



**THE
BIBLE
TEACHER**

EXCELLENT OFFER!

For Readers Only! If you would like to receive fine Christian books, you can choose any number from the following. For each book you should send 50 paise postage stamp, and just rupees Twenty only if you want to receive all books together.

1. Sound Doctrines.
2. Preach the Word.
3. Children of Obedience
4. New Testament Conversion.
5. Exhortations, Vol. 1
6. Exhortations, Vol. 2.
7. New Delhi Sermonettes, Vol. 2.
8. Let Us Reason Together.
9. We Live by Faith.
10. Good News
11. The Christian Reader
12. Topical Index of the Bible
13. Contending for the Faith
14. The Bible is the Answer
15. Lessons from the Bible, Vol. 1
16. Lessons from the Bible, Vol. 2
17. Fiftytwo Short Sermons
18. Gospel Treasure, Vol. 1
19. Gospel Treasure, Vol. 2
20. Is it the Truth?
21. Sermons on False Doctrines
22. Thirtyfive Thought Provoking messages.
23. A Ready Answer For Every Man, Vol. 1
24. A Ready Answer For Every Man, Vol. 2
25. A commentary on 1 & 2 Peter
26. Have you been wondering what the Bible Teaches? Vol. 1
27. Have you been wondering what the Bible Teaches? Vol. 2
28. God Made Them Male and Female
29. The New Testament Church
30. Sermon Outlines with a Message, Vol. 1
31. Sermon Outlines with a Message, Vol. 2
32. Unto You Young Men
33. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 1
34. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 2
35. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 3
36. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 4
37. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 5
38. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 6
39. Voice of Truth Radio Sermons Vol. 7
40. Scriptural organization of the churches of Christ.
41. You can be Just a Christian
42. God's message for man today Vol. 1
43. God's message for man today Vol. 2
44. Seldom Studied Scriptures
45. What does the Bible say?
46. A Commentary on Hebrews

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Box 3815

C-22, N.D.S.E. II

NEW DELHI—110049

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :

J. C. CHOATE

Associate Editor :

SUNNY DAVID

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

Pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 12

April 1982

No. 12



The Problem Of The Lack Of Respect

The Bible teaches that the Lord is not respecter of persons. Peter said, "of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34, 35). Again, he said, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). Paul wrote, "For there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. 2:11). Dealing with the master-servant relationship, Paul said, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening:

knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." (Ephesians 6:5-9).

Concerning the problem of having respect for persons, James wrote, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:1-5). Then Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 1:17 that the "Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work."

Now what conclusions can we draw from the foregoing? First, God is no respecter of persons. Second, in dealing with each other we should have respect for one another. Third, we must guard against showing partiality even in our worship services, lest we favour the one who has wealth over the one who is poor. And fourth, God will judge every man according to his works. The scriptures reminds us that in so doing that God looks not on the outward appearance, but on the heart from whence comes all thoughts and works whether good or evil. (1 Samuel 16:7). Then Paul says, "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." (2 Corinthians 5:10).

All of this is to say that God does not show partiality. He does not favour one group of people over another, or one person over another. Christ said that the Father in heaven "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust". (Matthew 5:45). All are invited to come to the Lord. (Matthew 11:28-30). Those who obey him become one according to John 17:20-23. As such there are no

rich and poor, Jew or Gentile, male or female, or other such distinction, but all are one in Christ. (Galatians 3:28). If one is lost in this world and in the world to come it will not be because God rejected him but it will be because he rejected God.

While God is no respecter of persons, it is another matter with the human race. Man makes all kinds of distinctions. He divides up according to nations, languages, colours of skin, education, profession, and material gain that one may have. In a country, divisions may be made on the basis of what part of the country one comes from, his mother tongue, his tribe, his caste, and many other such things. One group of people may be favoured over another. Partiality is often shown in giving out jobs. Minorities and the poor are generally looked down on or rejected. This can be very humiliating. It is sad indeed that man treats his fellow-man in such a shameful way. This grows out of the fact that there are always some who think that they are better than others. They feel superior to those around them. They shun and frown on those they feel that are inferior to them. Such people then develop an inferiority complex and this hinders them for the rest of their lives. A lot of people never associate with each other or have anything to do with one another socially because of the different classes they have placed themselves in. Again, what a shame; What a pity!

