

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

---

Vol. 28

March 1998

No. 11

---

## EDITORIAL

### ***What Does The Bible Teach?***

***"There Is Therefore Now No Condemnation To Those Who Are In Christ Jesus. . ."***

The word condemnation means to pronounce guilty or to adjudge unfit. It is written in the Bible: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Again, it is written, "There is none righteous; no, not one. . . for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:10 & 23). Sin is man's greatest problem. From the beginning, from the time of Adam and Eve, man has always sinned. No one is ever born with sin, just as Adam and Eve were created without sin; but all have sinned by their own choice. (James 1:14, 15). Sin separates man from God, and that separation is called death, which is, in fact, spiritual alienation of man from God. All accountable being, men and women, boys and girls, have sinned in the eyes of God. Wherever there is man, sin is there—sin and man coexist. Not only man sins by actions but sin also resides in the heart or mind of man. Christ taught, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'you shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed

adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27, 28). When we look at sin from this standpoint, we know, that it is most true that all accountable being, men and women, boys and girls, who know the difference between right and wrong, except little children, all are sinners, because all have sinned with their hearts or minds when they have entertained once or more any evil thoughts in mind. Therefore, from God's standard all are under condemnation because of sin. The condemnation of sin is hell, which is the lake of fire and brimstone, which burns eternally.

There is no condemnation; however, to those who are in Christ Jesus, says the Bible at Romans 8:1. Because Christ has removed the cause of condemnation: sin, which condemns and separates humans from God. The Word, Who in the beginning was with God, and was God, Who was later identified as Jesus Christ, became flesh, or assumed flesh and became a man, by the power of God, to redeem man from sin. (John 1:1, 2, 14). Through His death of the cross He is today the propitiation for the sins of the world. (1 John 1:2; 4:10). When Christ was dying on the cross; God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them. In fact, the Bible tells us that on the cross God had made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17; 19, 21).

In Christ Jesus an individual becomes a new person; washed of sins, because of the shed blood of Christ from the cross; sanctified, or set apart to serve, and live for God; justified, whose sins have been forgiven since the propitiatory death of Christ; preserved, to live undefiled in a sinful world. (1 Corinthians 6:11; Jude 1). Because in Christ one does not walk or conduct according to the flesh, but walks according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God which comes from the written word of God; as one read, hear, meditate and follow His will. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21).

Since there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, not only one would want to get into Christ to be safe, but also would wish to know how can an individual get into Christ. If we let the Bible speak, we get the following answer to our important question: we read, "For as many of you as were

baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27). God has spoken. The things written in the Bible is His word. Not only has He told us that sin brings condemnation, but He tells us how everyone of us can get into that safe place where there is no condemnation. The starting point of Christianity is the Gospel, which is the death and the burial and the resurrection of Christ Jesus. (I Corinthians 15:1-4; Mark 16:15, 16). When the first gospel meeting on earth was held and the listeners had asked the preachers; "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The following answer was given to them: "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37 & 38). In the next verse of the cited Scripture we read; that those who had gladly received the word, and their number was about three thousand, they were baptized that day and were added to the number of these first gospel preachers. (Acts 2:41 & 47). Evidently, the preachers had told them that they were under the condemnation of sin; and that Christ had died to redeem them; which led them to believe in Christ, and to ask: what should they do? Then, when they were told to repent and be baptized, they immediately did that to put on Christ or to get into Christ, where there is no condemnation.

Every human being on earth is either in Christ or outside of Christ. Those who are outside of Christ are under condemnation. But, those who are in Christ are blessed and are under no condemnation. (John 14:6). Where are you?

## ***Beware Of False Teaching***

**J.C. CHOATE**

God has revealed His will to us through His word, the Bible (Hebrews 1:1, 2). He has revealed all that he wants us to know, all that we need to know to be saved and to have eternal life. (Hebrews 2: 1, 2). The Scriptures are all given by inspiration and completely furnish us to every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Christ said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" (John 14:6). Again, Christ said, "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" (John 8:32).

In spite of the fact that we have the truth in God's word, and we are warned again and again concerning false teachers (2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1), with the admonition that we should not be deceived (Romans 16:17, 18; James 1:22), still most of the people of the world are deceived in religious matters.

How are people deceived? There are many ways and we need to be aware of these lest we also be misled.

1. Adam and Eve believed a lie and sinned. God had commanded them not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, located in the midst of the garden of Eden. He said that the day they ate of it they would surely die. Satan, in the form of a serpent, told Eve that she would not die but rather that they would become wise as God. She believed his lie, partook of the fruit, and gave to Adam and he ate also. (Genesis 2 and 3). They died that day spiritually, and they began to die physically inasmuch as they were driven out of the garden and away from the tree of life. There were also other consequences of their sin.

