

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

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## EDITORIAL



### AIDS

All of a sudden the world has been hit with a tremendous health problem. That, of course, is Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), the inability of the individual's immune system to fight off the various germs and diseases that may attack the body. The result of this is almost certain death within a short period of time.

In the U.S.A. AIDS has already become the number one health concern, and is rapidly becoming an alarming problem in the rest of the world. All kinds of tests are being considered and a lot of debating is being done about this. Great amounts of money are being spent on research to find a cure but so far nothing definite has been developed.

Eventually all who plan to be married may be required to take an AIDS test. Government people, those in the armed

services, students, and even tourists may eventually be asked to submit to such a test.

If this disease continues to spread, and if no solution is found for it, it could become a modern plague that could wipe out possibly millions of people. Already hundreds have died from it in several countries and thousands of others have contracted it. People have a great fear of being around anyone who has AIDS, lest it be passed on to them. Blood transfusions are being questioned and this within itself will create many problems for those who need blood.

But what has brought about AIDS? It was first discovered among homosexuals, and almost all of those who have it, and those who have died as a result of it, have been those who have had sexual contacts with homosexuals. This is the prime way of getting AIDS.

Because so many people of the world have developed a more lenient attitude toward homosexuals in recent years, an unusual amount of care has been taken not to place emphasis on homosexuality as being the cause of AIDS. Some have even put forth a great effort to prove that AIDS cases are also being found among heterosexuals. Nothing said about the fact, however, that some homosexuals are also heterosexual, that is, they marry and have families, or they have intimate contact with people of both sexes. In this way the disease can be carried over the line into heterosexual relationships but, even then, it is to be found only among those who engage in illicit promiscuous relationship. The disease has never occurred between a husband wife who have never had a relationship with any other person.

In spite of the fact that it is very clear that AIDS has grown out of immoral conduct of homosexuals, none of the governments, health officials, and public officials in general have put forth an effort whatsoever to frown on the root cause of this killer disease, that is, homosexuality itself. Instead, their main objectives are to find a medicine to cure it and a vaccine to prevent it. Worlds of money and time being used to find these answers. Thousands and thousands of doctors, nurses, and chemists are working

day and night on this problem. Many individuals, those who already have AIDS, are serving as human guinea pigs to find a remedy.

Naturally we would like to see a cure found for AIDS, but we would also like to see the cause of the disease removed. What would be wrong in warning the public against homosexual acts? Why don't doctors issue statements that would discourage such behaviour? Why don't newspaper editors carry articles in their papers that would explain why the world is plagued with AIDS?

The Bible definitely speaks out against homosexuality. The scriptures show that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because not even as many as ten righteous souls could be found there. (Genesis 18). Homosexuality was their sin. (Genesis 19). Paul spoke of those that God gave up to destruction because the "women did change the natural use into that which is against nature : And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men working that which is unseemly, and *receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.*" (Romans 1 : 24-27). Again, Paul said that the effeminate and abusers of themselves with mankind could not enter the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Now in these scripture references, and others what could be given, if homosexuality is not under consideration, then what would the writer have in mind? Surely, he is showing that such a practice is not natural, that those who do such things cannot enter the Lord's kingdom or church, that they cannot go to heaven because they receive within themselves the recompense of their sin that is justified. AIDS, evidently, is nature's own corrective measures for those who live contrary to the natural laws. Now they can repent and obey God, and in so doing the Lord will forgive them and add them to His church. In that case they will return to a normal way of life but that is the only way they can be saved. A homosexual cannot practice that way of living and expect to go to heaven.

But what about those who continue in their homosexual

activities? Then they will be subject to AIDS and other consequences, just as the fornicator must run the risk of becoming infected with venereal diseases. While the Lord does not necessarily directly punish people for their sins in this life, those who engage in these sins, and others, may very well suffer physically for their wrong doing. The Lord is not going to try to kill someone with poison, but if an individual deliberately drinks poison, he may die. Neither will the Lord send AIDS and other diseases directly to a person, but if he does those things that will produce AIDS and such like, God should not be blamed, but the one who engages in those acts must blame himself. On the other hand, there are some who may do such immoral things and never experience any ill effects. In these cases they will have to answer to the Lord for those deeds in the day of judgment. Paul says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Again, he says, "Be not deceived God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man showeth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Galatians 6:7,8).

My friends, it pays to live a clean moral life. Those who do so have no need to worry about contracting such diseases. A good moral life has many benefits. One of them is that a person doesn't have to worry about sins he has not committed.



**associate  
editorial**

## The Love of Money

I have heard people say that the Bible teaches money is the root of all kinds of evil. But this is not true, because the Bible

does not teach this. Here is what the Bible teaches: "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:7-10). So not money, the Bible teaches, but the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. There is a difference.

