	A	O	Q	N	G	H	E	A	L	A	D	J	C
F	L	E	A	P	Q	E	A	B	T	L	G	J	R	G
W	O	R	R	A	P	S	M	R	L	O	L	V	V	P
S	R	K	G	V	J	R	Y	O	D	C	E	V	E	M
L	E	V	I	A	T	H	A	N	K	F	A	D	I	
A	B	B	E	R	K	M	Y	S	E	H	C	R	A	Z
G	A	F	A	N	G	A	U	F	E	O	R	E	O	N
E	A	O	L	I	C	B	V	C	H	E	P	M	G	
R	A	S	O	O	W	O	K	A	Y	H	A	I	U	
T	H	E	L	W	D	S	R	D	D	P	V	H	U	
A	G	A	W	E	S	G	T	Q	F	G	O	B	J	V
I	K	V	L	Z	J	L	F	A	O	J	G	J	A	H
I	G	K	H	Z	J	X	M	M	X	E	A	E	O	Q

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

World Wide Broadcast Schedule

<http://www.treasureoftruth.org>

WHR 5
17.65 Mhz.
(up to) 60 Million Watts
Europe; Africa;
North America

Saturdays	
UTC	3:00 p.m. 9:00 p.m.
Nashville	10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
New York	11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.
Atlanta	11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.
Los Angeles	1:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
London	4:00 p.m. 10:00 p.m.
Paris	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Rome	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Capetown	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Cairo	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Nairobi	7:00 p.m. 1:00 a.m.
Ivory Coast	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Lagos	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.
Namibia	5:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m.

Brother Joe Gray
can also be reached
931-692-2942
or email at
manor@blomand.net

WHR 3
17.780 Mhz.
12 Million Watts
Asia; Australia

Saturdays	
UTC	8:00 a.m.
Nashville	3:00 a.m.
Kabul	12:30 p.m.
Karachi	1:00 p.m.
New Delhi	1:15 p.m.
Bombay	1:15 p.m.
Hong Kong	4:00 p.m.
Tokyo	5:00 p.m.
Auckland	8:00 p.m.
Sydney	6:00 p.m.
Shanghai	4:00 p.m.
Moscow	11:00 a.m.
Beijing	4:00 p.m.
Jerusalem	11:00 a.m.

WHR 1
9.495 Mhz.
4.2 Million Watts
Central - South America*

Saturdays	
UTC	11:00 a.m. 9:30 p.m.
Nashville	6:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m.
Mexico City	6:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m.
Bermuda	8:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m.
Panama	7:00 a.m. 5:30 p.m.
Lima Peru	7:30 a.m. 5:30 p.m.
Santiago	8:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m.
Sao Paulo	9:00 a.m. 7:30 p.m.
Buenos Aires	9:00 a.m. 7:30 p.m.
New Orleans	6:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m.
La Paz	8:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m.
Bogota	7:00 a.m. 5:30 p.m.
Managua	6:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m.

* Parts of North America

These are sample times in various time zones. For other cities consult a map for the appropriate time zone, or write for the information you desire.

Treasure of Truth
P.O. Box 156
Altamont, TN. 37301
931-692-4244

WNIB
13.570Mhz
Europe
Central & South America
Africa

Sundays	
UTC	8:00 p.m.
Nashville	3:00 p.m.
London	8:00 p.m.
Paris	9:00 p.m.
Rome	1:15 p.m.
Capetown	9:00 p.m.
Cairo	9:00 p.m.
Lagos	9:00 p.m.
Ivory Coast	9:00 p.m.
Berlin	10:00 p.m.
Mexico City	4:00 p.m.
San Paulo	4:00 p.m.
Buenos Aires	12:00 a.m.

WNIB
9.265 Mhz.
Europe
Central & South America
Africa

UTC	
Nashville	2:00 a.m.
London	2:00 a.m.
Mexico City	9:00 p.m.
Bermuda	11:00 p.m.
Recife Brazil	12:00 a.m.
Tahiti	6:00 p.m.
Dallas	9:00 p.m.
St. Louis	9:00 p.m.
Buenos Aires	12:00 a.m.

The only way many can hear the gospel is by shortwave radio. Our country uses shortwave to broadcast the Voice of America. The United States is distributing thousands of radios with other relief supplies so that many can hear the message of America.