2. One may be deceived by the influence of one person, or by the masses. Adam was led by Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit. (Genesis 3:7). People often find comfort in the fact that the majority are doing a thing, or that they are together with members of a large church that is also a denomination. We are reminded, however, of the words of Jesus when he said that the majority are on the broad way that leads to destruction. (Matthew 7:13, 14).

3. Many are deceived by human reasoning. They do what they like, because they think it is all right, because they prefer it, because they don't see any harm in it. We have some weak brethren today who reason that *it will take the grace of God to finally save Christians, because we have our weaknesses and faults, but so do the denominational groups around us; therefore, how are we any better than they are? So if the grace of God will save us, why will it not also save our religious friends?* True, it will take the grace of God to finally save us, if we are saved, but even the grace of God cannot save those who have not been born into His family, those who refuse to do what the Lord has asked us to do. We are saved, initially by obeying the gospel (Mark 16:15, 16), becoming a member of the Lord's church and family (Matthew 16:18), and wearing His name. (Acts 4:12).

Then we must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), living the faithful Christian life. (Revelation 2:10). As we walk in the light (1 John 1:7) His blood cleanses us from daily sin. But those who have never been born into the Family cannot walk in the light and are therefore not under God's grace.

4. Others are deceived by the popularity of some preacher. He has a charisma about him. What he says sounds so good. They believe in him. They trust him. Never mind the fact that much of what he teaches is contrary to the teaching of the Bible, they continue to follow him. In 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 Paul wrote about brethren who were glorying in Paul, Apollos, and Peter, but Paul condemned this attitude and encouraged them to follow only Christ, who died for them.

5. Some are deceived by false promises. They are led to believe that they can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, perform miracles, speak in tongues, etc. They have overlooked the fact that those promises were made to the Apostles, not to every believer. (John 15:26, 27). After the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection, He said to the Apostles just before returning to the Father in heaven: *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* (Acts 1:8). Now read through the book of Acts and see who received that power, who was able to perform miracles, and who spoke in tongues or languages. Don't be deceived into thinking that you can have power the Lord never promised you.

Look also at those preachers who claim to be led miraculously of the Lord. They are members of churches that you cannot read about in the Bible, they wear man-made names, etc. If they were led of the Lord, how could He be contradicting what He has clearly written in His word?

6. Many are deceived because they grew up in homes where the parents believed and practiced erroneous religious teachings and instilled those things into their children. Even though we may love and respect our parents, we must realize that it is possible for them to be in error. We must, therefore, read and study God's word and put the Lord first in our lives.

7. The world deceives large numbers with material gains and worldly pleasures. We must remember, however, that John

says that we cannot love the world and the things therein. He says if we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us (1 John 2:15-17).

8. We may be deceived by thinking that there is plenty of time left to obey God. James says that we know not what will be on the morrow. (James 4:14). Now is the time to obey God—not tomorrow. Tomorrow may be too late.

9. There are those who are deceived by arraying scripture against scripture, and then making what they like. Many reject the fact that baptism is essential to salvation because they put special emphasis on belief or faith and then conclude that salvation is by faith only. One could just as easily conclude that baptism alone saves us. This method of reaching conclusions, however, is wrong because the scriptures do not contradict themselves. Rather, we must accept all that God has said on any given subject. When we do that, we learn that one must hear the word of God, believe in God and Christ, repent of his sin, confess Christ as the Son of God, and then be baptized for the remission of sins. (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Mark 16:16). Then he is saved.

Some misuse the Scripture when it comes to marriage, divorce, and remarriage. They are living in an adulterous state but try to find a scripture that will justify their situation. Matthew 19:9 makes it very clear that what one can do and cannot do in marriage. God's word stands regardless of how man tries to twist it and use it in a way that would condone his actions.

10. Others are deceived by a mis-translation of some version of scripture. There are good translations of the Bible and there are bad translations. Sometimes translators have allowed their personal beliefs to colour their wordings of particular passages. For instance, Ephesians 5:19 says that we are to sing and make melody in our heart to the Lord but there are translations which say "sing and play" and "sing and dance." Psalm 51:5 has David saying, "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me.*" The Burmese translation by Judson says, "I was born with sin." But David was not a sinner from birth. Rather, the correct translation which says "born in sin" further explains the meaning, "In sin did my mother conceive me." So the sin was in the lives of David's adult parents, not in himself.

Of course the Bible clearly teaches that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and that the son will not bear the iniquity of the father, etc. (Ezekeil 18:20). Furthermore, the gospel is directed to those who know right from wrong, those who are *old enough* to hear the truth, to believe it, to repent of their sins, to confess with their mouths that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and to be baptized for the remission of their sins. (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38). Only adults are capable of doing these things.

Finally, Jesus said that one must be converted and become as a little child to enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1-5). This does not sound like Jesus was teaching that children inherit the guilt of sin from Adam and Eve.