Money is a necessity. Our government needs money, our families need money, and we as individuals need money. We need money to live and to travel. There are societies and organizations which are raising money through different means for helping those who are in various needs physically. Not only money is needed for saving the physical body of man, but we need money today to be able to reach the lost with the soul saving gospel of the Son of God. Jesus has said that man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. (Matthew 4:4). Just as man needs physical things to live and survive physically, he also needs God's Word to be saved and live eternally. God's soul saving Word may be preached in public meetings, through Bible Correspondence Courses, and through Bible literature. God's word may be preached through radio and through visual aids, etc. All of these things require money. Christ commanded His followers to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He said, "Go." But He didn't say how they should go. We can travel by any available means, and we can use any available method, but we must preach the gospel to all. However, without money we will be very limited in our efforts. The Bible therefore encourages Christians that they ought to give of their money according to their incomes on the first day of the week (Sunday) when they meet for worship. (1 Corinthians 16:1,2).

Money therefore is not evil or the root of all kinds of evil, but it is the love of money that causes man to do evil. All kinds of temptations and all kinds of evil are the results of the greed for

money or the things that money buys. People would commit murder, lie, bribe and cheat and do many other illegal and sinful things for the love of money. Again, social bias, pride, love of preeminence, selfishness and lusts are more frequently associated with the love of money.

In the Bible we read about many such people who were lost without hope for the love of money and for trusting in earthly riches. We read of Ananias and Saphira who were punished with instant death for lying to the Holy Spirit of God concerning the money they had decided to give to the church. (Acts 5:1-11). Also, we read about Judas Iscariot, one of the disciples' of Christ, who had betrayed Jesus in the hands of His enemies for a price of thirty pieces of silver (approximately rupees two hundred). (Matthew 26:14-16). Again, in Luke 12 chapter, Christ told of a rich man who had so much riches that he had to ask himself, "What shall I do since I have no room to store my riches?" Christ went on to say, that when he was planning what he would do with his riches, God told him, "You fool! This night your soul will be required of you, then whose will those things be which you have accumulated?" See, here, God called this man a fool, because he had spent all his life, his time and his strength for making money and other riches, but he had never thought about his soul, or where he would go and live in eternity, after his life on earth was over. How real!

Also, at Mark chapter 10 there is a story of another rich man. Not only he was rich but he was also a very religious person. He had many fine qualities in him as is evident from the story. Too, he was concerned about his soul and about the eternal life in heaven. He came with a great question to Jesus Christ and wanted to know from Him, what he ought to do to inherit the eternal life in heaven. Even though he was a fine young religious person of many qualities, Christ's penetrating eyes could see his real problem of trusting in earthly riches. Although he was concerned about his soul, he wanted to please God, he wanted to enter heaven after his life on earth was over, but more than these things he loved his great possessions on earth, and he wasn't willing to give up his riches on earth at any cost and for any thing, not even for eternal life! So Christ told him, "One thing

you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross and follow Me." What happened, then? The record says, "he was sad at this word, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." This man sadly walked away because he loved his money or his riches on earth more than the eternal life of heaven. And as he was going away, Jesus warned His disciples, "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:21,22, 24,25).

Where is your trust? In God or in money? What do you love the most, God or money? According to the Saviour, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon." (Matthew 6:24). Think!

## The Sabbath Day

Roger Shiflet

In the Bible, a person may read quite a lot concerning the Jewish sabbath day. In fact, one of the ten commandments given to Israel was "*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy*" (Exodus 20:8). The Jews were allowed to work and labor six days of the week. But on the seventh day, they were commanded to rest. The word "sabbath" means "rest." On this day, the Jews were allowed to do no work, to kindle no fire, to do no baking or boiling, to bear no burden, and were commanded to offer two lambs upon the altar of sacrifice (Exodus 20:9-10; 35:3; 16:24; Jeremiah 17:21-22; Numbers 28:9-10). God was very serious about this command, and anyone caught violating the sabbath was severely punished (see Numbers 15:32-36). Unfortunately, conflicting doctrines are being taught today regarding what the Christian's attitude ought to be toward the sabbath day. The Bible can clear up the confusion for

## us as we consider: The Sabbath Day—What It Was and What It Was (Is) Not:

First of all, the sabbath day was a sign and a covenant between God and Old Testament Israel. In Exodus 31:13-17, the Lord (through Moses) spoke to the Israelites concerning the sabbath. He said, "*Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations . . . Ye shall keep the sabbath . . . it is holy unto you . . . the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath . . . it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever . . .*" The sabbath remained as a sign between God and Israel for many years. But Israel later fell away from their covenant relationship with God: "*. . . they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant*" (Isaiah 24:5). Therefore, God promised to make a new and different covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

The sabbath was a memorial to the fact that God delivered Israel from Egyptian captivity. "*And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.*" (Deuteronomy 5:15).

