

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :
J. C. CHOATE

Associate Editor
SUNNY DAVID

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EDITORIAL



Control Yourself

We know that a car, bus, train, plane, or most anything that gets out of control can be dangerous. Sometimes a person gets too hot, gets angry about something, or loses control of his mental powers and goes berserk. Maybe as a result of his irrational actions one or more is hurt or killed. The fact is, most anything can go out of control at times, even human beings. We must therefore learn to control ourselves so that in any circumstance or situation that we may find ourselves in, that we will always do the right thing.

Some areas are being suggested here in which we need to control ourselves :

1. We need to control our thoughts. Some think that the only time that wrong is done is when one commits the actual

act. But what produces the act? It begins in the mind. Jesus said, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man. . ." (Matthew 15:18, 19). Again, Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it was said of them in old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart". (Matthew 5:27, 28.) John said, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3:15). The wise man, Solomon, said as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. (Proverbs 23:7). In these scriptures, and others, we can easily see that what goes on in one's heart or mind is very important to his spiritual well being. Therefore those thought processes must be brought under control and trained so that the mind can be used for good things instead of for bad things.

2. We must control our tongues. James discusses the tongue in James 3. He says that we put bits in the horses mouths and they obey us, and we are able to turn a great ship with a small helm, but he continues, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things, Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5, 6). He says that we are able to tame beasts, serpents, and things in the sea, but alas, he concludes, "The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (James 3:8-10). Finally he says "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness and wisdom." (James 3:10-13). In James 1:26, the same writer says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Paul told Timothy that

he should be an example of the believers in word and in conversation. We must watch what we say. Our tongue can be used for bad, as already indicated, but it can also be used for good. It can tell the truth, praise God, speak well of others, confess Christ, and preach the gospel.

3. We must control our fleshly appetites. Lust of the flesh, fornication, and adultery are the things that the world indulges in. Paul found some of these practices in the church at Corinth and he promptly condemned it and asked the godly members to withdraw from such. (1 Corinthians 5). For example, there is nothing wrong with sex as long as it is kept within a lawful marriage. (Romans 7:1-4 ; Matthew 19). Peter says that we are to abstain from fleshly lusts. (1 Peter 2:11).

4. We are to control our eating habits. So many people are overweight. Many of them are like this simply because they eat too much. Of course the world's philosophy is, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die." Another sad thing to note about those who eat well, many times they are not very considerate of those who are hungry. Christ will say to those who are lost in the day of judgment, when they want to know what they had done against him, "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink..." (Matthew 25:42). The Lord said that we shouldn't be all that concerned for our daily needs, for he will provide. (Matthew 6). It might be added that he doesn't always give all that we would like, but he gives a sufficient amount.

5. We are to control our money. Many simply do not know how to use money. They try to live beyond their income and this spells tragedy. There are those who will borrow money and then will not pay it back. The scriptures speak of money as being filthy lucre. Paul tells us, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:10). Paul also said that one of the qualifications of an elder is that he is not to be greedy for money. (1 Timothy 3:3). There is nothing wrong with money itself. It is only paper or metal. But it is the power that money represents, it is what can

be done with it. To long for it, to covet it, to steal it, or to misuse it is wrong. But it can be used in a good way in providing for one's needs, and likewise for his family, for paying debts, feeding the poor, and giving as we have been prospered to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 16:2).

6. We are to control our family members. They belong to us and represent us. Therefore they need to behave themselves and conduct themselves properly. Paul says that one of the qualifications of being an elder is that he must rule his own family well, "having his children in subjection with all gravity." (1 Timothy 3:4). The point is, if one cannot take care of his own family, how can he take care of the Lord's church? (1 Timothy 3:5). The husband is to be the head of the wife and the wife and children are to be in submission to him. Paul said, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." (Ephesians 5:23). The husband is not to be dictatorial or mean in dealing with his wife and children, but he is the head of the house. The husband should love his family and they should love him. This is an ideal family arrangement.

7. We are to control our spiritual life. Many don't know what they believe, who they are, why they are here, what they should do, or anything else. The Lord made us and gave us a mind or intelligence. We have the ability then to think, to reason, and to make choices. If we are wise we will believe in God and go to his word for help and guidance in what the Lord would have us to do. On doing that then he will save us and add us to his church. Being in Christ, walking on the narrow way, worshipping and serving God as he instructs us, then we have peace with our maker and our fellowman, and we have hope in this life and in the world to come. Get in control of your life and God will bless you.

In conclusion, are you in control of things in your life, in your home, and in your spiritual relationship to Christ? If not, you need to be working on these matters right now. They are too important to put off.

Those who are in charge of their lives are very noticeable.

They belong to God and generally have a good life, a nice family and they are happy and optimistic about the future. God is blessing them and they are in turn a blessing to others. you can have that kind of life too if you will turn to the Lord for help.



associate editorial

What Makes Christianity Unique ?