How then may we know which translation is good and which one is bad? Use the one or ones that are most commonly accepted and recognized as good translations. In local-language translations, if a verse conflicts with other clear Bible teachings, the careful student will seek to compare with other translations and even with original language texts in order to get the correct meaning.

We could no doubt list other ways that man can be deceived. But just knowing that is possible should cause each one to be on guard, and to take every precaution necessary so that he will not be led astray. Surely we want to be saved and to go to heaven. That being the case, we should make every effort to learn the truth and to follow it only. This requires that we keep an open mind, prayerfully seek the truth, and that we not do anything which would conflict with other Scriptures.

*Especially for Women*

## ***Can A Woman Teach?***

**BETTY BURTON CHOATE**

If the question is, "Can a woman teach publicly to a mixed group?" the answer is NO. The scriptures in 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:12-14 forbid a woman to be in a position of authority over men in the assembly of the church. "*And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.*"

But "teaching" involves much more than public lecturing. All of us teach every day as we go about our normal lives. We teach by our behaviour, by the way we interact with others. To the young preacher Titus, Paul wrote that women are to be discreet and chaste in their behaviour, "*that the word of God may not be blasphemed*" (Titus 2:5). To Timothy he wrote directions for the young widows, that they conduct themselves in such a way that they, "... *give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully*" (1 Tim. 5:14). It is obvious from these instructions that all of us teach—good lessons or lessons that bring shame and reproach on God's word and His people—by the way we live before others.

Women teach continually within the walls of home. Aware that some Christian women were married to unbelieving men, Peter wrote these instructions: "*Likewise you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they **without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives***" (1 Pet. 3:1). In cases where the wife is a Christian but the husband is not, his only hope for salvation lies in the faithfulness of his wife. If she is half-hearted about her Christianity, attending the assemblies irregularly and being unconcerned about her daily spiritual growth or the teaching of others, she will likely become a stumbling block to her husband. Her own behaviour will blind him to the truths of the gospel. But if she, lovingly and respectfully, insists that God must come first in her life, her husband and family members will learn from her godly conduct.

Women are also the teachers of much of the faith their children learn at home. We read, concerning the young preacher, Timothy, "... *the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also*" (2 Tim 1:5). Timothy's father was a Gentile. He did not have the faith of the Old Testament Scriptures as the foundation on which faith in Christ could be built. Timothy learned those truths as a child at his mother's and grandmother's knees, as they carefully taught him the word of God.

These examples of women teaching God's word show us that they are free to teach at every opportunity, through their behaviour and within the home. But can a woman teach those



who are not of her family?

We read in Acts 18 : 2, 25, 26 of a man and his wife named Aquila and Priscilla. They lived in Corinth and were tentmakers of a Jewish background. Paul stayed with them while he was in Corinth. Whether Priscilla and Aquila had already become Christians or whether they were converted by Paul, the Scriptures don't say. But when Paul left Corinth this couple traveled with him as far as Ephesus. There they found a Jew named Apollos who was "*an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures*"(v. 24). "*When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately*" (v. 26). The wording of the Scriptures indicates that the teaching of Apollos was a joint effort of Aquila along with his wife. Of course this would not have been public teaching in a synagogue, but was done privately in a home where "*they took him aside.*" There are many cases of private Bible discussions in homes where it is good for a woman to share in the teaching. Her attitude and behaviour in those instances should be the same as for any Christian: gentle and loving, not "know-it-all" or with anger.

In this present age of the printing and availability of many books, the question is sometimes asked, "Is it wrong for a man to read an article or a book written by a woman?" This would be parallel to a woman taking part in a private study in a home, except that the words would be printed instead of being spoken orally. There is no public teaching involved; the man is free to take up the writing or to put it down, as he chooses; and he is not under any pressure of leadership from the absent woman.

Are there any occasions when a woman may teach publicly? Paul's instructions to Titus speak of the older women, "*that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands. . .*" (Titus 2:3-5). So it is not only permitted but commanded that women are to teach other women, and that women are to teach children. This may be done privately, within the home, or it may be done publicly, in small classes, in large classes, in seminars and "workshops"—in any situation where men are not present.

There is even the possibility of small, isolated churches being made up only of women. What are they to do in such cases? Must they forego having worship assemblies, because

there is no male member to lead them? No; if all the members of the congregation are women, it would be their responsibility to conduct the service themselves, as long as no men were present.

So the question is not, "Can women teach?" but, again, it is a question of leadership roles. A woman is not to teach publicly where men are in the audience. In a public gathering, where male Christians are present, the men are to do all the leading in worship activities as well as in teaching. This is their God-given responsibility, and they are being disobedient to God Himself when they turn that work over to women, no matter how "qualified" the women may be.

The work of teaching children, other women, and unbelievers is a tremendous and time-consuming task. If women will do that work well, many will live with God eternally who would otherwise be lost. Let us focus on *what women can do*, rather than quibble and debate over what they cannot do.