The sabbath day observance was not bound upon men at the time of creation. Many people have tried, but no person has been able to find one scripture in the Bible to show that God commanded anyone to observe the sabbath before the time of Moses (about 1500 B.C.). Also, the Bible does not mention even one occasion of God punishing anyone for sabbath-breaking in all the years between the creation and the days of Moses. Indeed, Nehemiah said that God made the sabbath day known at Mount Sinai, where Moses received God's laws for Israel. (Nehemiah 9:1-14).

The sabbath day observance was never bound upon the Gentile nations (non-Jewish nations). As we mentioned earlier, God Commanded the sabbath day observance as a sign and covenant between himself and the nation of Israel as a reminder to them that he delivered them from Egyptian slavery. In contrast, most Gentile nations: (1) had not been slaves in Egypt, (2) needed no



reminder of deliverance from Egyptian slavery, and (3) were not made part of the covenant which God gave to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai. Therefore, God never showed any intention of binding the sabbath day legislation upon them.

Sabbath day observance was taken away (with all the Old Testament law) at the cross of Jesus Christ. Notice the words of the apostle Paul: *"blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to his cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ"* (Colossians 2:14, 16-17). This passage plainly states that, at the death of Christ on the cross, God took away the ordinance which had been given to the Jewish nation—including the sabbath ordinances.

The sabbath day is not binding upon Christians today. It is true that Christians should assemble on the first day of every week for worship and exhortation (see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25). However, it is a mistake to say that God changed the sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week. He did not. As we have already seen, God took the sabbath ordinance away when Jesus died on the cross. He did not move it over; he took it away. Therefore, it is a mistake to refer to the first day of the week as "the Christian sabbath."

Hopefully, this brief discussion of the sabbath day will clear up any confusion the reader may have had with regard to this Old Testament ordinance. Since the day Christ died on the cross, there has been: (1) no divine command to keep a sabbath day, (2) no Biblical example of a Christian ever keeping the sabbath day with God's approval (Paul did not keep the sabbath day in Acts, but used it to preach Christ to the Jewish assemblies. (Acts 13:14-15; 17:1-3; 18:4), and (3) no divine threat of punishment upon any who fail to keep the sabbath. May God help us all as we attempt to properly use the word of truth (11 Timothy 2:15).

# This May Shock Some of You

Ancil Jenkins

Are you confused about the end of time? Do you expect some people some day to disappear suddenly without a trace? Are you anticipating a great world ruler who will provoke war between the nations? Do you believe armies will be destroyed with hundred pound hailstones while fighting with sticks and stones on horseback?

These and many other ideas have alarmed and confused a great number of people. This has been disturbing to many of them. Some fear, "what if I do not make the rapture?" Certain rulers have been pointed out as the anti-Christ and then have passed from the scene of action. This has been caused some to be confused.

These views have also polarized the thinking of many people. They have become the bulk of their preaching and teaching. Every event that happens must be studied in relation to their view of the end of time.

Why have these problems come? These are the results of the teaching of dispensational pre-millennialism. This is basically what has been taught; (1) We were told that God has guaranteed to award Palestine to the Israelite, and that not until then will the kingdom of God be fully set up. (2) Some would have us to believe that Jesus intended to set up his kingdom while he was on earth. The Jews, however, did not allow him to do so. The theory says that he returned to the Father and had the church set up here as a substitute. When the Jews get ready then he will return and establish the kingdom originally purposed. (3) This interpretation teaches that the righteous dead will be raised when Christ returns and that the unrighteous dead will be raised at the end of his reign. There is much confusion as to the number of comings and the number of resurrections among many of these teachers. (4) Premillennialists teach that Christ is not on David's throne of Old Testament prophecy, but that he will occupy that throne

when he returns, ruling on that throne in Jerusalem over his earthly kingdom (5) Dispensational premillennialists teach that after his second coming Christ will with his saints reign over all the earth for one thousand years.

*This may shock some of you : the Bible teaches none of these things.* These views come as a result of a literal interpretation of some figurative language in the Bible and a misunderstanding of the Old Testament prophecies. This does not mean the Bible is to be taken as wholly figurative or poetical. It does mean there are parts of the Bible that must be understood as figurative.

Some have viewed this only as a harmless interpretation. Why would it cause a break in fellowship or a need for discipline in the church? It is true that one's eternal salvation might not be affected by the belief in these views. However, one who believes these doctrines will find them in conflict with other teachings of the Bible. It is therefore dangerous and must be avoided. What of the results of believing in these views?

*These teachings make God false to his promise.* John the Baptist said in Matthew 3:1-2 : "Repent ye : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus himself had preached the same thing (Mark 1: 14-15). "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand : repent ye, and believe the gospel. "As the result of the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus, multitudes believed the kingdom was at hand. The word "at hand" does not mean thousands of years in the future, but means coming in a very short time. Paul anticipated that his death would come shortly, when he said "it was at hand" (II Timothy 4:7).

