

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :
J.C. CHOATE

Associate Editor :
SUNNY DAVID

Published by Church of Christ, Box 3815,
New Delhi-110049

*Pleading For The Restoration Of Pure New Testament
Christianity*

Vol. 16

January 1986

No. 9

EDITORIAL



The Joy of Serving and Giving

As Christians we are the most blessed people in the world. We not only have access to the material and physical things of this life but we also have all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. In other words we have the best that this world has to offer, and in world to come we have the hope of the eternal life.

Sometime people think that if they become Christians then that means that they will have to give up all the good things. This is not true. The Lord has never asked any one to give up anything that is good. But he ask that one repent or turn from all that is bad and wrong. (Luke 13 : 3; Acts 17 : 30).

The emphasis should not be on what you will have to give up but on what you receive. Think of what you have been doing. Think of all of your bad habits. Maybe you had taken to drinking. Perhaps you smoked. It might be that you engaged in gambling, lotteries, and the such like. You may be guilty of things far worse. But how were these things helping you? Do you call that enjoying life? Such things were gradually destroying your health. You were throwing away a lot of money. And who was benefited? Were you helped by all of that? Did your family prosper because of it? My friend, the Bible says that things like that in your life are sin. what will sin do for you? it will destroy you and cause your soul to be lost. We read, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6 : 23). Now when you obey God then things begin to change immediately for you. First of all, the Lord forgives you of your sins. Then with forgiveness you feel a great burden lifted from you. There is peace and happiness. You are now a new person. You have a new life before you. You have new friends. You are able now to give to your family your love and provide them with those things that they need. On your job, you are a changed person. You want to do the work that you have to do. What happend? You became a Christian. Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5 : 17).

Don't think of who you were, but what you are, now that you belong to the Lord. You were a sinner, but now you are saved. You were lost, but now you are found. Your friends were of the world, but now you associate with good people. You did engage in bad things but now you involve yourself in good things. When you know what you were, why would you ever think of going back to that? That is like coming out of darkness into light and then going back into darkness. It is like being healed of a bad disease and then going back to that old disease of sin. Peter wrote, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue : Whereby are given unto us exceeding great

and precious promises : that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure : for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall : For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1 : 3-11).

But someone is ready to ask : "Once I become a Christian, won't a lot be expected of me ? I'll have to be so strict, go to worship every Sunday, give a contribution, and all of that." No, you won't have to do that or anything also if you don't want to. Don't become a Christian, if that is your attitude. Actually, with that kind of attitude, you cannot become a Christian. But you don't do these things because you have to but because you want to. There is a big difference in the two.

The Christian does not ask, "What must I do ?", but "What can I do ?" He doesn't think in terms of how little he can give, but how much he can give. He doesn't want to be served, but he wants to serve. If you are constantly thinking about the negative side of being a Christian, all that you are having to give up, all that you are having to do, and to give, then this means that you have not really given your heart to Jesus. You are trying to follow Jesus but at the same time to hold on to the world. This must be a miserable life for you. You need to make up your mind whether you are going to stay in the world or to follow Christ. Remember that Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise

the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6 : 24).

Now when one learns of God and his great love, and how Christ came to die for his sins, and he realizes that he is lost as he is, and that he can be saved only through Christ, and on this basis he obeys God, then his outlook is going to be quite different toward God and following Christ. Having forgiveness, he faces the Christian life with the spirit of thanksgiving. His heart is full of joy. He now believes, and he is ready to follow his Lord and Master wherever he leads him. He now has the Lord in his heart, he has new brothers and sisters in Christ, and he enjoys having fellowship with them as they meet on the Lord's day to worship and to pour out their praises to the Lord. With the burdens of his heart being lifted and taken away, he faces each day with new life and new joy. How happy he is to belong to the Lord and to be able to represent him and to serve him. Whatever he has now belongs to Jesus. Whatever he can do for the Lord, he wants to do it. He finds great satisfaction in this.

My, friends I want to encourage you to follow Jesus. Take your life, your talents and abilities, your money or whatever, and give it to the Lord. Tell your friends about Jesus. Volunteer your services in the Lord's cause. Become a preacher of the gospel. Study your Bible. Learn to pray privately and publicly. If there is something that needs to be done in the church, offer to do it. My, if all of my brethren would do that, it would be unbelievable as to what we would be able to do for Christ right where we are. Friends could be brought to Christ. Families could be united in Christ. The poor could be helped. The Bible correspondence work could be increased. More literature could be put out. New congregations could be established.

Let's get excited about being Christians, about being members of the Lord's kingdom, the church. Let's be zealous for the Lord's cause and be out working to do all that we can to spread the gospel.

But someone is ready to say, "I don't mind doing my part,

but I am not going to do all of it." what is your part? What is the part of the next person? My attitude should be that I want to do every thing I can for the Lord, whether the other fellow does anything or not. I don't want to rob myself of blessings because of the other fellow. I would hope that if I will do all that I can, that will encourage others to at least do something.