## ***Smoking***

**FRANCIS DAVID**

The Delhi Government has taken a very commendable step by banning the cigarette smoking in public places. When I was going through my newspaper, I have come to know that some people have liked this idea and some have not appreciated this prohibition. recently a news item has appeared in the local newspaper which goes like this "Smoker face American style prohibition." According to this news, smoking is banned in most restaurants in New York and the same could happen here. This news further says: that a series of legal actions are being planned in which waiters and waitresses could sue their employers for putting them at risk through passive smoking. Some people are taking this issue seriously and they have appreciated this initiative. How wonderful it would be if people take this seriously and quit smoking.

We all know the bad affects of smoking and you are not ignorant about warning which says Cigarette smoking is injurious to your Health. But inspite of repeated warnings from social and religious organisations people still like to smoke. The smokers

are increasing daily. In many colleges and schools young boys and girls could be seen smoking. Some of them claim to be more stylish with smoking. Whenever a smoker buys a pack of cigarette he gets a warning which is being printed on the Packet "Cigarette smoking is injurious to your health." A smoker does not pay any attention to this warning. How sad it is for such people, that after knowing the danger they just do not want to escape from it.

Do you know that each cigarette contains a poison which a smoker takes in the form of NICOTINE. This poison gets into one's blood and it affects the lungs. Have you ever thought that by smoking a person is harming himself as well as others too. I feel sorry for such people who are addicted to this bad habit. The cases of lung cancer have increased and every day a smoker is shortening his or her life. My dear friend, why are you harming your beautiful body which God has given you. You must also think about others too, because you are harming other through your smoking. What about your family? Your little children, your loved ones? You know they are all inhaling the smoke of your cigarettes, and their life is in danger because it is affecting their lungs and making them more prone to heart related diseases. Just think about it seriously when we talk to people about the bad affects of smoking and then request them to please quit it, you know what they often say, they say: "We can't, its very difficult." My friend, I want to tell you that if you really want to get rid of this filthy habit, you can do it. Just make up your mind and take a firm decision, and I'm sure YOU CAN DO IT. Ask God's help and will surely help you. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." this is what apostle Paul said in Phil. 4:13. A true Christian would not smoke and will never indulge himself or herself to a habit which affects his body and mind: A Christian know that his or her body is the temple of God so therefore he or she needs to keep this temple pure and holy. While talking to the Christians at Corinth, apostle Paul tells them that "Do you not know that your body is the TEMPLE of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. 6:19-20). Kind reader, if you are a smoker, then make your decision today that you are going to quit it. You got to be serious my friend. If you are not a smoker then keep yourself away from this bad habit.

# **The Son Of God**

**GARY C. HAMPTON**

## **The Word Was God**

Today, someone's son is simply his male descendant or one he has adopted to fill that role. However, Jesus was called the Son of God for another reason. To be sure, He was God's Son by birth (Luke 1:34-35), but the title "Son of God" most often refers to Jesus being of the same nature as God. When Jesus called God his Father, the Jews understood that he was claiming to be God (John 5:17-24).

John, in his account of the life of Christ, tells us Jesus was God come down to earth. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1-3). John says that the Word was with God at the beginning and was God. That all things were made by him is proof that he is God, since God was the creator (Genesis 1:1; compare Colossians 1:16-17). This Word, that was God, John plainly shows to be Jesus (John 1:14).

## **Jesus' Deity Was Confirmed by the Father**

On two separate occasions, the Father testified to Jesus' Sonship. After Jesus' baptism, "a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." On the mount of transfiguration, after Peter suggested making tabernacles for Moses, Elijah and Jesus, "a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I was well pleased. Hear Him!'" (Matthew 3:13-17; 17:1-5). As we have already seen, the Jews clearly understood that Jesus being the Son of God made him partake of God's very nature, in other words, the Father was saying Jesus is God!

The Hebrew writer also shows us the Father thought of Jesus as God. "Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).

Vine indicates this means that Jesus was the shining forth of God's glory and the very image of His substance. In verse 8, the Hebrew writer quotes Psalm 4:6-7, and says that God, the Father, called Jesus God.

### **John the Baptist and Paul Attest to His Sonship**

John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way of the Lord, God (John 1:23; Isaiah 40:3). Jesus understood Malachi 3:1 to refer to John the Baptist (Matthew 11:7-10). By looking back to Malachi 2:17, we can see that this Lord, whose way he was to prepare, was the God of Judgment. By inspiration, John tells us whose way he came to prepare (John 1:29-34). It was Jesus; the Son of God.

Paul also believed Jesus was God come down to earth. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:5-7). Expressed in other words, Paul is saying Jesus existed as the very essence of God, just as he took on the very essence of a servant by becoming a man (Hebrews 2:9-18).