Suppose a man hired a number of laborers for the day. He tells them if they will work for him eight hours he will pay them Rs. 100:00 each. At the end of the eight hours they come to him to collect their wages. He then tells them that he will give it to them someday but not right then because he has changed his mind. One would be very upset at such an action. However, this is what some would have us believe. We are told by them God intended

to set up his kingdom and then changed his mind and postponed the great reward. If this were true, would it not make us question the integrity of God?

One must be faced with these questions. Did God plan to set up his kingdom and know the people would reject and still send John the Baptist and Jesus to preach it was "at hand"? If he had planned to set it up and knew that people would reject it, we would question the wisdom of God.

On the other hand, did God plan to set up a kingdom and not know the results of what men would do? If this is the case we would question the power of God. To hold to a view that Christ postponed the establishment of his kingdom is not consistent with what the Bible teaches elsewhere on the nature of God.

*To accept this doctrine would mean that Jesus would reign on his footstool.* Acts 2:32-35 says, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool:" Isaiah 66:1 states, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" This earthly ball of our habitation has always been viewed as inferior to the great eternal home that Jesus has prepared for us. To bring Jesus back to earth to reign on this planet is to rob him of the honor which he is due: In fact, the Bible nowhere teaches that Jesus will ever set foot on earth again.

*The implication of this doctrine is that Jesus is a failure.* It makes his mission on earth a failure. Paul wrote in Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" God sent this Son for the purpose of establishing his kingdom. To view his kingdom as an earthly reign is to miss the great teaching of the Bible. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and

the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In the next verse he shows us that this church is the kingdom that he had planned to establish on earth.

On the contrary, the church is not the failure of Jesus. Paul teaches us that the church was in the mind of God from the very beginning before the foundations of the world. His plan was that both Jew and Gentile would be united in his spiritual kingdom. the church. (Ephesians 1:3; 3:10, 21).

*Such a belief robs the church of its dignity and power.* It becomes an afterthought of God. It is a temporary substitute put in place of the kingdom. Such teaching makes the bride of Christ his second choice.

The Bible teaches of the great importance of the church. The church today is the true "Israel of God." In it are his chosen people (Galatians 6:16; Romans 2:28, 29). The church is the dwelling place of the saved (Ephesians 5:23). The love of Christ for the church is an example for the husband to love his wife (Ephesians 5:25). It is in the church that God receives his glory (I Corinthians 10:22, Ephesians 3:10). Can one believe the church is only "The vestibule of the kingdom" and "an afterthought of God" and still hold to these great teachings?

*Such teaching denies the Lordship of Christ.* The great thrilling statement preached by the apostles is that Jesus is Lord (Acts 10:36). To believe that Jesus was unable to set up the church without the cooperation of the Jews is to deny his power. To say that he is not now reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords in heaven is to deny that he is Lord of all. There is no way one can preach Jesus is Lord if he is not Lord of all men and of all things.

What does the Bible teach? What are God's plans for the end of time? This is the chronology as presented by Jesus:

Jesus is coming again. We do not know when since there is no sign given. Matthew 24:36, 37 says, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

There will be one general resurrection at the time of his coming. Both righteous and wicked will be raised. John 5:28, 29 says, "Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

There will be a judgment at which all will appear (II Corinthians 5:10) : "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

There will be an everlasting reward for the righteous and everlasting punishment for the wicked (Matthew 25:46) : "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment : but the righteous into life eternal." Believing that the Bible teaches only one resurrection we must be prepared for it. There will be no further opportunity; there will be no second chance. Let us learn to trust God and his word and not the speculations and theories of men. The key word of the New Testament concerning the last day and the last hour is watch. Are you ready?

## Slack Service

Hoyt Bailey

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord slackly" (Jer. 48:10). The foregoing words refer immediately to the terrible work of destruction. We are fearful of a curse; but if the slaughter were believed to be in accordance with God's will, there could be no excuse for neglecting it. This is a most forcible argument against slack service. If such slackness could appear cursed to the Jew, how much more guilty is it in the Christian work of love!

One indication of slack service is what we might call negative goodness. Great care to avoid all forms of impurity may be found together with a reluctance to make any sacrifice or put forth any exertion. Another indication is conventionalism. A man follows in the rut of his predecessors, evinces no originality,

has no device with which to meet an emergence, never inquires into the suitability of his work to its end, never thinks of improving it. A third indication is working at half-power. What service is rendered does not come up to the level of requirement nor to the measure of ability. It is done in a slow, dreamy style. A fourth indication is failure before difficulty. The molehill is magnified into a mountain. The opposition, which is the spur to enthusiasm, puts a complete stop to slack service.