What we must realize is that we rob ourselves of many blessings when we fail to do for the Lord all we can do. He has promised to be with us, to help us, and to bless us if we will only follow him and be faithful to him. When we do that then he will certainly keep his promises and bless us above anything that we might have imagined. But when we hold back, or fail to do what we can, then he cannot bless us, and will not bless us, in our failure to obey him. So it is up to us, and how far we will go, when it comes to what we will receive.

How wonderful it is to be a Christian. If you haven't discovered that yet, I would pray that you not give up. When you really give your heart to Jesus, and you obey him, then you'll find this joy, but not until. Try it and see if it doesn't work.



**associate
editorial**

How To Have A Happy New Year

Around this time all people everywhere are wishing each other a Happy New Year. Many greeting cards are being mailed to wish a Happy New Year. What does this mean? Saying "Happy New Year" has become a habit to most

people. In a very casual manner they would say "Happy New Year", just as they would use "hello" when they see someone. Wishing others a Happy New Year, however, actually means that we desire their good and happiness throughout the year, that is, when we sincerely wish them a Happy New Year. But happiness is not something that comes to people merely by wishing. The real joy, peace and happiness does not come from wealth, merry-making, or worldly pleasures. But the true happiness comes by following certain Godly principles which we learn from God's book. Do you really want to have a happy new year? Do you really want to be happy every day, as long as you live in this world? Consider and follow these principles, and surely you will be happy all the days of your life.

Count your blessings every day and not your troubles or problems. Forget the bad and think about the good points. Don't think of your enemies or of those who hate you, but think of those who love you and care for you; your parents, friends and other such good people. Above all think of God, and be thankful to Him, because He provides for your daily needs. He provides you with air, sun-shine, food, etc. He has given you a beautiful and wonderful body. And then think of His matchless wonderful love, that while we were yet sinners God loved us so much that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us so that we might be saved from sin and its wages. (Romans 5:8; 6:23).

Be thankful for what you have, and do not worry about those things which you do not have. Remember, Christ said, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink; not about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow : they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like

one of these, Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, o you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or what shall we wear? For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:25-34).

You have beautiful eyes which help you see God's wonderful creation. You can read and do many good things by seeing. But there are millions of people in the world who can't see as you. They are blind. Then, you have beautiful hands and fingers, you can feel the texture of fabric, you can turn the pages of your book, you can write and do many good deeds with your hand. But there are those unfortunate people in the world who are handless or fingerless. Also, you have your legs. You can walk, run and play. But aren't there many who have no legs? They can't run, walk or play, like you do. So be happy about these things, and give thanks to God for them, and for other such things that you possess. Don't say, "I don't have this," or "I don't have that." This will only make you unhappy. But learn to count your blessings, learn to see those things that you have, and be thankful to God for them.

Try to live one day at a time. Most of our worries are over things that happened yesterday or will happen in future some time. Many are living either in the past or in the future. Some one has said, trying to live in the past is like trying to leap over a river in two leaps. It just can't work. When Jesus taught his disciples how they should pray, he told them to say, "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11). Live today, because it may be the only day that you have. Why worry about yesterday? Its gone, and we can't bring it back. And why worry about tomorrow. We do not know what will happen tomorrow. Yesterday is gone, and tomorrow is still in the future. Today is the day in which you are living, its yours. Do

your best today to make it a happy day. The Psalmist in the Bible wrote, "This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24). Let's make every day of our life a happy day with God.

Try to do at least one good deed every day. There are many good things which you can do. You can help a needy person with what you have. For example, maybe you can give or share something that you have. maybe you can help a blind person cross the road. You can comfort the one in sorrow. Show your sympathy and concern for others. The Bible says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Romans 12:15).

Learn to be a giver and not a getter. Remember the words of Jesus, he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35). If you are failing to get out of your life what you want then it is because you are expecting to get instead of giving. There is a joy in giving and in serving others which many have not discovered because they have never tried giving sacrificially. Giving the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12, Christ said, "Therefore whatever you want men do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

We want others to forgive us our mistakes, so let's forgive others first. We want others to give their attention to us, let's give attention to others. If we want others to greet us, let's greet them first. If we want others to smile at us, let's smile first. If we want others to speak good about us, then let's speak good about them. The same would be true with other things also. We reap what we sow, we receive what we give, Christ said, "Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put to your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." (Luke 6:38). Do something good each day. You can't give what you don't have, but you can give what you have. So don't wait to receive something to give. With your hands you can serve the poor and with your feet you can go to the needy. Use your ears to hear sympathetically.

the pains and suffering of those who are in sorrow. Give a smile to the sick and suffering folks, make them happy, and in turn this will make you happy. Learn to practice the happiness habit. Some one has rightly said, smile and the world will smile with you, but if you'll cry you will cry alone;

Its true that we are living in a world full of problems. Depressions and loneliness are a common feeling in todays society. Yet the Bible tells us that if we let God take control of our lives, and if we will accept and follow His Word, then peace and happiness will be ours, every day. To His disciples the words of Jesus were: "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). **We need to learn depending on God for helping us overcome our difficulties.** The Bible exhorts, "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain you; he shall never permit the righteous to be moved." (Psalm 55:22). There is nothing that He cannot help us overcome if we will trust in Him and obey His will. Many of our problems are due to the fact that instead of taking our problems to God in prayer, we try to work out our own problems with our own strength. We need to learn depending on God. That is why Jesus taught his disciples to pray for their daily bread or daily necessities, so that they would depend on God every day and would pray to Him daily for their every day need. God can help us untangle our life, if we allow Him to do so. Remember, Jesus said, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33). And He invites all those who are in troubles and sorrows to come to Him with faith in Him and obedience to His commands for peace and happiness. He says, "Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30).