There are some good moral teachings and exhortations in nearly all religions of the world, but only in Christianity there is a way of salvation for all. There may be gods and prophets and gurus and swamies in various religions on earth, but only in Christianity there is a Saviour of the world. I am told that most all religions preach love and accept that God is love, but only in Christianity do we learn what love really is, because the Bible says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). And, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10). The Gospel or the Good News of Christ makes Christianity a unique religion in the world.

There is only one God, who created every thing, and who made man in His own image and after His own likeness. (Genesis 1:26 ; 2:7). All have sinned against Him, (Romans 3:23), and all will have to give their account one day to Him. (Hebrews 9:27). According to the Bible, which is the Revelation of God's will for man, God shows no partiality. (Acts 10:34). He wants to save all people everywhere. (2 Peter 3:9). He has, therefore, provided a way of redemption from sin to all people in Christ Jesus, His Son, whom He sent into the world to take away the sins of the world. (John 1:29). God in His grace allowed His Son Jesus Christ to come on earth and to die on the cross for every

man's sin, and thus to become the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2), is the Good News of the Bible for every person. Hear what the Bible says, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:6-8). You should be happy about this because Christ died for you, He died for your sins. He has paid for your sins the redeeming price by shedding His own blood on the cross. (1 Peter 1:18, 19). Therefore, now there is no need for you to live any more in sin, in a hopeless condition. Remember, Christ died for you on the cross to save you from sin!

Since Christ has died for your sins, God commands that you should now believe in Him and repent of your sins and be baptized for the remission of your sins. After His death, burial and resurrection from the dead, and just before His ascension into heaven, Christ met His disciples and told them to, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and then he added, "*He who believes and is baptized will be saved: but he who does not believe will be, condemned*". (Mark 16:15, 16). When the Apostles of Christ began to preach His gospel, they told their listeners to, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38).

God wants all to be saved. He gave His Son for all. He wants all to hear the Gospel. He desires that all should believe in Jesus Christ and obey His commands. He wants all to go to heaven. He is not willing that any should Perish, He want all to come to repentance. The decision is yours. You must make a choice today.

The Fruits Of Fear

Ray Peters

Does it seem strange to speak of "The Fruits Of Fear"? What good can come from being afraid? Doesn't the Bible say, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear" (2 Tim. 1:7)?

The same writer stated in 2 Corinthians 7:1, "... perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Is there a contradiction? What is the meaning of these verses. What good can come from fear? No doubt, these are questions that have conjured up in the minds of many Bible students.

Focusing On The Word Fear

The meaning of "fear" and the demands of the above passages may not be clear until one focuses on the meaning of the various words translated "fear."

The first word is *phobos*. It first had the meaning of "flight," caused by being scared. Paul said, "I was . . . in fear (*phobos*), and in much trembling" (1 Cor. 2:3). By metonymy, (one word for another thing represented) it is that which causes fear from adversaries (e.g. Matt. 10:28). In 2 Corinthians 7:1 it has the meaning of "reverential fear," not of him (God), but the fear of displeasing him.

The second word for fear *deilia* from *deos*, meaning "fright" and is rightly rendered "fearfulness" in 2 Timothy 1:7. Truly, our Father has not given us a spirit or attitude of "cowardice" or "timidity."

The third word is *eulabeia*. It signifies first, "caution" and secondly, "reverence, godly fear." In Hebrews 5:7 the writer uses the word in reference to Jesus when he cried out to the Father on the cross. The last part of verse 7 reads, "and was heard in that he feared." An interesting note is that in Hebrews 12:28 the word for "reverence" is the word *aidos* and is translated "modesty" in 1 Timothy 2:9.

The Results Of Reverence

Having noted the meanings and usages of the various words translated fear, one can easily see there is no contradiction between 2 Timothy 1:7 and 2 Corinthians 7:1, Truly, our heavenly Father has not given his children, in the face of the enemies of truth and righteousness, the outlook of being afraid, fearful, cowardly, and timid, but rather has given them the spirit

of boldness, power, and fearlessness. Yet, in regard to him who made us, each is to be filled with reverence and respect and a desire to not displease him in our preaching, teaching, and our lives. Therefore, when one correctly understands the meaning of "fear" and then incorporates that "reverence and respect" for God into his life, there will be noticeable results and fruits. Thus, "the fruits of fear."

When one properly fears God, a respect for his name will be evident. The term "name" is an all encompassing word, and has reference to his authority as well as his revered name (Psa. 111 : 9). In respecting God, one respects his word and will not "add to or take away" from it (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18,19). One will not "water down" God's word. He will preach the "whole counsel" (Acts 20:7) and will handle it "aright" (2 Tim. 2:15). Again, a fruit of "constant carefulness in dealing with others" will come forth. It naturally follows, "if one respects God he will respect others." The golden rule, as Jesus taught in Matthew 7 : 12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do you, do ye even so to them" will be evident if a true reverence for God is entertained.

Going back to 1 Timothy 2 : 9 and the word *aidos* which is translated "modest" but in Hebrews 12 : 28 is translated "reverence" points out that one who "reveres" God will "revere" himself and others by wearing "reverence, respectful dress." Respect for brethren will manifest itself in "preferring one another" (Rom. 12 : 10) and will dispel the cliques and unfriendliness that manages to sneak its way into some congregations. When there is not a close-knitted atmosphere, the chasm is wide for Satan to walk in and cause problems.