### **Jesus' Miracles Prove He Was Divine**

As proof of His divinity, Jesus cited his miracles (John 5:36). Nicodemus had seen those miracles and knew they were proof Jesus was from God (John 3:2). John says the reason he made record of those miracles our Lord performed was that we might believe Jesus was God's Son (John 20:30-31). Jesus was able to turn water into wine (John 2:1-11), heal the son of a nobleman (John 4:43-54), and heal a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years (John 5:1-9) just prior to citing his miracles as proof of his being God.

Later, He raised the son of the widow of Nain, Jairus' daughter and Lazarus from the dead (Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56; John 11:1-46). The Pharisees recognized a special power was behind Jesus' miracles, so they attributed them to the power of the devil (Matthew 12:22-30). Jesus showed them that Satan would be working against himself if he cast out devils. Therefore, the power had to be from God.

## **Jesus, the Fulfillment of Prophecy**

As another proof of his divinity, Jesus turned to the prophecy of Old Testament scripture (John 5:39). Our Lord was born of a virgin, thus fulfilling the great prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 (Matthew 1:18-25). He was also uniquely the seed of woman and, as such, completed God's promise in dealing a mortal wound to the head of Satan by dying on Calvary and being raised the third day (Genesis 3:15). As Micah foretold, our Lord was born in the city of David, Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1). Through Him as the seed, singular, of Abraham, God blessed the heathen nations by giving them a means of salvation (Genesis 22:15-18; Galatians 3:8, 14, 16). Numerous other events in His life, such as the betrayal by the Judas and the sayings on the cross, were prophecies plainly completed in the life of our magnificent Lord.

## **The Empty Tomb's Powerful Testimony**

In his great Pentecost sermon, Peter stated, without successful contradiction from anyone, that God had raised Jesus from the dead. The religious leaders of the Jews would have liked nothing better than to have thrown a lifeless body down at the apostle's feet, thereby crushing the fledgling church before it got started, but they could not! In fact, they had paid the guards to testify they saw Jesus' followers take the body while they slept! The absurdity of that position is best demonstrated in the obedient response of some three thousand souls to Peter's declaration that Jesus had been made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:14-41; Matthew 28:11-15).

Paul, in writing to the church at Rome, said he had been separated by God to preach the gospel of Christ. Among other things, he proclaimed Jesus as the son of David, just as had been promised by the prophets. "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:1-4). The witnesses to the Lord's resurrection are so numerous as to make it an irrefutable and well established fact in any court of law. What other incident has ever had over five hundred confident witnesses, among whom was at least one who violently opposed the preaching of Jesus as the Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)? Truly, Jesus is the Son of God, as the empty tomb shouts even today!

# *Some Thoughts Regarding Angels*

W.A. HOLLEY

Angels are celestial beings created a little higher than men (Psalm 148:1-5; Colossians 1:16). There are thousands of them in Revelation (Revelation 5:11-14). Only two of them are named in the Bible—Gabriel and Michael (Luke 1:19; Revelation 12:7). Angels are always spoken of in the masculine gender. There are good and bad angels (II Peter 2:4; Jude 6). The words principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions are words used in your Bible with reference to angelic activity. It seems God uses angels as His guardians or representatives in His concern for others (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15).

"But of which of the angels hath he said at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of my feet? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:13-14). Satan is the grand adversary of God and man (John 8:44; I Timothy 3:6; I Peter 5:8-9). Satan has "his angels" (Matthew 25:41). It seems that the outburst of demonic activities during the personal ministry of Christ was Satan-inspired (Acts 10:38).

God the Father has employed the angels to punish the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Two men (angels) visited with Abraham regarding the future of these two cities (Genesis 18:1 ff; Hebrews 13:2). In this connection two angels appeared to Lot to protect him from Sodomites who wished to ravish his family (Genesis 19:1 ff). This incident has an important bearing for those of us who live today (Luke 17:26-32).

When Hagar was wandering in the desert, God sent an angel to strengthen and encourage her (Genesis 16:7-11; 21:17). God used angels to communicate with Moses (Exodus 3:2) and with Balaam (Numbers 22:23-35) and when Israel rebelled, God sent an angel to rebuke her (Judges 2:1-5).

During the time of Gideon, God sent an angel to help him and his people win a great victory over the Midianites and the Amalekites (Judges 6:1-38). Too, when the sweet singer of Israel, David, had taken a census of his people contrary to the will of God, an angel of destruction was sent to bring havoc on

the people of God. David repented of his sin and the people were spared (II Samuel 24:1 ff). Elijah, the great prophet had won a great victory over Jezebel's prophets. Jezebel threatened his life. Elijah became frightened and fled all the way to Horeb, where he asked to die. But God sent an angel to revive his faith and confidence in God. Elijah was just such a person as you are. (I Kings 18-19; James 5:17-18).