Dear reader, Happiness is not an accident. It does not come to people through greeting cards, or by wishing "A Happy New Year." Happiness comes by living God's way. The real

happiness comes only from God when we trust in Him and do His will and live the way He wants us to live. May this year and all the days of your life be happy to you as you strive to live putting God first in your life, and then others, and then yourself.

She Shall Be Called Woman

Betty Burton Choate

THE WOMAN AND WORSHIP

Especially in the cities where distances are great and transportation can be a problem, the tendency too often is for the man of the family to attend worship services while the wife and children stay at home.

This practice may seem to make sense. The reasoning may be that the children are too young to learn spiritual matters anyway, so to struggle with getting them on and off buses and to pay out useless money in bus fares for them are unnecessary things. So they stay at home, which means that the mother stays at home also.

What is the result of this practice? Can strong Christian families be developed when only the husband is assembling with others for worship? Can the family learn Biblical truths from this? Can they become involved in spiritual activities of the church in this way? Can they develop a love and closeness with other Christians when they seldom see them? Can proper classes be planned and taught for the children when they cannot be depended on to be there?

Can we as Christians not realize that if only the husband worships God, eventually he will grow weak spiritually and the whole family will fall from the truth? The only way we can ensure that this generation of Christians remains strong and that the children grew up to be the church of the future is to

involve the whole family regularly in worship and in the activities of the church. Again, I repeat! Our families be lost unless we train them spiritually. We must be aware of this danger to them and do everything in our power to guard against it.

The woman has a soul. She knows that she needs to worship God. She needs to hear lessons of guidance and encouragement from His word: She needs to learn to love others in the church, to feel a real closeness with her sisters in Christ so that they can share in her happiness or sorrows. She needs to find work to do in helping the church to grow, so that she can also grow spiritually through her efforts for God.

Even though the children may not be able to understand spiritual truths on an adult level, they can certainly understand when they are taught on their own level. That is why it is so very important for parents to go to what ever effort they must in order to take the children to worship each Lord's Day. And there must be classes for them so that they can be trained and will grow up with a full knowledge of God's truth.

Not only must the woman and the children be regular in their public worship, but it is of great importance that the family have a period of devotion and Bible study each day in the home. Not enough can be learned in two hours on Sunday to nourish our souls all week. We must pray regularly and we must study at home. Only in this way can the whole family grow in spiritual strength.

Somehow, within our families we as Christians must realize that all of our achievements, successes, struggles, and goals in this life will be of less importance than dust and ashes if, after all, we lose our souls. All that we work to do for our children, and to give them, will be nothing if we fail to give them spiritual training and if they are lost eternally. We must set our priorities straight. "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mat. 16:26).

God's Gift Of Salvation

Roger Shepherd

The opportunity to be saved is the greatest blessing ever given to man. The central theme of God's Word is salvation in Christ. The salvation which is found only in Christ begins in Genesis 3 : 15 and ends in Revelation 22 : 21. The Bible gives one complete "knowledge of salvation!" (Luke 1 : 77).

Man is in need of God's gift of salvation. Sin expresses man's need for a Saviour. (Matthew 1 : 21; Romans 5 : 8, 9). Man must have full knowledge of the contemnation of sin and the free gift of salvation this side of eternity. (Romans 6 : 23).

SIN IS A PROBLEM

In order for man to receive salvation, he must acknowledge the problem of sin. The meaning of sin is simple. It is the transgression (breaking or disobeying) God's law. (1 John 3 : 4.) The word sin literally means "missing the mark." (Romans 3 : 23.) The mark of excellence for every individual is the perfect will of God. (Romans 12:1,2) One who fails to live according to God's will, misses the "mark" and sins !

A failure to love God and others is the basic cause of sin. (1 Corinthians 16:22). One either loves God and does righteously or loves the devil and lives in sin. (Romans 6:16.) One who selfishly seeks to satisfy his own desires to disregard love for God's will and to do others good, sins. (James 1:14-15).

The Bible teaches that perfect love for God and fellowman results in obedience to God's law. (John 16 : 15, 21-24). Therefore, a lack of love is to disobey God!