The last, but not the least, fruit of fear, is that God notices it and puts it in the "Book of Remembrance" (Mal. 3 : 16). In Malachi's time those that "feared" the Lord "spoke often one with another : and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name." It is not that our Father has a poor memory! The point is that he notices our actions. If one is to have his name written in the "Lamb's Book Of Life" (Phil.

4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 20:12; 21:27; 22:19), and see the portals of heaven, one must truly manifest the "fruits of fear."

God, An Invisible Reality

G. Devadanam

In the material world around us, there are many things which are invisible. The very fact that they remain unseen does not constitute a proof for their non-existence. Not only they escape from our naked eye, but surprisingly enough, they also stay out of the reach of all sense perception. Such are known as invisible realities. Electricity, Ether are some such examples.

Limitation of sense organs, of course, makes some physical phenomena invisible. For instance, most of the disease causing bacteria exist unseen because of their size. And a host of galaxies with their innumerable stars, exist unseen by virtue of their distance. Either bacteria or galaxies remain as invisible realities, subject to the limitation of natural sense perception. And to the knowledge of ancient man they were non-existent. However, to the eye of a modern man with his sophisticated scientific equipment, they became visible realities. Their existence mostly relate to physical and material substances.

However, there are some invisible realities which are not materialistic, in nature. That might sound strange ! But what do you think of the life which is within you ? Is that not an unseen reality ? Life is perceived in all living beings, but as to its shape and size, etc.; no one knows. And while it leaves the body, it slips away un-noticed even by the greatest of experts. Do you know why ? Because life, by its very nature, is invisible. Existence of it is demonstrated only by its activities. Could there be any possibility of knowing its existence apart from its activities ?

Even among physical phenomena, there are some visible realities which could only be known by their activities. For this, electricity is our example again. Electricity has been very widely used in our times. Being invisible, electricity baffles all human sense organs, and yet it is real. The wisest of all electrical

engineers would never have perceived it with any of his own sense organs directly, which to the most are the only reliable source of knowledge.

Electricity is not light, nor it is fan's breeze, nor fire, nor machine, nor a shock, etc., But electricity lits properly connected lamps, heats the stoves, moves the machines, and so on. It shocks or kicks a person who approaches it unduly. The presence of electricity is exhibited only by its functions. So, with this we conclude that there are some visible realities which do exist and yet stay out of the reach of human sense organs.

God is a Spirit Being, and He is one such reality. "Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Have you ever seen a man, who while reading his book under an electrical lamp, enjoying the breeze from an electrical fan, and yet say, "there is no electricity"? What do you think of such a man, if you happen to come accross one? What suppose would you then say of some one, who enjoys the heat of the sun, light of the moon, fruit of the earth, etc., and still say . . . "THERE IS NO GOD"?!

"But ask now, the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowl of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" (Job 12:7-9). The breath of all the living and the souls of all men are in His hand.

Moreover, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:18-20).

Therefore, now without controversy sense perception is not the only source of reliable information. There are realities apart from sense perception. If God is not seen with your naked eyes,

nor is perceived with any other of your senses, don't think that He is not. God does EXIST, He is REAL; He is a Spirit Being. By virtue of His nature or constitution, He is invisible. Nonetheless, He demonstrates His existence by His handiwork, the visible creation!!

What do we have to do with God, if He does exist? We will see something about it in our next lesson. Until then, may the good presence of God go with your mind.

How The Christian Is To Overcome Hate

Sam E. Hester

There are three prevailing rules in the world for getting along with people: the rule of hate, the rule of justice, and the rule of mercy. Those dominated by the rule of hatred render evil for evil, and evil for good. Those dominated by the rule of justice render evil for evil and good for good. Those who are dominated by the rule of mercy render good for good, and good for evil.

The rule of hate originated with the Devil. (John 13:18, 27). The rule of human justice originated with man and God. (Genesis 9; Romans 13). The rule of mercy originated with God alone. (Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 23:24; Romans 12:19-21). There is a place in the world for the rules of justice and mercy, but no place should be given to hate. What should the Christian do about hate? Not only must the Christian know how to practice love, he must know how to overcome hate.

THREE WAYS

There are three ways that an enemy can hate you: in his heart, in his words, and in his actions. Jesus taught us to counter hatred by having the opposite attitude and by taking the opposite action to those who hate you. (Matthew 5:44). For instance, hatred in the heart is to be met with love (agape), a concern for the best for the other person. Hatred in words is to be met by a blessing in words. Hatred in action is to be met by a good action, such as

prayer for him who is persecuting you.

What about actions against Christians which are public in nature and which exhibit a bad attitude? Jesus teaches us to be willing to forbear and to go beyond the reasonable and legal requirements. For instance, a public insult, such as a slap across the face, is to be met with a willingness to be insulted further. (Matthew 5:39). A judicial injustice, such as having one's coat taken away, is to be met with the attitude of willingness to give more. (Matthew 5:40). A governmental burden, such as being required to carry a soldier's baggage one mile, should be met with a willingness to go twice the legal requirement. (Matthew 5:41).