One cause of slack service is worldliness. The clay of selfishness is mingled with the strong metal of devotion. A man would serve God and mammon. He tries to do the work of God with one hand, while he advances his own interest with the other. Such is not acceptable with God. Another cause is unbelief. This paralyzes much of our work—more than we are ready to admit. Under such condition, the God served is a shadowy being, and no wonder the service is faint and feeble. Another cause of slack service is want of devotion. The service of the hands is given without the love of the heart. This mechanical work is a poor, spirit-less thing. It is love and love only that can inspire a service of unwearying energy. Another cause is cowardice. There is a fear to do difficult and dangerous work. We pity this for its weakness. We should condemn it as wicked. Should not the servant of Christ be willing to suffer all torments and die for his Lord who suffered and died for him? "Be thou faithful unto death." Another is indolence. Some men are habitually tardy and dilatory. They should learn to resist these tendencies as temptations to fatal unfaithfulness.

Slack service is no slight failure to be gently rebuked. The curse of God lies upon it "Cursed be he..." It is very wicked. We are God's servants, and bound by ties of nature and of gratitude. It is likely to be fruitless. Negligence in work may imperil the whole results of it. If the ship is carelessly steered it may be wrecked. It injures the man who works negligently. Our manner of work reacts upon ourselves. Indifferent service produces a low tone of life, coldness, lethargy, unspirituality.

Our text calls from the curse of slack service. This curse is a solemn warning, evils that necessitate it should terrify us from

incurring it. We are called by the obligations of duty. "We are not our own; we are bought with a price." When we do our best we are unprofitable servants. Soloman voices of time and eternity bid us "work while it is day." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." We are called by the need of the world. Our Christian service is no profitless treadmill drudgery. It is for the good of mankind. The call in the text was to execute wrath; ours is to do deeds of mercy. The world in its darkness, its misery, its sin, cries aloud for the Christian mission of consolation and redemption. Can we sleep while such calls pierce our ears? We are called by the constraining love of Christ. He died for us; he only asks that we shall live for him. But the least we can do is to live faithfully, earnestly, and devotedly, serving the Saviour with all earnest zeal. We are also called from slack service by the heavenly reward (Heb. 12:1, 2).

The apostle Peter, wrote, "Wherefore, I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance: Knowing that shortly I must put off this, my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance" (II Pet. 1:12-15).

## Mercy In Action

Winfred Clark

If one reads Luke 10:30-37, he will find mercy displayed by an unknown Samaritan on the Jericho road. He did not spend much time in defining it, but he spent a lot in demonstrating such. Even lawyer that had tempted the-Son of God and had sought to justify himself could attest to that fact (Luke 10:37). So we get a good look at mercy when we read these verses. Such as is so needed in this old world in our own day.

*One May See Mercy Looking.* You will see both the priest



and Levite looking but they are not the personification of mercy. There was no pity that pierced their hearts. They saw, but they did not see an opportunity to help. They saw something to be shunned, not shouldered. Mercy did not affect what they saw, for it was not in the heart. They did not have sufficient feeling for the fallen. Before we are too critical we need to ask, do we? After all, some around us have been passing the road from one place in life to another and bad health has overtaken them and left them stripped and half dead. These people we have seen but just how have we looked at them? Have we had sufficient feeling to move us to compassion.

The Samaritan saw the same man they did and I don't know that his vision was any better. I do know that he felt for him when he saw his situation. That makes the difference in the way he looked.

*One May See Mercy Laboring.* The Samaritan went to the man and bound up his wounds (Lk. 10:34). His was more than a look, for it led to efforts to aid. Mercy would not allow such an one merely to look and pass. His pity causes him to use what he has to aid the man. He did not sit down and talk of all the things he did not have to work with, but used what he did have.

This Samaritan did not leave the task to others but became personally involved. He assumed personal responsibility. What a difference mercy makes. It does not say, "I will do as much as others," or "I will, if others will." It does, even though it must be alone. It does not wait for the negligent Priest or the calloused Levite to change. It says, "I'll do regardless of others and in spite of others."

*One May See Mercy Lifting.* After he had poured in oil and wine and bound up the wounds, he did not leave the man. Yes, he has done more than others but the man is still down. What is to be done? He places him on his own beast and brings him to an inn.

We sing the song, "Love Lifted Me," and surely it did. This man could well have said; "Mercy lifted me." It was mercy that

took him from the side of the road when he had fallen to put him back on his feet again.

How many orphans or destitute children who were down could say the same? Many have been cared for by churches who contributed on a regular basis to provide for their needs. They are placed in a position to live useful lives of love and labor for the Lord because Christians have cared.

*One May See Mercy Lasting.* It is interesting that the man stays with the man through the night and then on the morrow assumes more responsibility for his welfare. He says to the inn keeper, "Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Do you notice that these are the only recorded words of this man. But oh, what they do tell you of this man's heart! He wasn't ready to rid himself of the responsibility just as soon as he could. He stayed with the job down to the end. He would see it through. He did not have a good start and an incomplete finish. His was a demonstration of mercy lasting.

Now, let us suppose that the Priest and the Levite and Samaritan later met this man. Which one of the three would have more influence over him? Which would he be more apt to listen to? The answer is obvious, isn't it? Don't you think we ought to learn a lesson mercy teaches us?