The word respect means to treat with consideration, to show esteem, to honor. As individuals, the respect that we may receive from others often depends on the way we conduct ourselves, that is, how we live, the kind of language we use, our attitude, our honesty, and so on. Sometimes it takes time to establish ourselves in our profession, as well as in other areas of life, to gain the respect of those around us. This may be true even in the Christian life, and especially with those who would be preachers. We may have lived very bad lives, disgraced our family members, and made such an impression on the people in general that even on being converted to Christ that it will take time to change the thinking of those who know us. They will be waiting to see what changes will be brought about in our lives. But if we will continue to be faithful to Christ, and be patient, we can convince them that

we are serious.

We have a problem here in India, and in Asia as a whole, with the people not respecting their local preachers. On the other hand, they seem to prefer foreign preachers. If they have a choice, they would prefer the foreigner when it comes to preaching, baptizing them, and in being assisted in other ways. Why is this? The local man should be preferred over all others. He is one of the people, speaks the language, knows the culture, and understands the problems and needs of those around him. In spite of that, he is often rejected. But again, why is this so?

It would seem that when the missionaries first come to this country that they sought to reach the people through social programmes and as a result of that this attracted many people. Men who wanted to preach were drawn to them and often they became nothing more than hirelings. They were then viewed as insincere, preaching only for pay, changing from one group to another for an increase in salary, not living a good and godly life, having very little interest in dealing with those who were members of their church. They also saw for years, and still to some extent today in some places, the local preachers as being but assistance to the foreign preachers. Because of all of this then the people over the years have found it very difficult to have much respect for such preachers. Of course there have been some exceptions, but this has often held true. At the same time, the people saw the missionary as being one who came from a foreign land. He was sent to them. Someone thought enough of him to send him and his family. He was sincere enough, and dedicated enough, to leave his home country behind and to bring his family to a foreign land to work among them. They respected him for this. They believed he was a good man. They accepted him as an honest man, and one who would tell them the truth, one who was interested in them, and one who would help them. He was a hard worker and was willing to spend his life among them and to die in their midst. Therefore, they preferred him over the local preacher.

With the passing of the years, some of the local preachers, although in religious error, have managed to show by their manner

of life that they are sincere, that they are good men who are doing their best to live good lives, that they are honest and have an interest in helping their people, and they have so prepared and trained themselves so as to become excellent speakers and leaders. Therefore, they have gained the respect of their people and are highly esteemed. Many others, however, have not reached this point yet. Some even continue to abuse and degrade the ministry. They are willing to preach for the church that will give the biggest salary. They are interested only in money and position. They are lazy, dishonest, and have no interest in the people. Instead of helping them, they abuse them, mistreat them, have no time for them, and take advantage of them. There are some who go around monthly to collect a few rupees from this one, that one, and by seeing enough people like this, they are able to earn enough to make a living for themselves and their families. But it is because of men like these that a lot of the people to this day have no respect whatsoever for local preachers.

Preachers in the Lord's church are faced with the same problem. It is embarrassing, humiliating, and discouraging for them to be shunned and rejected in favour of a foreign preacher, but that is the way it is, and of course they have grown up in this type of society and they know how the people think about these kind of things. If they are genuinely converted to Christ, are showing by the way they live that they are truly following Christ, and they are sincere in their preaching, then over a period of time they will gradually gain the confidence and respect of more and more of those among whom they work. But it will take time. Their relatives, friends, and the people in general will be observing their lives, how they react to different situations, what their attitude is toward them, and if they are practicing what they preach. That is why a man becomes more effective in the Lord's work with the passing of years, in that he needs time to show to the world what kind of person he is, and that he is one that they can come to for help and guidance in spiritual matters.

I have often wondered myself why the local people preferred foreign preachers over local preachers, but I think the things that have been discussed explains why this is so. In the last twenty

years I think I can say that I have personally seen a number of preachers here in India grow and develop along the lines mentioned, and as a result they are growing in stature, esteem, honor, and respect in the eyes of their brethren and the general public. Some of these have been preaching most of this time. They have given their time to the Lord's work. The families are Christians. Some of them have been radio speakers in different languages for our radio programmes. Some of them have had a number of their radio sermons printed in book form. Others have written for our magazines. They have grown tremendously in their knowledge of God's word and in their ability to preach it. They conduct Bible correspondence courses, preach in meetings, convert souls, baptize them, perform marriages, conduct funerals, and do all the many things that a preacher of God's word has to do. I am thankful for these brethren, and in time the local brethren will appreciate them more and more. Some already greatly respect them, but their stature is still growing. With the passing of time, there will be more preachers like these.