Sin begins in man's heart as an evil thought. (Matthew 15 : 18-19.) The evil thought left in the mind to mature, produces sin. Sin generally proceeds in two forms from the evil heart. (1) Doing things that God forbids. (Genesis 3 : 1-6; Galatians 5 : 19-21.) (2) Neglecting to do what God commands. (James 4:17).

Sin has a universal appeal. That is, sin is present in every accountable human life. (Romans 3 : 10, 12 : 23; 1 John 1 : 8). It affects the life of the morally good people who may commit only a few sins. (James 2 : 10, 11.) Sinners are very much accountable to God in all the world.

CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

Sin brings the punishment of God. God being just must punish disobedient for their sins. (Romans 2 : 5-8.) The principle of justice demands that God punish transgressors of Divine Law (Genesis 3 : 16-24).

The impenitent sinner will suffer several consequences of personal sin. A life of pain, hard work, physical death, and finally spiritual death was introduced by Adam. Every individual who sins thus becomes a sinner. (Romans 5 : 12.) In this life sin makes one dead in the sense of being alienated from God (Ephesians 2 : 1.) The tragic result of sin is an eternal separation from God in hell when this life is over (Revelation 21 : 8).

GOD'S GIFT OF SALVATION

God gives the answer to sin through Christ. (Romans 5 : 8, 9.) Only Christ is qualified to be man's mediator from the blessing of salvation. (1 Timothy 2 : 4-6). Man can approach God acceptably only through Christ (John 14:6). The sacrifice of the Son of God is sufficient to save all sinners (Hebrews 7:27).

God gives forgiveness of sin through Christ. The death of Christ was the penalty required for the forgiveness of sin (1 Peter 2: 24; 3 : 18). Jesus Christ was made a sin offering so man could be redeemed from sin to become "the righteousness of God." (1 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7).

God gives the Christian power to conquer sin through Christ. Christ's sinless life is an example that inspires godly living. (1 Peter 2:21-22.) The Bible reveals Christ's perfect way of life (2 Timothy 4:16-17.) The Spirit of Christ provides strength and help to live right. (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 3:16.) A Christian can escape every temptation with a life committed to Christ. (1 Corinthians 10 : 13).

CONCLUSION

All men need salvation. All accountable sinners stand condemned without the Saviour. (Romans 3 : 23.) God in love for helpless sinners provides salvation through Christ, the Saviour of the world. (Matthew 11 : 28-30; John 3 : 16).

Christ came to give man life abundantly. (John 10 : 19.) In Christ God gives man abundant spiritual blessings. (Ephesians 1 : 3.) God offers eternal life free to those who accept Christ in complete obedience to the gospel. (Romans 6 : 23.) One should not hesitate to repent of sin (2 Peter 3 : 9); confess faith in Christ (Romans 10 : 9 : 10, 17); and be immersed in water for the forgiveness of sin. (Romans 6 : 3-5.) The gift of salvation is a great blessing found only in Christ ! One gets into Christ by being baptized (immersed) into Christ where salvation is. (Romans 6 : 3; Colossians 2 : 12).

A 20th Century Parable

William Mardell Lynch

The other day at the local airport, I witnessed an incident that I cannot forget. It has left an impression that haunts me, yea even troubles me. It was one of the most moving things that has happened to me in a long, long time.

All the passengers had passed through inspection, through the outside door of the waiting room and up the steps into the plane. The ground attendant with his ear muff fitted, had closed the door and recessed the steps into the fuselage. Another attendant with a message on a long pole handed the final word to the pilot. The engines were started and accelerated to acceptable speed. Just as the plane began to move, a well dressed woman of probably sixty years rushed up to the door of the terminal and said : "Oh, no ! They can't leave me ! I must not miss this flight ! The attendant looked at her through the glass and smiled but he made no effort to unlock the door or to stop the plane.

The thing that haunts me is the look of consternation that was on that woman's face, The sheer panic, the frustration. Her plane was leaving and she should have been on it. She had no baggage, not even a hand bag. Apparently she had already checked her luggage and had missed her plane by visiting in the lobby; just plain carelessness. Then she began to cry and run back to the ticket counter where she was apparently told there was no way they could halt the plane. She began to calm down, lit a cigarette and stood there the most dejected, disappointed, crestfallen bit of humanity one could ever see.

As I witnessed the behaviour of this woman, my mind turned to thoughts of the day of judgment and the hour when the righteous are caught up to meet the Lord in the air and the unsaved are left. When the realization really strikes home: "I am lost, hopelessly, helplessly and haplessly lost!" What a thought! what anguish, recrimination, and despair will grasp the souls of the damned!

I thought of Noah and the flood How the people must have felt when he closed and barred the door and the rain began to fall! I thought about those that had made fun and joked about that silly old man building a boat four hundred and fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide and forty-five feet high, hundreds of miles from the nearest ocean! But it was a different story with the flood waters rising!

How many of us will be lost because of a transgression of the law the failure to do good which is what sin is? How many that knew the gospel and that they ought to obey it will be lost because they simply put it off? How many out of duty Christians will be lost who intended, before it was too late, to make things right with God but just got too busy here and there and their period of probation ran out?