NOT JUST DEFENSIVE

But the Christian is not just to be on the defensive in overcoming hate, he must also be on the offensive. The "golden chapter of the Bible," Romans chapter twelve, gives at least three things we can do "on the offense" to conquer hate. First, we must pursue peace. (Romans 12:17-18). It is not enough for us to desire peace; we must actively pursue it. Second, we must postpone wrath. (Romans 12:19). Vengeance does not belong to us. God renders vengeance through the civil courts, in his direct providence, and he will at the final judgment. Third, we must outsmart hate. (Romans 12:20-21). To be overcome with evil or to stoop to hatred and vengeance is to be outsmarted by evil. Someone who makes us return evil for evil has shown that he is bigger than we are. On the other hand, if we treat a normal person with kindness rather than vengeance, it may move his heart. To return good when he has done you evil makes a normal person feel embarrassed. It may be the one thing that will win him to your side when nothing else will. Hatred is always at a disadvantage when met by mercy. Hate can be outsmarted.

HITLER'S HATRED!

A famous unbeliever named Frederich Nietzsche thought that Christianity was weak because of its doctrine of mercy. Nietzsche thought that a person became strong through arrogance, power, and initiative. A disciple of Nietzsche, Adolf Hitler, once said, "Love is weak, hate is strong; we'll use hate and we'll conquer the world!"

Hitler and his empire are no more. Christianity still stands, with perhaps more influence than ever before.

CONCLUSION

Mercy is where the righteousness and the justice of God meet. In Old Testament times, this point of mercy was at the "mercy seat" located on the ark of the covenant. Today, Christ is God's rule of mercy. So everyone who needs mercy needs Christ. Through Christ we receive the only thing necessary for our souls in regard to our past; the forgiveness of our sins; through him we can also be delivered from the rule of hate.

Be Strong and of Good Courage

Roger E. Dickson

It was nothing short of sheer courage that allowed Jesus to triumphantly ride upon the back of a donkey into the midst of those religious rulers in Jerusalem whom he knew would drive steel nails a few days later into the flesh of his hands and feet. If what Froude said was true—"Courage is, on all hands, considered as an essential of high character" — then we must conclude that Jesus was of the highest character. Those who would dare follow in his steps must strive to be of the same breed.

"For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power. . . Be not ashamed therefore. . . ." (2 Timothy 1:7).

Moses stood on Jordan's banks with a vision of the trials Joshua would encounter on the east side. One charge permeates all of Moses' instructions to Joshua: "Be strong and of good courage." (Joshua 1:6-18). If Moses could stand before me today, I am sure he would say the same as Paul, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." Courage is that Christian virtue which sings that we truly have faith in our God.

Courage says, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13). "Courage is almost a contradiction in terms," said Chesterton, "It means a strong desire to live taking the form of readiness to

die." I am sure this is what Paul meant when he said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

The courageous are not identified as those who have no fears. The courageous are identified as those who never let their fears take control of their lives. It is as Arthur Koestler said in *Arrow in the blue*. "Courage is never to let your actions be influenced by your fears." But courage is as Fenelon said, "A virtue only in so far as it is directed by prudence."

"In the fear of Jehovah is strong confidence." (Proverbs 14:26). Solomon was right. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth but the righteous are bold as a lion." (Proverbs 28:1). The righteous are such because "they know whom they have believed." Therefore, "if the glory of God is to break out in your service," wrote Schlink, "you must be ready to go out into the night."

"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear." (Hebrews 13:6). That is how one goes out into the night. "Wait for Jehovah" David encouraged, "Be strong, and let thy heart take courage." (Psalm 27:14). Someone once said, "Courage is fear that has said its prayers." Therefore in full confidence that God is close, one can courageously go forward. Plutarch wrote, "The Lacedaemonians seldom inquire the number of their enemies, but the place where they could be found." Remember, though, "The loving God never forsakes a hero on earth if his courage fail not." So said Andreas.

But why so much about courage? There are no cowardice heroes, that's why. Cowards win no victories. "Courage consists not in hazarding without fear," wrote Plutarch, "but being resolutely minded in a just cause." One may suffer a great loss in money and friends. But if one loses courage he loses all. "Courage is the virtue that makes other virtues possible." As Winston Churchill said, "Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities, because . . . it is the quality which guarantees all others." From this one essential human quality, therefore, one can obtain any victory.

Because of courage Paul could say, "So as much as in me is,

I am ready to preach the gospel." He would do so in the heart of paganism and persecuting influence—Rome. Confucius said, "To see what is right and not do it, is want of courage."

Paul was courageous. He saw what was right and did it. That's why his performance always matched his desires. Remember, Ralph Waldo Emerson was right when he wrote in *Essays*, "God will not have his work made manifest by cowards." Remember also that only you can be your own doctor in curing your own cold feet. But once cured, you will be able to have the victory. You will be able to follow after martyrs as Wishart who was burned at the stake. As flames encircled his mortal body he shouted, "The flame doth torment my body, but no whit abates my spirits."