God is no respecter of persons and neither should we be. But to be accepted of God, we must obey him. And to be accepted as preachers, and even as Christians, we must prove ourselves. Remember again that if we are lost it will not be because God has rejected us but because we rejected him. And as preachers and teachers, and Christians in general, let us so conduct ourselves and do the work the Lord has given us to do so that we will not only please God but that we will even have the respect of our fellowman.



**associate
editorial**

"The Church of Christ Believes in Water Salvation"

I don't think there is any other particular teaching of the

Bible has been so much openly rejected and attacked than the doctrine of baptism. At this time we are not discussing Holy Spirit baptism which was promised to the Apostles by Jesus (Acts 1:1-8), but we are talking about the water baptism that Jesus commanded in his great commission. After his death and resurrection and just before he was received up into heaven, Jesus commanded his disciples, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16). Nothing could be more plainer than this. To be saved, Jesus said, one must believe and be baptized. The disciples were to go everywhere and preach the gospel to all people, and then those who would hear and believe the gospel should be baptized. For what? To be saved. Because Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This is what the church of Christ believed and practised in the beginning and this is exactly what the church of Christ is doing today. We are preaching the gospel of Christ and telling people to believe and to be baptized to be saved. Is it wrong? However, since the church of Christ teach this fact, our friends in denominational churches have often accused the church of Christ that the church of Christ believes in water salvation. I wonder how can such people even claim to be Christians, when they do not believe in what Christ said. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord," said Jesus, "and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

Matthew tells us about a centurion, a gentile, in Matthew 8 chapter, and says that even Jesus marvelled at his faith which he had in Jesus. He says, "And when Jesus entered Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented, And Jesus saith unto him I will come and heal him. the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having

soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this. and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 8:5-12). Not only do we see in this story that the centurion humbled himself before Christ and accepted his authority, but his faith in Christ was so great that Jesus marvelled. He said, Speak the word only, and I know that my servant will be healed. He believed in Jesus' word, he believed that whatsoever Jesus would say it would be done. So his faith was great. Jesus said, not the church of Christ, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and if we believe in Jesus then we must believe in his word. Shouldn't we?

When Peter and the other Apostles preached Christ's gospel in Jerusalem, and when people who heard them preach asked them what they should do, the Bible says, Peter told them to repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and then the record says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls". (Acts 2:37-41). If you were there, suppose, in the multitude of three thousand people that day, what would you have done? Saul, before he became the Apostle Paul, was told by a preacher, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16). There are many other examples in the New Testament which show that people were baptized immediately after they heard and believed the gospel. Eunuch even insisted that Philip should baptise him, when Philip preached Christ to him. We read, "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down

both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:36-39). Why were they all baptized immediately, soon after they heard the gospel and believed in Christ? because they were told what Christ has said, that one must believe and be baptized to be saved.

When one is baptized in water he doesn't believe that water would save him but rather he believes Jesus would save him when he would obey his command. Jesus is the saviour, not water, but Jesus saves those who obey his commands. (Hebrews 5:8, 9). A John 9 we are told, Jesus healed a man who was blind from his birth. How did he do that? We read, Jesus spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and then annointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and then he commanded the blind man to go and wash his eyes. What happened then? The record says, he went and washed his eyes and came seeing. He got new eyes. How? Because he obeyed the command of Christ. Not because of the clay or the water with which he washed his eyes, but because he did what Jesus told him to do. But what if the man had refused to obey the command of Christ? Would he be healed? Certainly not. Then what of those who refuse to be baptize today, will they be saved? Surely not. Because Christ has promised to save them who would believe and would be baptized.

Ruth

Dennis Gullede

"And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth 1:16.

Sometimes the very life of an individual is a lesson in itself.

For this reason we want to look into the life of one of God's greatest woman, Ruth. What made Ruth the unique character that she was? May we suggest just a few of the qualities that made her great.

Ruth had an undying devotion to her family. Ruth and her sister-in-law Orpah were married to the two sons of Naomi. After the passing of their husbands, Ruth and Orpah were encouraged to go back to their home land. Ruth chose to remain in the company of Naomi. The beautiful statement of her devotion is found in Ruth 1:16, 17. So many young people are alienated from their families. There are various reasons for this. Sometimes it is of a young persons own choosing. Young people should develop a closeness to their families.