When the thought really strikes home: "I am dying and I am not prepared to meet God!" The same panic, the same hopelessness the same despair that was written all over the face of this frantic woman will be indelibly carved in our faces! The difference is she could catch the next plane, but there will be no

second chance for those unprepared to meet God when death overtakes them or the Lord comes !

Think on it friends and brethren, it was truly a thought provoking incident : A 20th Century Parable whose message was loud and clear.

Doing The Will Of The Father

Jimmy Garner

Obedying the gospel is not merely being "religious." Our Lord's word in Matthew 7 : 21-23 conclusively proves that simply being religious is not obeying Christ ! He said : Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Simply doing religious works is not equal to obeying God ! We must have the right religion to be right ! That religion is Jesus' religion. He declared : "I am the way the truth, and the life : no one cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14 : 6).

Neither is prayer the same as obeying the will of God. To those who call out in prayer "Lord, Lord" Jesus said, "I never knew you." Calling on God in prayer is not the same as obeying the gospel to be saved from our sins. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5 ; 9). Notice that **Jesus saves those who obey him !** His conditions of salvation are faith or belief in him (John 8:24); repentance of sins (Luke 13:3), confessing him before men (Matthew 10 : 32), and baptism (being buried in water) for the remission of sins. (Acts 2 : 38; Mark 16 : 15:16):

Neither is having a good feeling the same as doing the will of the Father. Feelings are not a reliable guide. Feelings come as a result of testimony, or evidence. Jacob's sons presented

Joseph's coat of many colours stained with blood to Jacob. (Genesis 37 : 32.) Jacob concluded that a wild beast had killed Joseph. This evidence caused Jacob to mourn over Joseph as if Joseph was really dead, but Joseph was actually alive ! Jacob sincerely felt that his beloved son was dead.

Feeling that you are saved is not proof of your salvation! you may have accepted false evidence. (Wrong conclusions on what God says for you to do to be saved).

The writer of Proverbs 14 : 12 warns : "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Kind reader, you will not be permitted to enter into the kingdom of heaven without doing the will of the Father who is in heaven. Why don't you obey his will immediately ?

What Does It Mean To Preach Christ ?

Dabney Phillips

INTRODUCTION

A good sister was heard to say, "I would like to attend a church where Jesus is preached." This was a first century need and it is a 20th century need. If one will read thoughtfully the following verses they will be helpful : 1 Corinthians 2 : 2; 2 Corinthians 4 : 5; Acts 8 : 35. It is impossible to separate Christ from his word. (John 12 : 48.) There are those who would like to preach "the man and not the plan." Our world is reeking with immorality, rebellion and false doctrines. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only power to stem those tides of sinfulness. There is much more to "preaching Christ" than most people understand.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IS PREACHED

There are 333 Old Testament prophecies that relate to Jesus Christ. Someone has aptly said, "The Old Testament is the

New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." Jesus and the apostles preached from the Old Testament. When tempted by Satan as recorded in Matthew 4 : 1-11, Jesus three times stated that it is written, as he quoted from the book of Deuteronomy to set the devil to flight. Jesus underscored this principle in Luke 24 : 44 as he divided the Old Testament into the law, the prophets and the psalms. Paul while preaching in the Jewish synagogue in Thessalonica reasoned three Sabbaths out of the scriptures.

The Old Testament serves various purposes. It provides evidences of Christ's divinity. Read carefully John 1 : 45. It exemplifies the principles of righteousness. Hebrews 11 is known as the great Bible hall of fame. Abel, Noah, Abram and others are cited as examples of true righteousness. The Old Bible warns of the consequences of disobedience. Again the student is asked to read and meditate upon Hebrews 2 : 1-4. The devil never has cut his wages. (Romans 6 : 23.) The Old covenant gives us hope. (Romans 15:4).

THE CROSS OF CHRIST IS PREACHED

The cross is not mentioned by name in the Old Testament. The cross originated with the Phoenicians, Christianity is the only religion bought with the blood of a Son, and an empty tomb. The cross or the death of Christ means various things to different people. To some the death of Christ for our sins was foolishness. (1 Corinthians 1 : 18-23.) They think Jesus died as a good man, but not for salvation of the human race.

The cross was the end of the law of Moses. (Romans 3 : 23; Hebrews 7 : 12; Colossians 2 : 14.) There are those who try to bind certain elements of Moses law.

Certainly the preciousness of the church is seen in the crucifixion. (Acts 20 : 28.) We should desire to become a member of anything for which our Lord died to establish.

Worship involvement is related to the cross. The commun-

nion service, our songs, prayers and sermons deal with our Lord's death.

Finally, the cross relates to Christian living (Galatians 2:20). We are urged not to crucify Christ afresh. (Hebrews 6:6).

CHRISTIAN OBLIGATIONS ARE PREACHED

Israel was chosen, but had to serve God. Being the elect of God involves heavy responsibilities. Not only is the cross a gift but but it is also a demand. Christ does something for us and in us. Clever arguments and excuses are no substitute for action. Christians are called out of the world to go back into the world. Truly we must "become fishers of men and not mere keepers of the aquarium."