## Authoritative, But Not Authoritative

Bob Duncan

According to *Webster's New Twentieth Century Unabridged Dictionary*, the word *authoritative* means "having due authority; official. This is the first definition. But it also means, according to the second definition, "asserting authority; fond of giving orders; dictatorial." By divine injunction, elders in the Lord's church are of necessity authoritative, i.e., they have due authority; but they are not to be authoritative, i.e., they are not to be fond of giving orders.

In recent years some have tried to strip from the eldership the authority which God has given it to oversee the affairs of the congregation. They have taken the position that an eldership has no authority except the authority of a good example. They have said that elders rule by example only. "Neither as being lords over God's heritage," in I Peter 5:3 has been misconstrued to mean that an eldership has no authority to make any decision affecting the congregation, and to expect the congregation to abide by that decision.

It is true that elders must set proper examples (I Peter 5:3), but this does not prove they have no authority to govern the congregation under Christ. The fact they are not to be lords over "God's heritage" does not mean they can have no authority over the congregation. Jesus taught the apostles that they were not to exercise lordship (Mark 10:42; Luke 22:25). Does that mean the apostles had no authority? Certainly not! Neither are elders without authority just because they are forbidden to exercise "lordship".

But it will have to be admitted that those who have taken this false position with reference to the eldership probably did so in many cases in an over reaction against an authoritative ("fond of giving orders") elder or eldership. God never intended it, but unfortunately some become elders who are not the kind of men they should be, but who are dictatorial, domineering, and arrogant. Having been lifted up with pride, they have fallen into the condemnation of the devil (I Timothy 3:6). One so imperious and overbearing cannot reasonably expect a congregation of God's people to respect him as a leader. Such a disposition on the part of elders actually invites rebellion.

In I Peter 3:1-4 elders are cast in the role of shepherds, and they are compared to Christ, who is our chief Shepherd. Men who serve as overseers of God's flock would do well to study carefully the example set by Christ.

Shepherds of the flock of God should imitate the compassion of the chief Shepherd. The parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15) shows how the shepherd looks over the flock and, seeing that one is missing, arises immediately to go out and search until he

has found it. He cannot rest knowing one sheep which is lost might be rescued through his efforts. And he knows when one is missing. The shepherd of John 10:13 "calleth his own sheep by name;" Perhaps it is in this very area more than in any other where the elder fails or succeeds—knowing and caring about every sheep in the flock. Those who are cold and callous towards those who stray from the flock can never be the kind of elders God wants.

In John 10 the shepherd is pictured as speaking to the sheep, who hear his voice and follow him. Verse 5 says, "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him : for they know not the voice of strangers. "The shepherd does not drive his sheep; he walks with them, leading them. Oh, there is another way all right; but elders are not pictured as sheep dogs, but as shepherds. (Some seem to think they are sheep dogs,) As a rule the elder who tries to drive the flock does so because he simply has not the ability to lead them. It is unfortunate when a man is selected to the eldership whose insensitive, unfeeling, hardened disposition makes it virtually impossible for him to lead the average member of the congregation to the water cooler, even if his life depended upon it.

Dedicated Christians should be much in prayer for elderships, and all elders should pray diligently for the wisdom to exercise their God given authority in the best interest of the flock, for whose benefit they have been chosen.

## The Problem of Overcoming Daily Temptation

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

We can overcome daily temptation if we, like the Sweet Singer of Israel, will meditate upon the Scriptures and do such daily. The beautiful book of Psalms is prefaced with an eloquent appeal to what we should not be and then with an ardent appeal to what we should be. The Bible says in Psalm 1:1-3, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor

standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The man who meditates daily on the Scriptures has the finest weapon ever devised to meet and conquer his daily temptations. A later Psalm contains the beautiful statement, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). It is the man who never meditates or hides Sacred Scripture in his heart that is in real danger of succumbing to the temptations that are his day by day. The man who meditates on God's word daily and carefully hides what he studies in his heart is in position to know the nature of sin. He is in position to know what the guilt of sin means to his soul and to his eternal interests in the sweet by and by. He is constantly under God's power. He can be like the man who was a great admirer of the Bible and paid this unsolicited tribute to the Grand Ole Book: "Every hour I spend with you either kills a vice or lets in a virtue to fight it." Reader friends, that is the very heart-beat of the successful combating of temptation in our daily lives.

We can overcome daily temptation if we, like Daniel, will determine to avoid the things that are designed to defile and wreck us. The Bible says this about the youthful and determined Daniel shortly after he was taken into the land of Babylonian captivity: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (Dan. 1:8). Daniel formed this resolution while he was but a young man. We need desperately entire crop of courageous young men and women who will form the same noble and courageous resolution relative to the imbibing of alcoholic beverages and to the participation in the wicked world of drug addiction. The person who stays completely away from alcoholic beverages will never become an object slave to alcohol. The person who never goes after that first fix will not be tomorrow's drug addict with a wrecked mind and a warped soul on its way to a devil's hell. Daniel witnessed in the king's wine and in his dainties harmful ingredients to his better interests. In

view of such he said a loud and decisive NO to participation therein. The Lord blessed him richly for so doing as the sequel of Daniel fully relates.