Ruth recognized the value of work. She gleaned in the fields of Boaz. Not only did she gather food for herself, but she always carried some back to Naomi. Today, we live in a world with a "gimme gimme" attitude. Some people expect every blessing to be handed to them with nothing done on their part to deserve it. There is a dignity in work that we must not forget.

Ruth prepared herself for a future and a family. Ruth was to marry Boaz, a near relation to her departed husband. Boaz took an early interest in Ruth when he noticed her devotion to work and family. After Ruth and Boaz were married, there was born to them a son named Obed, who was the grandfather of David, king of Israel.

There are many great women mentioned in the Bible. Ruth is certainly one. How did Ruth win her great recognition from God? By simply fulfilling her role as wife, mother and provider, while living a faithful life before God. Today, the preference of many young women is so diametrically opposed to God's way that it has become unpopular to speak from the Bible on this matter. But, we hope that the pressures of society will not hinder young ladies of the church of Christ from being what they ought to be.

A Poll of Hell

Grady Miller

Most of us are familiar with the Gallup Poll, the Harris Poll, the Roper Poll, and others of the same nature. A poll may be defined as a survey of opinion...a questionnaire designed to determine how a certain group of people feel on a particular issue. Because of our frequent elections we have all been made aware of the presence of these various polls.

While this article is somewhat imaginative, it is based upon Scriptural teachings. The Bible declares that heavenly mansions await the children of God (John 14); on the other hand, it also affirms that eternal misery in a devil's hell will be the punishment of all those who are lost. Now then, suppose for a moment that we could take a survey of hell and ask the question, "Why are you here?" We might think of it as a poll of hell. In other words, what can cause our souls to be condemned for all eternity?

No doubt there are many reasons why the lost will be condemned but we would like to consider a few. First of all, outright unbelief will be the reason why countless millions will be in hell. The Bible teaches that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6); Jesus declared that "If ye believe not that I am he (that is, the Son of God) ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). Therefore, many will be lost simply because they do not believe in the true God and His only begotten Son. No doubt this is why Jesus commanded His disciples to "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15).

Another factor which will surely contribute to the population of hell is wickedness. We may be assured that if our God is our own belly; if we are concerned only about the base and vulgar elements of this world our doom is sealed. Jesus revealed unto John that "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and

all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). A revolting catalogue of the works of the flesh is found in Galatians chapter 5; the Scriptures contend that if we practice these things "we shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

In the third place, stubbornness will cause many to be lost. How frustrating it is to see those who stop their ears to keep from hearing the truth, as did Stephen's assailants. The same judgment could be given to these people today, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." (Acts 7:51).

And then perhaps the most tragic reason of all: neglect. The author of Hebrews asked a most pertinent question in chapter 2, verse 3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" The answer should be obvious to us all; there is no escape if we put off our salvation until it is everlastingly too late. One does not have to be a thief or a murderer to be lost. All one has to do is nothing; simply neglecting to do that which is right will cause us to be lost. How many will be condemned that knew what to do, but somehow, for some reason or another, never got around to do it? Let each one of us determine to be busy doing God's will; remember, "the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). By doing this, we can be assured that our eternal destiny will be one of bliss, not torment.

Salvation By Faith

John Stacy

Most all denominational preachers affirm that the alien sinner is saved by faith. At the moment he believes in Jesus, he is saved. For proof they offer verses such as John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Romans 5:1 is also held out as proof for this theory: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The most often quoted verses to teach salvation by faith only are Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of itself, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." Let us learn that these verses teach that we are saved "by faith" and not "at faith." There is a difference and the difference is the difference between right and wrong, truth and error, heaven and hell!

That we are saved by faith, no Biblical student would deny. The verses we have quoted teach salvation by faith, but not by faith only. (See also Mk. 16:16; Heb. 11:8-9, 17, 20, 29-30).

What does salvation by faith include? To answer the question, we shall examine Bible examples of conversion in the book of Acts.

First of all let us consider the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47). We can sum it by noting Acts 2:36-38, 41, 44. These verses say, "Let all of the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter answered and said unto them, repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ to the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. They then that gladly received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And all that believed were together and had all things common."