Most of the New Testament was written to Christians urging us to reach our spiritual potential. Jesus went about doing good. Too many of us simply go about!

When the Jerusalem church experienced persecutions they continued to share the good news of salvation. The church has privileges and responsibilities (James 4:17).

THE LORD'S CHURCH IS PREACHED

The New Testament church is distinct from Judaism, paganism, denominationalism and modernism. Young theologians claim that the church is out of step with modern times. Cultures may change, but the word of God remains the same throughout the centuries. God joined Christ and the church together. The same process that puts one into Christ's spiritual body saves him from sin. (Galatians 3 : 27; 1 Corinthians 12 : 13).

Notwithstanding the human failings of the church, it is still healthy, and will outlive its critics. (Daniel 2 : 44.) The church does not need to be restructured, and does not need the seal of "intellectual eggheads."

Study the following verses and note how they relate to salvation: Acts 2 : 44 ; Acts 2 : 38; Acts 20 ; 28; Galatians 3 :

27 ; Ephesians 2 : 16 ; Ephesians 5 : 23-25; 1 Timothy 3 : 15.
One just cannot preach Christ and not preach the church.

What Did Philip Preach When He Preached Jesus ?

Basil Overton

You have already read a good lesson by Dabny Philips on preaching Jesus. In the following lesson learn some other things involved in preaching Jesus. Every Christian should learn well the matters in brother Philips' lesson and in the following lesson so he can tell others what it means to preach Jesus.

SEVERAL EXPRESSIONS

Acts 8 : 35 says Philip preached Jesus unto a man of Ethiopia. What did he preach when he preached Jesus ?

There are several expressions in Acts 8 which refer to the same thing that Philip did when he preached Jesus. Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans, (Acts 8 : 5.) He preached the things concerning the kingdom of Christ and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8 : 12.) Peter and John preached the word of the Lord. They preached the gospel. (Acts 8 : 25.) All of these statements regarding preaching mean the same thing.

SOMETHINGS PHILIP HAD TO SAY !

In preaching Jesus, Philip had to tell about how Jesus came into the world from heaven being born of the virgin Mary, was conceived by power of God without any man being involved (Matthew 1 : 20, 21; John 6 : 38; 16 : 28.) Philip's preaching included his telling Candace's treasurer how Jesus lived a life of privation and was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53 : 3.) He must have told the finance officer how Jesus lived a perfect life and did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth. (1 Peter 22:2, 23).

I wish I could have heard the evangelist Philip tell the Ethiopian officer about how our blessed Lord was crucified

between two thieves. The record says (Acts 8 : 32) that the treasurer was reading where Isaiah wrote the prophecy that the Messiah would be led as an animal to the slaughter.

Philip must have told the eunuch about the awful time when the darkness like that of midnight came at midday, and the Son of God gave up the ghost on Calvary !

The evangelist must have told the Ethiopian that in order for him to be saved from his sins he would have to repent of those sins. (Acts 17 : 30, 2 : 38).

DID HE PREACH BAPTISM ?

There are those who insist that Philip did not preach baptism in water because he preached Jesus.

A third of a century ago when I was engaged in a public discussion with a gentleman who was denying that baptism is essential to salvation, he said, "Mr. Overton, the eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53, and it says Philip began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus ! Show me from Isaiah 53 anything it says about baptism."

I replied that I could not show from Isaiah 53 anything it says about baptism. I also pointed out that neither could I show from Isaiah 53 anything about the kind of faith my opponent was affirming. Then I said, "The text does not say that Philip just preached what is in Isaiah 53, instead it says he began at that scripture and preached unto him Jesus ! Notice that it says he **began** there." Obviously, he preached many things not stated in Isaiah 53 !

Preaching Jesus has to include preaching what Jesus commanded and authorized because after recording that Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch, the sacred historian wrote that the eunuch desired to be baptized in water ! (Acts 8 : 36.) Verse 35 says Philip preached Jesus, and the next verse says the man who heard him preach Jesus desired to be baptized in water !

After the text says Philip "preached unto him Jesus" it says they came to a certain water and the Ethiopian treasurer said,

"See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"
(Acts 8:36).

In the King James Version you will see that the words *here* is in the above statement are in italics. This means they are **interpolated** words which means there are no words in the Greek text for these words. The translators supplied them because they thought they would help express the sense of the original text more clearly. Sometimes this is true of interpolated words, but now always. The original text is literally translated by "See, water!" or "Behold water!" or "Look, water!" The Eunuch had heard Jesus preached, and after hearing Jesus preached when he saw the water he exclaimed, "Look, water! what hinders me from being baptized?"

Obviously in hearing Jesus preached he learned he needed to be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16 : 16 ; Acts 2 : 38.)