"... is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee . . . ?" so asked King Darius of Daniel who was calmly sitting in the midst of lions. (Daniel 6:20.) Yes, God is able to deliver the courageous. Daniel's three friends had earlier said, "... our God . . . is able to deliver us. . . ." (Daniel 3:17). Someone once said, "There's only one thing more important in life than background, and that's backbone." The lions undoubtedly did not devour Daniel because he was made up of mostly grit, and backbone !

A fable says, one skeleton said to another as they idly hung in a laboratory closet, "You know, if we had any guts we would get out of here."

The world belongs to the courageous. The weak are only spectators in an arena where victory belong to those who are willing to throw away the scabbard in the heat of fierce battle. Yes, Montaigne was right. "The strangest, most generous, and proudest of all virtues is true courage."

But what better charge could be, written for the servant of God than God's charge to Ezekiel, "And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns are with thee, and thou doest dwell among scorpions : be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house." (Ezekiel 2:6).

Yes, "be strong and of good courage," a charge that permeates the Holy Writ. It should permeate our lives, too, (Numbers 13:20; Deuteronomy 31:6; 7, 23; Joshua 1:6, 9, 18; 10:25; 1 Chronicles 19:13; 22:13; 28:20; 2 Samuel 10:12; Ezra 10:4; Psalm 27:14, 31:24; Isaiah 41:6).

Good-news-ing the Good News

Jim Massey

No better proof could be found that restoring original Christianity is an ongoing need in every generation than the need in our day to restore New Testament evangelism. What may be called evangelism, evangelists, and the work of an evangelist may become so distorted by change and tradition that it is not recognizable by Bible descriptions. Evangelism is good-newsing the Good News.

We need to work at restoring that which restores all else. The taproot producing Christianity is evangelism. The mainstream work of the church to which all else is tributary is evangelism. Just as Dr. Salk eliminated all other possible causes of polio and identified the one virus which produces it, so we can eliminate all things making the church sick and dying and identify that which makes it healthy and growing—the gospel. And the Good News spreads Christianity only when it is spread itself.

Good news cannot but be told. The only one who doesn't tell good news is one who doesn't know it. The apostles could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard (Acts 4:20). Good news cannot be kept to oneself. When a generous brother gave me \$ 10,000 for suffering Ibo preachers in the Biafran war in Nigeria, he said, "Don't tell anyone about this." But how do you suppose I felt. I wanted to explode! I wanted to tell everyone the good news. It is hard to hold in good news.

God punished sin and forgave men by punishing Jesus in our stead. The very nature of God cannot stand sin. But the very nature and choice of man is to practice sin. Because God is perfectly just, He must punish man's sin, and a perfect standard

of right and wrong doesn't remedy man's sin problem. Law only exposes man's guilt and his need to be forgiven of sin. Sin is a barrier between God and man just as crime is a barrier between a criminal and his right standing with society. By the basic natures of God and man, the only way man can be forgiven by God is for God to find a way to punish sin and yet to forgive man, the sinner. Jesus' substituting death is the answer.

Christ suffered in the place of sinners. Because God must punish sin, man's sins were punished upon Jesus. His death was a substitute sacrifice for us. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was stricken, afflicted and smitten of God. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. He was chastened so that we could have peace with God. With His stripes we are healed. God has laid upon Him the sins of us all. God's demand for sin's punishment was satisfied when He saw the travail of His soul (Isaiah 53:4-12). Christ suffered sin's penalty in man's place (Romans 3:24-30; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

We have atonement because of Jesus. The word "atonement" means "at-one-ment." It is the price paid that enables peace to be restored between enemies. God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might be made righteous (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross, and by His stripes we are healed (1 Peter 2:24). Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18). All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but forgiveness of sins freely justifies or makes man righteous in Christ (Romans 3:23-26).

A man from Ethiopia was riding in his chariot reading the prophet Isaiah about God's suffering Lamb upon whom man's sins were laid. The preacher Philip began at this scripture and preached unto him Jesus. the Ethiopian then wanted to be baptized. They stopped the chariot, went down into the water, and the man was baptized. He then came up out of the water rejoicing because his sins had been forgiven in the death of Jesus (Acts 8:28-39).

The Christian is responsible now for restoring the basic gospel.

The Galatian congregations had removed themselves from Christ by changing the gospel Paul had preached, to another gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). By stressing and trusting their own righteousness by the Law, they had changed the Good News of Christ into the bad news of a legalistic gospel. As a result they had no good news to tell. A perverted gospel curses instead of saves, and it has no power to compel its telling. It is not good news.

The most thrilling and beneficial thing on earth is to study and reread the basic Good News so as to restore its message and its power in one's life. Distortion and tradition will pervert its simple purity unless we put blank film in our mental cameras and let the Bible reveal its original and powerful meaning to us afresh. This, in turn, will automatically restore original good-news-ness of the Good News. To restore in our lives the basic gospel's power is to restore basic evangelism, since to know it is to tell it, and good news cannot but be told.