Note: those who obeyed the gospel on Pentecost were called believers! The word "believe" is used in an all-inclusive sense to denote those who obeyed the Apostolic command to repent and be baptized. This word describes those who had received the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and those who were added by the Lord to the church (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14). This is what salvation by faith includes!

Secondly, the conversion of the Samaritans. In Acts 8:5 Luke penned, "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." Philip's preaching was designed to produce faith, for "faith, cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). Acts 8:12 says, "But when they believed Philip preaching the good tidings concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." What did their belief lead them to do?

First, they believed the good news concerning the Kingdom of God. Jesus had a lot to say about the Kingdom of God. In Matthew 18:3 Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." To Nicodemus Jesus said, "...verily, I say unto you, except a man be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God...except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:3, 5). In the Sermon on the Mount Christ taught, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." (Matthew 6:33). One cannot preach Jesus Christ without preaching the church-kingdom! (Matthew 16:18-19).

Secondly, they believed the good tidings about the name of Jesus. The word "name" stands for one's "character, rank, authority or majesty." Peter earlier in Acts 4:12 said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Paul later wrote, "And whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." To do something in Jesus' name is to do it by His authority. Our Lord declared, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." (Matthew 28:18).

Thirdly, the Samaritans believed the good news about water baptism! Why not? Philip preached Jesus and Jesus preached the essential of baptism. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19). He also said, "He that believeth and is the baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16). Thus, salvation by faith includes entrance into the kingdom of God, through faith in the character of Jesus and by baptism.

The third example of conversion is that of the Ethiopian Eunuch. (Acts 8:26-40). Notice in particular Acts 8:35-39 which states, "Philip opened his mouth and beginning at that same scripture preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water and the eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip answered and said, if thou believest, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him, and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing." This Person heard Jesus preached (v. 35). He believed what he heard (v. 37). He was immersed in water, or baptized (v. 38-39). He rejoiced only after he came up out of the watery grave to arise to walk in newness of life. (v. 39, Rom. 6:3-5). Surely, from the conversion examples of the Samaritans and the Ethiopian Eunuch, we learn that you can't preach Jesus and leave out what most of the world does not believe is essential for salvation—BAPTISM!

Fourthly, there is the conversion of those in Antioch. Acts 11:21 tells us, "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord." Note: believers in this text, "turned"...Acts 3:19 says, "Repent ye therefore, and turn again that your sins may be blotted out..." (ASV). The King James Version of the Bible uses the word "converted" which means, "to turn again." The point is, that though repentance involves turning, we learn from Acts 3:19 that the turning is something else. What could it be? Well, what follows repentance? Acts 2:38 tells us that it is baptism! Thus, the turning in Acts 11:21 is baptism. Baptism brings one "into or unto Christ" (Gal. 3:27, Rom. 6:3-5).

In the fifth place there is the conversion of the Philippian Jailor. Acts 16:30-34 gives us this story. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. And they spake unto him, the word of the Lord with all that were in his house. And he took

them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them up into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Luke said in verse 34 that the Jailor "believed in God," Once again we see the word "believed" used in an all-inclusive sense. It includes hearing, faith and baptism which was undergone, straightway, immediately, or the same hour of the night. Notice that the Jailor and his house rejoiced after their baptism like the Ethiopian Eunuch! (See also Acts 3:39).

The Salvation of the Corinthians is our sixth example of conversion which teaches us what salvation by faith includes. In Acts 18:8 Luke sums up the Corinthian's salvation by saying, "And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." The word of God which they heard from Paul produced faith (Rom. 10:17) and motivated them to be baptized as Jesus had commanded every creature in every nation to do (Mk. 16:15-16; Matthew 28:19).

Finally, we look at the redemption of the Ephesians. In Ephesians 2:8-9 Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast." What does salvation by grace through faith include? Acts 19:1-5; 20:21 and Ephesians 1:15 will answer the question. From these texts we learn that there were twelve disciples in Ephesus who did not know about the Holy Ghost. They had received John's baptism which was no longer valid after Pentecost. John's baptism pointed to the coming of Christ. New Testament baptism points back to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Rom. 6:3-6, Col. 2:12). John's baptism was in no name and did not put one into someone or something. New Testament baptism was in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and added one to the church or put a person into Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:47; Gal. 3:27).