It is obvious that preaching Jesus included how that Jesus was raised from the dead and before he ascended he commanded his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and that he that believes that wonderful news and is baptized would be saved! (Mark 16 : 15, 16.) This is the reason the eunuch wanted to be baptized in water; he wanted to be saved. He was baptized in water for the remission of his sins. (Acts 2 : 38; 8 : 38.)

Before being baptized in water the Ethiopian finance officer confessed that he believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Acts 8 : 37.) Paul said that preaching the gospel or preaching the faith included preaching that confessing with the mouth the Lord Jesus was involved in being saved or becoming a Christian. (Romans 10 : 8, 9).

WAS HE IMMERSSED OR SPRINKLED ?

A preacher once told me that even though the inspired record says that both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water (Acts 8 : 38) that was not proof that the eunuch was immersed. He said he might have been sprinkled with a little water.

That preacher administered what he called baptism by sprinkling a little water on one's head. I asked him if in order to thus "baptize" one he went with the person down into water and immersed a big part of himself and a large part of the person to be baptized, in order to sprinkle a little on the person. He said "No." I asked him why he did not do it that way. He said he had too much common sense to do that, and that it would not be an exercise of good common sense to go down into the water with a person to sprinkle that person. I then asked him if Philip had good common sense since he did go down into the water with the person he baptized!

Of course Philip immersed the man of Ethiopia because the word baptize means immersion. Paul said in baptism we are buried and raised. (Romans 6 : 3, 4; Colossians 2 : 12).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS

1. What can those in the church who do not preach do to help those who do preach to think about the things in the lesson that are designed to help preachers?
2. Should those who do not preach encourage those who do preach? How?
3. Do you think that those in the church who do not preach understand well the situation those who preach are in? What about yourself?
4. Does the author say about how and where preachers should get their training?
5. Should a preacher be expected to know when he is beginning as a preacher all that a preacher needs to know?
6. Do you feel there is enough tolerance by other members of the church toward those who preach? What about yourself?
7. Do you feel that preachers that you know and hear are good communicators?
8. Are you a good listener when you hear preachers?

Should Infants Be Baptized ?

John Wadley

Does the Bible teach infant baptism ? Is there a command to baptize infants ? No. Are there examples of it ? No. Can one necessarily infer that such was observed ? No. Search your Bible through. You will be amazed that it is completely silent on infant baptism.

Some attempt to prove infant baptism by Matthew 19 : 14. Jesus said, "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me. . ." There is no reference to infant baptism in this text.

Others turn to examples of family conversions. They assume there must have been babies baptized. (Acts 10 : 34-43; 16 : 14-15; 16 : 29-34.) In none of these is there mention of children. It is presumption to teach babies were baptized when the Bible not say so.

PREREQUISITES FOR BAPTISM

Before one can be baptized properly he must be taught the gospel (Matthew 28 : 18-19); believe the gospel (Mark 16 : 16); repent of his sins (Acts 17 : 30); and confess his faith in Christ. (Matthew 10 : 32). What infant can meet these requirements ? He that cannot meet them cannot be baptized.

WHAT IS BAPTISM FOR ?

"Be baptized and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22 : 16.) But sin is transgression of God's law. (1 John 3:4.) Infants have not sinned, therefore they are not proper subjects for baptism.

OBJECTIONS TO INFANT BAPTISM

1. It is unscriptural; an addition to God's word.
2. It puts a lie on the lips of all who say it is taught in the Bible.
3. It makes parents misinform their children who ask,

“Should I be baptized ?”

4. It plants a delusion in the minds of those baptized in infancy.

5. It causes many who were baptized as infants to live and die without truly obeying Christ's command to be baptized.

6. As a tradition of man, it makes void Christ's law. (Matthew 15 : 6.)

7. It is worthless to those who receive it, at best, and generally harmful.

If your preacher practices what he calls infant baptism, ask him why he does. Forsake the teachings of men for the pure gospel of Jesus.

Christian Soldiers Must Endure

Kyle McWhorter

A Christian is a soldier in the army of the Lord. This army is an all volunteer army. The conditions of induction are obedience to the commands of the gospel of Christ. (Mark 16 : 16; Acts 2 : 38; 2 Thessalonians 1 : 6-9.) Having obeyed the Lord in these, one has entered the church or the Lord's army. One then must be sure he puts on the whole armour of God. (Ephesians 6 : 10-20).

Having put on the Christian soldier's armour, one is ready to endure the hardship as a good soldier of Christ. Paul said to Timothy, “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (2 Timothy 2 : 3-4).

Yes, one who is a soldier of Christ must be able and willing to endure many hardships in the great fight of faith. Christians are engaged in great struggle of life and death. The battle will be long and difficult. One must be prepared to endure !

MUST ENDURE THE RIGORS OF TRAINING

One who would become a good soldier in the Lord's army must undergo rigorous training to prepare himself for the great battle for truth. Preparation is essential in every undertaking that is worthwhile. One cannot be a successful fighter without proper preparation.