We can overcome daily temptations if we, like, the Lord Jesus Christ, will faithfully rely upon God's word in the hour of temptation. Just subsequent to his baptism in the waters of the Jordan the Bible says in Matthew 4, in Luke 4 and in Mark 1 that Jesus was tempted by Satan. Matthew and Luke detail these temptations. Matthew 4 opens with the inspired observation ; "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards ahungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:1-4), How did Jesus go about meeting the devil with this power-packed temptation? He did not perform a miracle. He depended upon the word of God. Again "the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee : and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4:5-7). How did Jesus go about the successful meeting of this power-packed temptation by the determined tempter? Again he relied totally and submissively upon the power that resides in the word of God. Again he performed no miracle. He depended upon something to rout the devil that is open and available for you and me. Matthew continues by saying, "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world: and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou will fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him' and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:8-11). How did Jesus go about the meeting of this

temptation-the ace that Satan saved till the very last? Again he employed the word of God Almighty. Again he did not perform a miracle. A popular singer and actor of our country, Pat Boone, has written a book entitled, *A Miracle A Day Keeps The Devil Away*. There is a vast difference between how Jesus chose to meet temptation and to defeat it and how Mr. Boone has chosen to do it. Jesus had power to perform miracles and chose not to do it in the meeting of temptations. The current singer and actor does not have any miraculous powers at disposal, though he had laid claim to such, and yet contends that is the very way to meet and defeat temptations to sin. Such shows a naiveness toward miracles and their purpose toward temptations and how to meet them properly. Jesus successfully met and overcame temptation because he knew God's word, he trusted God's word and he fully depended upon it to see him through. And it did!! In the heat of temptation use the Bible to meet and defeat the devil. God's word is the one that will send him reeling in abject defeat every time. Even if you and I had miraculous powers, and we DEFINITELY DO NOT POSSESS SUCH, we would still need to meet temptation by resorting to the word of God and remaining faithful to the same.

We can overcome temptation if we, like Paul, will maintain proper control over our body at all times. He wrote, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection : lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." We can overcome daily temptation if we, like Paul, will dedicate our lives wholly to the Lord. The Bible says of Paul in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live : yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." To the Philippians Paul penned the sobering and soul-guarding sentiments, " For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of

God by faith : That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death....I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 1:21; 3:7-10; 4:13). Such is a tried and tested way to overcome temptation.

## The Son of God

Royce Frederick

**THE VOICE OF GOD** from heaven declared that Jesus is His Son. After John had baptized Jesus, there was "*. . . a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*" (Matthew 3:17). While Jesus was on a mountain in the area of Caesarea Philippi with Peter, James, and John, "*. . . a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*" (Matthew 17:5).

**THE LIFE** of Jesus verifies that he is God's Son. His purpose in life was not to seek pleasure or satisfy sensual desires. He lived **unselfishly** for God and mankind. His purpose for coming to earth was to seek and save sinners (Luke 19:10; Matthew 9:13). He refused to permit the people to make him an earthly king (John 6:15). His mission on earth was not to be served, but to serve. He told his disciples, "*. . . the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*" (Matthew 20:28).

Jesus showed **compassion** toward people who were in need. His compassion moved him to heal the blind, the lame, the lepers, and people having any other sickness (Matthew 20:34; 14:14). His compassion moved him to raise several people from death (Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:1-46). Before he raised Lazarus from death, the Bible tells us, "*Jesus wept*" (John 11:35). He showed compassion for the hungry when he fed a crowd of 5,000 people and another crowd of 4,000 people (Matthew 14:15-21; 15:32-38). On many occasions, he showed that he cared about men and women of all races and nations (Matthew 8:5-13; 15:21-28;



24:14; 28:19; Luke 9:51-56; 10:25-37; 17:11-19; John 4:1-42). He showed compassion and love for the poor (Matthew 5:42; 11:5; 25:34-46; Luke 16:19-31; 21:1-4). Although he did not participate in their sins, he was a friend of sinners, eating with them and teaching them (Matthew 9:10-13; Luke 7:48).

Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life. Satan tried to entice Jesus to sin, but Jesus did not yield (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus often faced situations where his righteousness was tested, and he triumphed in every test. Jesus *"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"* (Hebrews 4:15).