The Ephesians were a people, "...who heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation..." (Eph. 1:13). They were also told to believe and repent (Acts 20:21). We know so well, that

they were baptized into the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins and for the washing away of sins. (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

Here is a clear cut example of people being rebaptized for the proper purpose. Millions have had water sprinkled over them or poured on them. Millions have even been immersed believing that they were saved at the moment they believed. All Bible examples of conversion ended in having one's body buried in the watery grave, arising to walk in the newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5).

Certainly there is no power in the water to wash away sins. The blood of Christ is what washes away sins (Rev. 1:15). Baptism is WHEN sins are washed away and the blood is WHAT washed away sins. (Acts 22:16).

Let us learn that baptism without faith, repentance, and confession will avail nothing! Repentance is faith willing! Confession is faith telling! Baptism is faith acting!

Have you been saved by faith? Notice, I did not say by faith only, John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This verse does not teach salvation by faith alone! It teaches that a believer will be given the power to BECOME a child of God!

If you will follow the Bible examples of salvation by faith in the book of Acts, you will become what those people became and you then will be added by the Lord to the same Church they were added to—the Lord's

Are You A Peacemaker ?

Margie Overton

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be

called the children of God." (Matthew 5:9). These words should remind us of the role we should play in the lives of others. We should try to heed the teaching of Romans 12:18, which says, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

If it be possible! This expression implies that it can not always be done, but we certainly must try to the very best of our abilities to do what is right to bring about such peace.

At all times we should display the Christian's attitude of endeavouring to preserve peace; and we should do our best to appease the anger and malice of others. We should never begin a quarrel, but remember that as Christians we are to seek peace. "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." (Psalm 34:14.)

As Christians we must at all times bear in mind that we are followers of Jesus Christ. He came that we might enjoy peace. He said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you..."

There may be times when others may oppose and persecute us. They may slander and revile us. We know the world hates us, because the world hated Jesus. When we follow him we can be sure the world will not approve of what we are doing.

If we would not irritate or try to prolong a controversy it would help to put an end to bitter feelings.

Solomon said, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with." (Proverbs 17:14).

An English proverb says, "An ounce of prevention, is worth a pound of cure." Quarrels and hard feelings that go on for a long time, might have been prevented in the beginning by kindness. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." (Proverbs 15:1).

Our peace must have an inward direction. Our main concern should be to have peace in our own souls and lives. How can one be a peacemaker unless he has peace in himself?

We cannot share peace with others if we do not possess it. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14).

The peacemakers are called the sons of God because they are the children of their Father in heaven, living out their lives in simple obedience to his will. Those who have peace show it through their lives as well as their words.

Do you have peace within? Are you at peace with others? Do you have peace with God?

What Is Happiness ?

Corda L. Underwood

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth forever." (Psalm 146:5-6).

Happiness is something everyone wants but very few possess! One cannot directly search for happiness. Why? It comes as a by-product. Someone has said, "Happiness is something that comes as a surprise companion to that which is the real goal." Happiness is a state of mind rather than surrounding circumstances. It cannot be found in things. The apostle Paul was happy and rejoicing while in a Roman prison, and at the same time, the emperor could not find happiness with all his wealth, power and possessions!

Jesus, the master teacher, tells us in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, verses 3 through 12, that happiness does not depend

on what we have but upon what we are! It is my conviction that far too many people depend upon material things for happiness. Such as: a newer car, a stereo set, a larger house, etc. Jesus teaches that goodness precedes happiness. People are at their happiest when they are living in harmony with the word of God.

The person who lives solely for self will never attain happiness. It is the serving of others that brings happiness. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35). Happy people are never trying to be happy; mostly, they are busy helping other and happiness finds them. When we learn the lesson of giving self, everything else will follow.

Happiness will come to those who deal constructively with the problems that confront them. Running away or denying that problems exist always brings remorse and recrimination. If you want to be happy, and I know you are interested, or you would not have read this far, note carefully: It is not so much what is done to us, but **WHAT WE DO** that determines our character, our destiny, and our happiness! Follow God's plan: deny self, obey God and serve others!

An Old Proverb

An old proverb says, "Riches got by deceit cheat no man so much as the getter." Unjust riches curse the owner in getting, in keeping, and in transmitting; they curse his children in their father's memory. All wealth that is accumulated by meanness and the denial of reasonable comforts and enjoyments to family or children, may be classed among those that are gotten by unfair means. Those who thus hoard money are deaf to all the appeals of the homeless, the friendless, and the orphan. They take no part in works of charity and good-will to their fellow mortals. We never see them aiding or countenancing the establishment of orphan asylums or homes for the sick and destitute. And when they die, the curse that has fallen upon their hoarded riches very

often makes it only the means for riotous living and the ultimate degradation of those who might otherwise have become good and useful citizens.