The New Testament has much to say about angels. An angel of the Lord appeared to Zacharias announcing that Elisabeth should become a mother (Luke 1: 11-15). John the Baptist was born. The angel's name was Gabriel (Luke 1:19). Later, an angel appeared to Mary who became the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38). Again, an angel appeared to Joseph to reassure Joseph that his marriage to Mary the virgin was appropriate—that he should not falter on his promise (Matthew 1: 18-25).

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem the angels came as a "heavenly host" to praise God (Luke 2:8-20). Just after Jesus baptism, with the memory of the Holy Spirit falling upon Him, and after hearing the voice of God commending Him, he was thrust into temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). When Jesus had successfully resisted all three mighty temptations, the angels came and ministered unto Him. Toward the end of Jesus' earthly journey, in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was suffering in agony an angel came to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43).

When Jesus had finished His earthly ministry, He ascended into Heaven (John 17:4; 19:30). Read Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-52). Acts 1:10-11 tells us that when Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven "two men stood by them (the apostles) in white apparel. . ." (Acts 1:10-11). The *two men* were angels in human form. Thus, angels bore witness to Jesus' glorious resurrection (Luke 24:1-7; John 20:11-13).

Angels, after the establishment of the church, had an important role in its early growth. For example, when the apostles had been arrested and placed in prison, angels unlocked its doors and sent them back to the temple to continue their preaching (Acts 5:17-23). An angel instructed Philip, saying, "arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert" (Acts 8:26 ff). Although the angel directed Philip to go to a certain geographic



location, he did not do the preaching; rather it was Philip who did the preaching (Acts 8:26 ff). God uses human-instrumentality to preach His word; not angels, not the Virgin Mary, nor any other celestial being. Jesus could have summoned a myriad of angels to proclaim the word of God had He so chosen (Matthew 26:53-54). Men are to preach the gospel of Christ (II Corinthians 4:7; Mark 16:15-16).

It is a sin to worship angels. John, twice attempted to worship angels but he was rebuked both times (Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9). "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" said Jesus (Matthew 4:10). If Jesus had worshiped Satan. He would have acknowledged the Lordship of Satan. Scripturally, one cannot worship Peter, Mary, money, or any other thing.

Jesus is now in Heaven (Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1:9-12). But, one day He will return a second time (Hebrews 9:28; Titus 2:13; II Peter 3:10-15). All His holy angels shall return with him (Matthew 25:31). "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

Dear Reader, in view of the forthcoming Judgment, there are lessons which we must learn. Jude was a brother of Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). Jude wrote the book of Jude, Some ungodly fellows had intruded into the church. These were heretics who entered secretly under a banner of being loyal Christians. These were false teachers who appeared as angels of light (II Corinthians 11:13-15). Jude uses three men—Cain, Balaam, and Korah—to illustrate his point: Cain substituted his plan for God's plan (Genesis 4:1-8). Now some of our brethren want to substitute their own way for they think their way, is better. Balaam represents those who love deceit and money (Jude 11). Many preachers love popularity and praise; hence, they bend when it serves their purpose. Korah represents those now who rebel against the authority of God and the elders (Numbers 16:25-35). Many will not submit to the authority of God and His word (Matthew 28:18-20; II Timothy 3:16-17).

Listen to Jude as he describes these false teachers: "These are they who are hidden rocks in your love feasts when they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever" (Jude 12-13) If God punished angels who sinned, will He not punish those backsliding children who die in their sins?

## *Gird Up The Loins Of Your Mind*

**HOLGER NEUBAUER**

Peter admonishes that Christians should "gird up the loins" of their minds (I Peter 1:13). "Girding" is a reference to the style of dress characteristic of people in ancient oriental lands. When performing tasks, running or taking a long journey, they gathered up the loose ends of their outward garb and tied them into a girdle or belt. The "girding" enabled them to walk, run, or perform certain work without being impeded by their clothing.

In employing this illustration, Peter was encouraging Christians to gather their loose thoughts, and tighten their mental activity in order to perform the work of a Christian. A modern day translation of Peter's illustration could be, "roll up the sleeves of your mind."

Christians are to gather their loose and disjointed thoughts and prepare themselves for spiritual work, which demands study, reflection and meditation. Paul said, "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). The need of mental discipline is ever present. Whether it be for preparing for Bible study, or praying, or simply avoiding evil, the Christian needs to learn how to think.

Ultimately, our happiness will depend on how we are able to discipline our minds for the service of God. The Apostle Paul promised through the Spirit that God would keep our hearts and minds and also give us a peace that passes understanding (Phil. 4:7). However, the reception of that promise is contingent upon what he said in the very next verse. Notice what is said, "Finally

brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

We ought to work on good Bible study habits, as it is the best way I know to do what Paul has instructed us in Philippians 4:8.