Udenominational Christianity

Cecil May Jr.

The noun "denomination" comes from the verb "to denominate," which means "give a name to." However, in a church context denomination denotes a group of local churches that share at least some of these characteristics: a governing structure that ties the congregations together; a common body of beliefs or practices; a distinguishing name; and a conscious recognition that they are but a part of the larger whole of Christendom.

Denominations have been so much a part of the religious scene for the past several centuries that modern man finds it difficult to think of the church or Christianity apart from the denominations that, according to his understanding, comprise it. Despite this, however, it is possible today to be a Christian, to work and worship as a member of Christ's church, and yet not be part of a denomination. Not only is it possible, it is what the Bible teaches we ought to be.

The Udenominational Christ

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is much too great to be the

exclusive property of any one denomination. Denominations or sects existed among the Jews in Jesus' day. He spoke to all, corrected the errors of each without partiality, and recognized the need of adherents of each to become a part of His kingdom. Speaking of the Pharisees, with particular reference to their doctrines that set them apart from other followers of God through Moses, Jesus said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13).

Jesus is the eternal Word of God become flesh (John 1:1,14). He is the seed of woman, the seed of Abraham and the Son of David. But beyond all of that, He is the Son of God. To see Him is to see the Father. To know Him is to know eternal life. He is man's access to God and to divine mercy. He is not one road among many, but the only way to the Father.

No denomination can hold Him. Any name different from His that is worn detracts from the glory that belongs to the church's founder, builder and purchaser. Any doctrines peculiar to a denomination are, by that very peculiarity, not His words and are not, therefore, the words by which we shall be judged in the last day. Any denominational structure or earthly headquarters detracts from the authority that belongs to the one head of the church who sits at God's right hand in heaven.

"Whosoever will," "all ye that labour and are heavy laden," whosoever believeth": all these phrases show the invitation of Christ is universal. He is not the private property of any sect.

The Undenominational Gospel

The gospel predates the copyright laws. No denomination has exclusive ownership of the Good News of what God has wrought for man through Christ. When Jesus is preached as the Son of God and His atoning death is shown to be the only sufficient sacrifice for man's sins, those who receive by faith those glorious truths are not thereby identified with any sect or party of Christendom. The gospel belongs to every creature.

The apostle Peter preached Christ. When men believed and wanted to know what to do, he cried out to them, "Repent, and

Let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sin ; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Those who gladly received the Word were baptized and that day there were added to them about 3,000 souls (Acts 2:42).

That response to the preached gospel did not add men to any denomination, sect or party. Obedience to that same gospel will add men today to the same entity it did then, the church Jesus said He would build.

When I obeyed the gospel, I was responding to the love of God demonstrated to me in the sacrifice of Christ and to the conviction of sin in my life God's Word awakened in me. I believed the words of Jesus, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), and I responded in faith to Him.

The preacher who baptized me told me he was not a representative of any denomination and he was not baptizing me into any sect or party. What I did was to hear Jesus, believe Jesus. When I was baptized, I was baptized, therefore, "into Christ" (Galatians 3:26,27).

None of that affiliated me with any denomination, for no denomination has exclusive ownership of those words of our Lord from the Bible. Never since, have I done anything calculated to make me a part of any party or to join me to any separate, man-made segment of the church.

The gospel believed and obeyed makes one a Christian. If one wants to wear another name religiously or be something other than or in addition to a Christian, he will have to look for something other than the gospel to make him that.

The Undenominational Church

Those who are saved make up the church Jesus said He would build. Every redeemed person has been purchased by His blood (1 Peter 1:18, 19). They are part, therefore, of the church He bought with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

Because God does the saving and the adding (Acts 2:47), we may be sure the saved are all added and the added are all saved. To use the word "church" to mean something other than either a local congregation of believers or the totality of the redeemed is to use it in a sense foreign to Scripture. The Bible knows nothing of modern day denominations.

The Bible does know of the sectarian inclination of man and the desire to be denominated from one another when division over men's ideas have taken place. To those who said, "I am of Paul," "I am of Cephus," "I am of Apollos," Paul cried out that he was not crucified for them, nor were they baptized in his name. Therefore, when one has recognized who was crucified for him and in whose name he was baptized, he knows who alone he ought to be "of."

I believed in Christ, and He is undenominational. I obeyed the gospel, and it is undenominational. The Lord added me to His church, and it is not a denomination.

If I have brothers and sisters who, after being added by the Lord to His church through their obedience to the gospel, have joined a denomination, they have separated themselves from me and from all other Christians who are not a part of their party, but they have not made me a sectarian or a party member by doing so. If their denomination practices closed communion, I cannot commune with them, by their choice. If their denomination worships with unscriptural practices and by man-made doctrines, I cannot worship with them. If what their denomination tells men to do to be saved is not what the Bible says must be done, then those who become a part of that denomination are not likely to have become children of God, and cannot be my brethren.

If some in the church of our Lord, by party spirit or by sectarian legalities, they attempt to bind on all brethren, have made themselves into sects and parties, that still does not make me a party member or the church for which the Lord died a denomination. Someone else's sectarianism does not make me sectarian. Someone else's party spirit cannot wrap me up inside a party. My own party spirit, my own sectarianism, if I possess it, can do that, but someone else's does not.