The Sin Of Sodomy

Leonard Johnson

"For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed 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 with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due." (Romans 1:26, 27).

The Lord condemns sodomy or homosexuality in no uncertain terms. He describes such as "vile"—that is, "wretchedly bad, morally debased, depraved, despicable, foul, filthy" passion.

Despite what is being said today about homosexuality being normal, natural, and innocent, God says that it is unnatural. The Lord says that in homosexuality the woman changes "the natural use into that which is against nature," and that men leave "the natural use of the woman" when they "burn in their lust one toward another," and work that which is unseemly. (Romans I: 26, 27).

According to ancient authors of good repute, long before Paul wrote the Roman letter, the sin of sodomy or homosexuality was widely practised. In fact, it was so wide-spread among the ancients that many of their legislators, priests, and philosophers were sodomites.

The Christian must form his judgment of right and wrong, sin and righteousness, by what God has revealed in his word, the Holy Bible. Though for the sake of conformity one may be

tempted to accept society's standards of right and wrong, yet one who believes in God's infinite wisdom and absolute authority must acknowledge God's standard of right and wrong. So long as God is God and his word is the standard of right and wrong sodomy will be wrong, sinful, beyond any question or doubt, and those who practice such will receive "in themselves that recompense of their error which is due." (Romans 1:27).

SODOMY AMONG WOMEN

"For this cause, (because the Gentiles had exchanged the truth for a lie, and had worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator) God gave them up to vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature." (Romans 1:26).

Today women who practice sodomy are called lesbians. Long before Paul wrote Romans, this sin was widely practised among women.

Lesbians say that sex relations of woman with woman is natural and normal, and that every one should accept such behaviour as normal and innocent.

The Lord said in Romans 1:26 that women had changed something that was "natural" into that which was "against nature,"—unnatural. Something was "against nature" or unnatural.

What is meant by the "natural use" which the woman had changed into that which is "against nature"—unnatural? If homosexuality is natural, then woman's sex relations with man is unnatural, against nature. This verse teaches that it is natural for woman to have sexual relations with man, and that it is against nature, unnatural, for her to have such relations with another woman.

So long as the Bible is the truth of God, lesbianism will be against nature, unnatural, and will be considered by the Lord as

“vile,” that is, “wretchedly bad, morally debased, depraved, or despicable, foul, filthy.”

No law of men, no amount of public acceptance, and no brazen, arrogance can sanctify sodomy among either women or men.

WHAT GOD SAYS IN OTHER PASSAGES ABOUT SODOMY

Those who respect God accept his word as final in all things pertaining to life and godliness. Though homosexuality is gaining in popularity in America and in some other Countries too, yet God's people look to the word of the Lord to determine whether homosexuality is right or wrong.

Let us now turn to other passages in the Bible and see what the Lord says about sodomy. Jude verse seven summarizes the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah and the subsequent punishment in these words: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh (practised sodomy), are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire.”

Leviticus 18:22 says, “Thou shalt not lie down with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination.”

And again, we read in Leviticus 20:15, “And if a man lie with mankind as with womankind, both of them have committed abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.” This verse does not read like many modern magazines or sound like some of the palaver heard on radio and television.

According to Deuteronomy 23:17: “There shall be no prostitute of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite of the sons of Israel.”

Among the sins of Rehoboam, the first king of Judah, was his allowing immorality to run rampant. In I Kings 14:24 we read:

"...and there were also sodomites in the land: they did according to all the abominations of the nations which Jehovah drove out before the children of Israel."

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9, Revised Standard Version).

To Timothy, Paul wrote saying, "Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, immoral persons, sodomites, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine..." (1 Timothy 1:8-10 Revised Standard Version).

CONCLUSION

The scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, condemn homosexuality in the strongest of language. Sodomy is not just another innocent, acceptable life-style; it is among the basest, vilest, most degrading and abominable of all moral conduct. No amount of explanation can make homosexuality right or acceptable in the sight of God or of those who respect his word. Only turning away from the practice of such in genuine repentance can take away its guilt.