## *The Nameless Church*

**DENNIS GULLEDGE**

We must know that the church of the New Testament is neither denominational, nor sectarian. We must also know that there is no single, exclusive name in the New Testament identifying the church. This is a part of its uniqueness. In this connection brother Hugo McCord wrote:

"The New Testament church is unique in that it has no proper name. Denominations have proper names. The word 'denominate' means no 'name' something. But the New Testament church is nameless. Though it is called the house of the Lord, the family of God, the body of Christ, and the Kingdom of Christ . . . yet it has no proper name" (*These Things Speak*, page 121).

Denominations and denominational names originated in religious differences which sprang up after the New Testament was written. The divisive principles always suggested the party names, whether those principles had to do with ordinances, particular church theories, methods of work and worship or personal preference as to distinguished leaders. One writer put it this way: "Soon they began to differ among themselves, and it was necessary that some terms be used to express these differences. In this way different denominations arose." Thus we have the many different denominational names that we all hear and know. The justification for such seems to be this: How are you going to distinguish one Smith from another, without some sort of given name to express these differences? It seems not to have occurred to many people that distinguishing one Smith from another is the one thing we do not want to do. Rather, in keeping

with the Lord's prayer in John 17 all the Smith's should be one! For this reason all these "given names" not found in the New Testament should be abandoned. The Lord's church today knows nothing of them because it is nameless.

Exactly what do we mean by the "nameless church"? We simply mean that the church which Jesus promised (Matthew 16:18) and built (Acts 2:37-47) had no given name. The denominational names which exist today have no root in Scripture. But, the church was known by various designations, and some of these we will give attention to here.

1. "The church" (Matthew 16:18). The word which Jesus used and which is translated "church" in this passage has no religious meaning in and of itself. The word in the Greek is *ekklesia*, and means "a called out group." In the New Testament this word was employed to describe an angry mob (Acts 19:32, 41, "assembly"), and a "lawful assembly" (Acts 19:39). It is translated in Matthew 16:18 by the word "church" and refers to those people whom Jesus called out of the world to live for him (Matthew 11:26-28; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9).

2. "Churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16). In this passage Paul is speaking of a collection of local congregations, each of which is a church of Christ. This term shows ownership. Those congregations (churches) were His by right of ownership as they belonged to Him.

To use the designation "church of Christ" is entirely proper and scriptural, but it is not a proper name. To speak of "church of Christ" congregations, "Church of Christ" preachers, etc. is to take a scriptural designation and use it in a way entirely wrong. As Hug Fulford has so well noted, "Christians no more constitute a 'Church of Christ' congregations than they constitute a 'Church of God' congregation or a 'Body of Christ' congregation! All of these terms carry equal weight and equal meaning in the New Testament" (*Gospel Advocate*, 10/7/82, page 596).

3. "The Churches of God" (1 Thessalonians 2:13-14). This designation also shows ownership. They are congregations (assemblies, churches) of God, who is owner of all things. These are the same as "churches of Christ." They are not a different group of Smiths! (That is, those mentioned in the previous passage).

It is worthy of note here that just because a church somewhere may wear this or any other scriptural designation,

that does not mean it is the Lord's church: A scriptural designation is fine and a step in the right direction, but if a congregation, is unscriptural in its organization, work, worship, purpose or doctrine, it is not the Lord's church.

4. "The Kingdom of God" (I Thessalonians 1:3-5): This is one of the most frequently employed designations of the church in the New Testament (some 68 times). The church is called a kingdom, and we must think of God's people as citizens in that kingdom (John 3:5; Col. 1:13), with Jesus Christ as King (I Timothy 6:15).

5. "House of God" (I Timothy 3:14-15). This house is God's family—"the church of the living God." Christians are "of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). They are "children of God" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18) and brethren of Christ (Hebrews 2:11-12). No one is able to "join" the church of our Lord, rather he is "born again" (John 3:5) by his obedience to the truth (I Peter 1:22-23), being baptized for the remission of his sins (Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 2:38), and the Lord then "adds" him to the church (Acts 2:47).

Such is the way a person becomes a member of the church of Christ today.

Do not think the New Testament church is deprived in any ways simply because the Lord has chosen to leave it nameless. God has not given His church a proper name, and neither should any man presume to do so. As churches of Christ we wear the name of our owner to show whom we represent. Whom or what do you represent by the religious name you wear? You may be interested to know the origin of the religious name you have taken. Check it out!

## *In The Name Of The Lord*

**JERI MANASCO**

Christians know that whatever they do, they are to do it in the name of the Lord (Colossians 3:17). The phrase "in the name of the Lord" or "in Christ's name" is used rather freely by believers. Sometimes it is an abused phrase.

### **NOT A RITUAL FORMULA**

"In the name of the Lord" is not merely a ritual formula that

adds legitimacy to one's actions. It is not a phrase to be used merely to give the appearance of piety in worship or service. When we say "in the name of the Lord" we mean that what we do we are doing by his authority and approval. Obviously, therefore, if we are doing an unscriptural thing, it cannot be "in the name of the Lord."