The fact that many continue in sin does not nullify the power of the gospel to cleanse men from sin. The fact that some in the body of Christ have decided to worship according to the doctrines of men or to bind on their brethren the precepts of men does not nullify "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" for those who continue their commitment to God and Jesus Christ through the Bible alone.

You, too, can be just a Christian, a member of the church the Lord said He would build, the one for which He died and which He purchased with His own blood. You do not have to be anything else. You ought not be anything else.

No Warning

John Smith

"Why did you let things get so bad before you came to see me?" he asked.

"There was no warning," I cried.

"No warning?" The inflection was unbelieving. "No warning? No irritation when you brushed your teeth, no little shooting pains when you put a toothpick between those teeth, no ache when you drank something cold or allowed a piece of ice to rest there?"

"Well, it has been a little sensitive now and then," I said defensively. "But didn't seem serious."

"I'll tell you how serious it is; you're going to lose a tooth that could easily have been saved."

It was so final, so irrevocable, and the dread of having a tooth pulled filled me with apprehension. How could I have been so stupid as to have ignored the warning?

Much of preaching is indeed a "warning." I preach and teach daily in an effort to bring an awareness of the need for change in our lives. The lesson of the 10 virgins is a constant warning to watch and be alert. The ongoing problem we face is a tendency towards complacency.

"Sunrise, sunset, sunrise, sunset." The days go by, the years pass—20s blend into 30s, 30s to 40s then 50s. We are lulled into a somnambulistic state that assumes things will always be the same. Warnings are always there, but we pay no heed. Either we are desensitized because we hate unpleasantness.

There are those who smoke and need to quit and those who play dangerous games with their marriages, morals and language habits. Others need to study more, pray more, give more time to eternal matters and their children. A thousand things nag us, but we are so desensitized to the stimuli, the warning voices, we do not act.

Suddenly one is told, "You have cancer." One comes home from work to discover his wife is packed and gone, and his son is charged with drug possession. One loses his position, his dignity, his reputation.

One turns to God and finds no solutions because he doesn't know God. One tries to pray and has no voice, no words. One tries to meditate, and being alone with his thoughts is terrifying. His daughter is pregnant, and he doesn't know what to say. He realizes he doesn't know anybody—himself least of all—and he doesn't know where to start. He cries, "There was no warning." But it isn't true, you know.

"Moreover, man does not know his time : like fish caught in a treacherous net, and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls on them" (Ecclesiastes 9:12).

A Mocked Messiah

Dan Winkler

It was the Master's darkest hour. The silence of loneliness echoed through the distraught chambers of His heart. He was more alone than any man has been before or since. He was rejected by His kinsman, neglected by His apostles, and forsaken by His Father. Even the sun, which He had called into existence on the fourth day of time, refused to shine in the last three hours of His life.

Neither words of encouragement nor refrains of comfort were offered to Him. Instead He heard :

You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself ! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross . . . He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. He trusts in God : Let Him deliver Him now, if He takes pleasure in Him; for He said, "I am the Son of God" (Matthew 27:40,42,43).

To deepen an appreciation of the sacrifice Jesus made for man. consider these words more carefully. Those who encircled Golgotha with their mockery made light of six different facets of the life of Jesus.

They Mocked the Might of Jesus

"You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself" were their words. Upon His cleansing the temple, Jesus' enemies asked Him for a sign that would indicate the authority He had for such action. Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). The Jews mistook His words to be a reference to the physical temple that had been under construction for 46 years. Instead, Jesus had reference to His resurrection from the grave.

Jesus' enemies never got over His words concerning the temple. In fact, when they searched for trumped up charges in an effort to call for His death, these words were brought to the front (Matthew 26:57-62). Thus, as He hung from crude Roman spikes—His life pulsating from open wounds, His face dried with mockery of human spittle, His back striped with the scourging of an unjust trial, His heart weary over the needs of man—His enemies made light of that which they never understood. He was a mocked Messiah.

They Mocked the Messiahship of Jesus

"If You are the Son of God, come down from cross" were their words. "If you are the Son of God" were words that sided Jesus' enemies with the devil who had used the same terminology when

tempting Jesus in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). In healing a man sick of palsy, Jesus challenged His enemies with His deity. "My son, your sins are forgiven," He had said to the invalid. Such was misunderstood as blasphemy, for only one could forgive sins, even God. Jesus, thus, had to explain that His ability to perform miracles and His identity as the Son of God went hand in hand. (Mark 2:1-12).

Jesus' enemies never got over His claims of deity. To Pilate they said, "He made Himself out to be the Son of God" (John 19:7). They did not agree that He was the Son of God; they did not accept the fact that others said He was the Son of God. Rather, they viewed His claims of deity as the unfounded assertions of Jesus Himself. They lacked the courage to deny His claims with sound logic and founded argumentation. However, their cowardice grew backbone when Jesus hung on the cross, so much so they threw their denials into His face. He was a mocked Messiah.