The Proof Is In The Performance

Edsel Burleson

Christian living is living so others may see Christ in us. Paul said: "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." (Galatians 2:20.) Peter instructed: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (1 Peter 1:21). It is by our performance that we prove our Christianity.

I read recently of a young man who was leaving home for the first time and was being encouraged by his mother. She said, "Son, you will face temptations and people of the world may mock you when they see that you are a Christian." The boy replied, "Don't worry Mom, I won't let them find out."

It is easy to profess to being a Christian when things are going smoothly or when it will bring comfort or a bit of help. But the real proof is in the doing.

Wendell Winkler tells the story of the great violinist, Fritz Kreisler, who, while traveling had several hours to spend between trains, so he went into a music store. He laid his violin case, which had his name on it, on the counter. The storekeeper, seeing the name, thought the musician's violin had been stolen, and called the police.

Upon their arrival they went about to arrest Kreisler, thinking he was a thief. All the time, Kreisler was insisting that he was no thief, but that he was the real Fritz Kreisler.

Finally, he asked the storekeeper if he had one of Kreisler's recordings. He did have, and the record was played. Upon completion of the record, Kreisler opened the case, removed the instrument and played the same piece. The storekeeper apologized in embarrassment and the policemen quietly left the store. The performance had proved his profession.

An anonymous poet expressed it very scripturally in these words:

If a man would be a soldier,
He'd expect of course to fight;
And he couldn't be an author,

If he didn't try to write,

So it isn't common logic,

Doesn't have the right true ring

That a man to be a Christian

Doesn't have to do a thing.

If a man would be a hunter,

He must go among the trees;

And he couldn't be a sailor,

If he didn't sail the seas.

How strange for any person

To think perhaps that he

Can fail to work and worship,

And a faithful Christian be!

"He Missed One Service"

David Johnson

Recently, Paul Harvey reported on a 73 year old man who was pinned beneath his farm tractor for four days and nights in driving rain and freezing temperatures. Concerned friends finally went to see about him, apparently just in time. It seems as though he is going to survive his ordeal although he will lose a leg below the knee.

Although the reported was center upon the amazing fact that this 73 year old man could live after being pinned beneath a tractor for four days and nights, a more amazing fact to me is what caused his friends to go see about him. What caused these people to go see about him? He missed "prayer meeting." That's all. He missed one service. I believe there are to possible suppositions we can make about this incident.

On the one hand we could suppose that this man was so faithful and regular in his church attendance that everyone knew if

he was not there, something had to be seriously wrong. A question. What if you had been the one pinned under the tractor? Would your absence have been noticed? Or, are you so irregular in attendance that everyone would assume you decided to sleep in, or go to the lake? How many services have you missed in the last three months? Could you honestly classify yourself as a faithful, regular worshipper?

On the other hand, we could assume that the people in this man's congregation had such a concern for the souls of men that when anyone, no matter how regular or irregular, missed a service, they went to see about them. It is sad to say but this characteristic is solely lacking in many congregations for our Lord's church today. What do you do when you notice someone is missing from services? What does your Bible class do when roll is called and no one answers for "so-and-so." I fear that this man under the tractor might have died if he had been worshipping at some congregations, for no one would have cared enough to check on him.

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another." (Hebrews 10:25 NIV).

"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Matthew 18:12).

Leave Your Monument

Thousands of men breathe, move and live, pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? Because they did not partake of good in the world, and none were blessed by them; none could point to them as the means of their relief from distress; not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled; and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than insects of yesterday.

Will you thus live and die, O man immortal? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy, on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year; you will then never be forgotten. No; your name, your deeds will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.

The New Birth

J.C. Choate

Christ said that one must be born of water and of the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3-5). Some say the water here has reference to the physical birth but Christ corrected Nicodemus on this when he thought likewise. Others say that this is symbolic water. If so Christ would have referred to it as living water or would have used some other word to have suggested that it was figurative language. If this be true, then we must conclude that since he didn't then this must be literal water. Now, what other act or command in the New Testament is associated with literal water? It would be baptism, of course. (Acts 8:26-39; Romans 6:3, 4; Colossians 2:12). Therefore, the Spirit works through the word to lead one to be baptized, or buried in the water, and in coming out of that water then it can be said that he has been born of water and of the Spirit. He is then a new creature in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17). He has been born into the kingdom of God or the church. (1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:47). **Have you been born again, scripturally?**