Jesus endured abuse without taking revenge. Simon Peter tried to defend Jesus against the mob which came to arrest him. But Jesus stopped Peter and rebuked him (John 18:10-11). Jesus later told the Roman governor Pilate, *"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence"* (John 18:36). From his trial to his death, Jesus endured many kinds of abuse. People slapped his face, mocked him, spit in his face, whipped him, placed a "crown" of thorns on his head and struck him on the head with a reed, drove nails through his hands and feet, and left him hanging on a cross to die an agonizing death. Through all of this, Jesus *"... did no sin, neither was guile [deceit] found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled [spoken evil against], reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously"* (1 Peter 2:22-23).

**THE DEATH** of Jesus shows that he is the Son of God. Jesus was truly a human, but he was not merely human. He was also the Son of the living God. He *"... was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . ."* (John 1:14). Many humans have courageously given their lives to preserve the physical lives of other people. But the death of Jesus was more than the death of a mere human for physical lives. The death of Jesus Christ was the death of the only begotten Son of God to save lives for eternity! He left the glory of heaven to suffer ridicule, agony, and death on earth so that you and I could live with him in heaven's glory forever (John 3:16; II Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-11). He suffered willingly at the hands of the humans who were created by God through him

(Colossians 1:14-17). He foreknew that he would be crucified by wicked people, yet he voluntarily laid down his life for our sins. *"Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life, that I might take it again No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself . . ."* (John 10:17-18).

A person's sins separate him from fellowship with God and his Son, who are sinless. All of us sin, and the penalty for sin is death (Romans 3:23; 6:23). Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins, so that we can live in fellowship with God and his Son now and forever (Matthew 20:28; I John 1:3). *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just [righteous] for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] by the Spirit"* (I Peter 3:18). Jesus died for all people of all nations (I John 2:1-2; I Timothy 2:5-6; Mark 16:15-16). A sinner enters into the benefit of the death of Christ when he, by faith, is baptized (immersed) in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 22:16).

**THE RESURRECTION** of Jesus from death shows he is God's Son. Jesus did not remain in the tomb. By the power of God, he arose from death on the third day (I Corinthians 15:1-4). During a forty day period, he appeared to his disciples many times (Acts 1:3). On one occasion, he showed them the nail marks in his hands and feet, and he ate some food in their presence. These helped convince his disciples that they were not merely seeing a spirit. They were seeing him in his actual physical body which had been dead (Luke 24:36-43). More than five hundred people saw him at one time (I Corinthians 15:6). His resurrection was additional proof that he is the Son of God. Jesus was *" . . . declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead"* (Romans 1:4). After he had appeared to many people, he ascended into heaven to take his place on the right side of God (Acts 1:6-10; I Peter 3:22). From there, he rules over his kingdom, the church (Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 1:13, 18).

Beginning in Acts 2, the apostles boldly declared to the multitudes that they had seen the risen Christ. God also worked miracles through the apostles to confirm their message (Hebrews 2:3-4). By preaching that the risen Jesus is Lord, the disciples

risked losing their own lives at the hands of the people who hated Jesus. In fact, many of the disciples were killed because of their testimony. But even in the face of such persecution, they continued to proclaim the fact that they had seen Jesus after he had risen from death.

Many different kinds of evidence—Human History, Prophecies from God, the Virgin Birth, the Many Miracles worked by Jesus, the Teaching done by Jesus, the Claims of Jesus, the Voice of God, and the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus—show that Jesus is truly the Christ, the Son of the living God!

Jesus Christ will return one day to resurrect all people who have ever lived, and he will judge them according to what they have done (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:11-15). Jesus foretells us that “. . . *the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*” (John 5:28-29). He invites us to be baptized into him, live according to his will, and receive the free gift of eternal life (Galatians 3:26-27; Romans 6:3-4, 12-18, 23; 8:1; Revelation 2:10).

When the Son of God returns, will you be ready to greet him with joy?

## Communicate one with Another

Ronnie Lowe

Where would the world be without any means of communication? Not only would we be unable to speak, but we would be unable to communicate through sounds, actions, expressions, writing, or any other means. The world would be in utter chaos without any type of communication.

In Genesis 11, we read the account of the building of the Tower of Babel; “*And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn*

*them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."* The men thought that in building such a tall tower, they could reach unto heaven and exalt themselves. To stop the work, God simply confounded their languages so that they could no longer understand one another. But what happened what they could no longer understand one another? They quit working the tower, and they began to scatter to the various parts of the earth. A similar result occurs in our homes if there is a breakdown in communication. The family members will soon cease working together for the good of the family, and they will often become separated from each other.

Our homes deserve preservation. Thus we can see the need for good communication within the home. Two things are essential in good communication: a source and a receiver—one to send the message and another to receive, or one to do the talking and another to do the listening. Too many times, we are willing to do all the talking, but none of the listening. Parents and children need to learn and practice the art of listening. We need to listen to one another's problems and then help solve them.

Within the closeness of the family unit, we ought to be able to express our deepest feelings and anxieties. The home should be a place of caring and sharing. The home must remain strong, and for that to be, the lines of communication must remain open.

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