They Mocked the Mission of Jesus

"He saved others; He cannot save Himself" were their words. Jesus came to this world on a mission of mercy (Luke 9:10; John 3:17). To provide evidence of who He was and why He came to earth, He directed the attention of His enemies to the words of John the Baptist, the miracles of His Father, the Old Testament Scriptures, and the specific words of Moses (John 5:30-47). Yet, Jesus' enemies never understood His mission (John 6:51,52).

Jesus' enemies never got over their disappointment in His mission (John 8:31-59). In His darkest hour they thought they had the last word in ridiculing His mission of mercy. If they had only read the Bible they so often abused with their traditions, they would have known that the death of Jesus was not the coffin, but the climax of His mission. Yet, He was a mocked Messiah.

They Mocked the Majesty of Jesus

"He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him" were their words. God had

promised the coming of an everlasting king (2 Samuel 7:12, 13), and Jesus came to be this king (Matthew 21:4, 5), reigning over a spiritual kingdom (John 18:36, 37). Yet, His enemies never understood the true nature of His kingdom and royalty. While He was among men, even His own apostles had difficulty grasping the spiritual aspect of His kingdom. (Acts 1:6).

Jesus' enemies never got over their disappointment in His being a spiritual king rather than a literal king relieving them of civil oppression. In calling for His death, they cried unto Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). How repulsive it must have been for them to utter such a cry. They despised Roman oppression and longed for deliverance from it. Yet, they were willing to wallow in the pretense of hypocrisy and stoops to the degradation of perjury; they were willing to do almost anything to rid themselves of the menace called Jesus and expose Him for the "false king" they thought Him to be. Since Pilate would not remove the words that adorned the cross of Jesus, "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews," they encircled Golgotha and denounced the saying. Again, He was a mocked Messiah.

They Mocked the Mind of Jesus

"He trusts in God: Let Him deliver Him now, if He takes pleasure in Him" were their words. Jesus trusted in God fully. Listen to Him in prayers (John 17:1ff); in time of sorrow (Matthew 26:37-39); in time of death—at least three of His seven statements from the cross were addressed directly to His Father. Yet, His enemies never understood His trust in God. (Matthew 27:46-49).

As if to rub salt into the wounds of rejection and satisfy their sadistic ego or their prejudicial hatred, the Jews threw God into the face of Jesus. They scoffed, "If God wanted You, why will He not have You? Why will He not save You?" They made light of His trust and made of Him a mocked Messiah.

They Mocked the Message of Jesus

"He said, 'I am the Son of God' "are the words concluding their derision. Though humble (Matthew 11:28,29; 12:17,18), Jesus did claim to be God's Son (Matthew 16:18; John 6:38).. Such claims, again, were misunderstood (John 6:41,42).

Jesus' enemies never got over His claims of deity (John 10:33-38; Matthew 26:63-66). They could not refute His message; they could only respond with impotent assertions and blanket indictments. Still, they had the audacity to flaunt their disbelief in His face and mock the claims He had proven true with flawless logic, fearless courage and unquestionable signs. He thus died a mocked Messiah.

Conclusion

Today man can still "add insult to injury." It is possible to put Jesus through the trauma of Calvary once again. It is possible to expose Him to the cursed disgrace of Golgotha once more. Such is accomplished every time a Christian turns away from paths of righteousness for apostasy (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Instead of bringing shame to Jesus, Christians are to let their light shine so as to bring glory to God (Matthew 5:14). They will be encouraged to do so out of a deeper appreciation for the Lord if they study and avoid the sentiments of those who caused Jesus to be a mock Messiah.

The Great Deceiver

Trent H. Wheeler

The Bible has much to say about Satan. He is referred to in scripture as our adversary (1 Pet. 5:8), Belial (2 Cor. 6:15), the father of lies (John 8:44), the serpent (Gen. 3:4), the wicked one (Matt. 13:19) and a number of other highly descriptive terms depicting his loathsome character.

The question often arises concerning Satan's origin. Was Satan at one time part of the heavenly servants of God? The scriptures give us some indication of this. Isaiah 14:12,13 states, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." Jude stated, "And the angels which kept not their first

estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). These were Satan's cohorts! Revelation 12:9 states. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Satan is the adversary of God, who wishes to exalt himself above God. He apparently believes this is possible, and leads an army of angels (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:9) in this effort. Satan's kingdom is of this world and he is continually waging spiritual warfare against God and Christians (Eph. 6:12). Satan's powers are deception (Gen. 3:4,5; 2 Pet. 3), lying (2 Thess. 2:9), fear which weakens our faith (Matt. 10:28), lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life (Jas. 1:14; I John 2:15-17).

For Christians to battle Satan successfully we must put on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:10-17), trust in the Lord and in his might (1 Cor. 10:13), be sober and vigilant (1 Pet. 5:8), and submit ourselves to God (Jas. 4:7).

Satan is a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may consume (1 Pet. 5:8). He will use every form of trickery and deceit to pull us into condemnation with him. We must use the weapons God has provided us with to do spiritual battle against him.