Moses, the great law giver, spent eighty years in preparation forty years work as the leader of the people of Israel. Jesus spent thirty years of his life preparing for the three years of work he did during his personal ministry. Jesus prepared his apostles by teaching them the principles of the kingdom of heaven while he was with them he then promised them that the Holy Spirit would come and guide them in to all truth, and bring to their remembrance what he had said to them. (John 14 : 26; John 16 : 13).

The man who is to become a successful fighter in the Lord's army must spend many strenuous hours in careful and prayerful Bible study. (Acts 17 : 11; 2 Timothy 2 : 15; 1 Timothy 4 : 13-16). Not only must one study the Bible, but he should also study books written by the brethren. He must be an avid reader and be able to assimilate the truths and great principles that the men of God in the past and present have written concerning God, Christ, the Bible, and the church. Only by having prepared himself thusly, can he win the battles of the future for the Lord : "Christian soldier, prepare yourself for the fight !" any one who is not willing to endure the rigors of preparation is not to be a soldier in the great army of the Prince Emanuel !

MUST ENDURE THE HEAT OF THE BATTLE

The Christian soldier is never on furlough. The battle lines between truth and error have been drawn. There is no neutral ground upon which one can stand. The soldier of the Lord must fight. Paul said, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life; whereunto thou art also called and has professed a good profession before many witnesses." (1 Timothy 6 : 12).

The fight must be waged against every form of error, both in the church and without. Every sin must be exposed and denounced by the faithful soldier. The heat of the battle or battles may be awesome. One may lose friends whom he has cherished for years. His own kinfolks may turn against him. There may be times, after a great battle has been fought, when sleep may flee from his eyes. These things come as a result of the heat of the battle for truth and right. The Christian soldier may, and will feel the heat, but he must endure it.

MUST ENDURE PERSECUTION

Jesus Christ came into the world as a great teacher come from God. (John 3 : 1-2.) He taught and spake as never man spake (John 7: 46.) Through his teaching he sought to reach the Jewish leaders of his day, with the great truths about the coming kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 4 : 17; Mark 1 : 14-15; Mark 9 : 1). Jesus healed the sick, cast out demons, calmed the raging sea, and raised the dead. Jesus was a man who went about doing good. (Acts 10 : 38). Yet the world hated him. (John 16 : 18.) The religious leaders of that day were so filled with hatred and envy toward Jesus they had him put to death on a cross.

The apostles of Christ were given the Great Commission by the Lord. That commission was to take the gospel to the whole creation (Mark 16 : 15-16; Matthew 28 : 19-20). These apostles were faithful to the charge given to them by the Lord. In about twenty-five years these stalwart men of faith had preached the gospel to every creature under heaven. (Colossians 1 : 23.) However, they had to face fierce opposition and persecution from many quarters. Some of them were slain, others were severely beaten, and driven from city to city. One of them was banished to the lonely Island of Patmos. (Acts 12 : 2; Acts 14 : 19-20 ; Acts 16 : 19-24; 2 Corinthians 11 : 23-28 ; Revelation 1 : 9.)

Since our Lord was crucified on the cross of Calvary, and his apostles were so sorely mistreated and persecuted, one need not think today that the Christian soldier's life will be easy. Paul said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3 : 12.) If the battle is to be won for truth and right, the Christian soldier must endure persecution. It will surely come.

MUST ENDURE DISCOURAGEMENT

The Christian soldier who fights bravely for the cause of the Lord will sometimes become discouraged. The Lord himself must have become discouraged when he found Peter, James, and John sleeping after he had asked them to watch with him in the garden of Gethsemane. (John 26:40.) The peerless apostle to the Gentiles was in the cold damp prison in the city of Rome. He expected to die at the hands of the executioner. The disciples had all forsaken him except Luke. (2 Timothy 4:6-11). This must have been a very discouraging thing for this old soldier of the cross. However, Paul did not complain.

There are many things that cause one to become discouraged today.

1. So many people are so unconcerned about the salvation of their souls. The preacher can teach and preach his heart out, and people will just look at him with that "so what" attitude. This lack of concern is seen also in the lives of members of the church. Indifference was a characteristic of the church at Laodicea. (Revelation 3:14-20.) Perhaps, more souls are going to be lost eternally because of this indifferent attitude than any other single thing.

2. Churches seem to be plagued with so many problems. One can hardly find a congregation of the Lord's people that doesn't have some kind of special problem. Most of the time it is not over false doctrine, but rather personal differences. Many times an entire generation has to die before the problem is solved.

3. It is difficult to get some Christians to attend the services faithfully. A lot of the energy that could be used to convert the alien sinner must be expended in being "nursemaids" to weak church members. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:7).

4. Sometimes those who have been faithful for years drift away from the faith. (Hebrews 2:1-4). It is a sad and discouraging to see members of the church make shipwreck of their faith. (1 Timothy 1:19.) Yes, these things and more are discouraging to the soldier of the cross. However, the valiant soldier will always look to Jesus. (Hebrews 12:1-3.) He will endure any hardship to gain the glorious victory through Jesus our Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58.) Such a soldier knows that only those that endure unto the end will be saved. (Matthew 24:13).