The Crusades of the Middle Ages were carried on as holy vendettas against the "infidels" of the East. Blood flowed and windows were made by pious men "in the name of the Lord." Crimes in recent years have been committed "in the name of the Lord." But surely none would seriously and sanely claim that the crime was justified because that sacred phrase was used. Religious errors are invented and zealously propagated "in the name of the Lord." If it is error, though, it cannot be in the name of the Lord, for he speaks with the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13; 1 John 4:1-6).

It is wrong and inexcusable to do things that are religiously and morally wrong and attach the phrase "in the name of the Lord" as a cover-all for sin. The homosexual community is essentially making their appeal to the Bible (of all things!) to justify their sinful and perverse lifestyle! Jesus, they say, is gracious to all men. Religious leaders, church "bishops", and religious synods are more attaching legitimacy to gay sinfulness "in the name of the Lord." The Bible forbids that lifestyle and claiming Christ as an advocate and defender of such a thing will not legitimize or justify the sin!

### **WRONG CANNOT BE MADE RIGHT**

Everyone who has a smattering of respect left for the Bible acknowledges the truth of what has just been said in the moral realm. But doesn't the same thing hold true in religious matters? One must carefully examine his religious "heritage" in the light of the Bible! Denominational traditions is not justified on any ground; adding "in the name of the Lord" will not make more than one body acceptable to God. When Jesus has said he built his church (Matthew 16:18), the phrase "in the name of the Lord" will not justify the establishment of another or membership in a human church acceptable (Matthew 15:13-14).

Religious practices cannot be made right by saying, "I am doing this "in the name of the Lord." Infant baptism is not scriptural because it simply has no Bible authority. Believers

were the subjects of baptism in the New Testament (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12, 13; 18:8). Sprinkling water on an infant and accompanying it with "in the name of the Lord" will not make that practice acceptable in the court of heaven. The use of an instrument of music in the worship of the church cannot be justified on any scriptural grounds! The zealous playing of an instrument in worship and saying one is doing so "in the name of the Lord" simply will not make it legitimate. The use of "interpretive religious dance" is not made right because it is done "in the name of the Lord." If it is not in the Bible it is not "in the name of the Lord"!!

### PROPER USE OF THE PHRASE

On the positive side, much can be seen as legitimate use of "in the name of the Lord." People were healed miraculously in the name of the Lord. The feeble man at the temple was healed in that name by Peter and John (Acts 3:1-12; 4:9, 10). Even so, the phrase was not a religious charm or a magical formula. It simply meant that the power and authority by which the man was healed was that of the Lord, not that of the apostles (Mark 16:17-20; Acts 16:18; Luke 10:17). It is a statement of authority, not of formula.

Remissions of sins was and is granted in the name of the Lord. It is "through his name" that remission of sins is granted (Acts 10:43). "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). So when we preach that men should repent before they receive remission of sins we are doing so by the authority of Jesus, or "in the name of the Lord." Remission of sins was given "in the name of Jesus Christ" to those who repented and were baptized (Acts 2:38). To promise remission of sins on any other grounds for the alien sinner is to offer a remission of sins that Jesus neither offer nor endorses.

We can plead for religious unity in the name of the Lord! "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Can one defend division by the name of Jesus Christ? If one cannot defend division by the name of Christ, **then one cannot defend in the name of the Lord doctrines and traditions that create the division!**

## CONCLUSION

We can perform acts of service in his name (Mark 9:41). We can praise God in the name of the Lord (Ephesians 5:20). There can be assemblies in his name (Matthew 18:20). Church discipline is administered in his name (1 Corinthians 5:4; 2 Thessalonians 3:6). We pray in his name (John 14:13; 14: 15:16; etc.) It must be remembered, though, that this does not mean that the mere use of the phrase "in his name" or "in the name of the Lord" is what makes these practices right. They are right when done by his authority and approval. Only then are they "in the name of the Lord."

---

### FORM IV (See Rule 8)

1. Place of Publication : New Delhi
2. Periodicity of its Publication : Monthly
3. Printer's Name : Sunny David  
Whether citizen of India? : Yes  
(If foreigner, state the country of origin) : XXX  
Address : B-201 Sarita Vihar  
New Delhi 110044
4. Publisher's Name : Sunny David  
Whether citizen of India : Yes  
(If foreigner, state the country of origin) : XXX  
Address : B-201 Sarita Vihar  
New Delhi 110044
5. Editor's Name : Sunny David  
Whether citizen of India : Yes  
(If foreigner, state the country of origin)  
Address : B-201 Sarita Vihar  
New Delhi 110044
6. Names and addresses of individuals who owns the newspaper : Church of Christ  
E-10/B Defence Colony  
New Delhi.

I Sunny David, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated March 1998

Sunny David  
Publisher