

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

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## The Temple Of God

All of us know that a temple is usually thought of as a place of worship. In Old Testament times, God's people worshipped in what was called a tabernacle. A tabernacle was a temporary dwelling place. God had the Israelites, those who had been delivered out of Egypt, to make a tabernacle out of tents and materials that he prescribed. It was designed on the order of the temple which would be built later. It had the Holy place and the Holy of Holies where God dwelt. The Israelites would enter the tabernacle to worship by offering their sacrifices, and the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies once a year to speak to God on behalf of the people. Many years later the temple was constructed in Jerusalem and then Jews from all over the world would come once a year, if possible, to worship God in the temple.

The temple was still being used in the days of Christ, but with his coming it would soon be a thing of the past. While visiting in a Samaritan village, Jesus had a conversation with the woman at the well where he had gone to get water. We read, "The woman

saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:19-24).

With the death of Christ on the cross, we are told that the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. (Matthew 27:51). This signified that Christ had taken out of the way the old law to give a new one, that the temple would no longer be a place to meet God, but that he would from henceforth dwell in his people, and the religion of God would no longer be Judaism but Christianity. Therefore, from that day to this, the temple of God has been the follower of Christ, the human body, and the spiritual body of Christ, the dwelling place of God.

While Christ was still living, he said to those around him, "Destroy this temple. and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19). When Christ was crucified, there were those who mocked, saying, "...Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." (Mark 15:29,30). Those who heard Christ make that statement thought he was talking about the literal temple there in Jerusalem. They knew that it had taken many years to build it and they could not conceive of anyone destroying it and then rebuilding it within three days. Of course Christ was not talking about that temple, but rather his body, where God dwelt. He was saying that even though it be destroyed or crucified that after three days he would restore it, that is, he would come forth from the grave, and that he did.

Even after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the Jews as a whole continued to go to the temple in Jerusalem to worship. This went on until 70 A.D. when Jerusalem, and the temple, were destroyed. It has never been reconstructed.

The followers of Christ, however, were not only familiar with the temple in Jerusalem but they also knew of the temple of Diana at Ephesus (Acts 19:27), the heathen and pagan temples of Athens (Acts 17), and throughout the world. In contrast to this, Paul proclaimed to the Christians at Corinth, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:16,17). Again, he said, to the same Corinthian Christians, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19,20). In these verses of scripture, speaking to Christians, we are told that the physical body is the temple of God. It is the temple of God because God and the Spirit dwell in it, and God and the Spirit dwell in it because it has been bought with a price; that is, through obedience to God, it has been cleansed and purified by the blood of Christ. In Matthew 28:19,20, Christ said that he would be with the Christian and in Colossians 1:27 we are told that as children of God, Christ dwells in us. Therefore, we belong to the Lord (Acts 20:28) and as such we are to keep our bodies clean, pure, and holy, not doing anything that would defile or destroy them. If our bodies serve as a dwelling place for God, Christ, and the Spirit, then surely we should want to preserve our bodies for their abode.

Then as a group of Christians, making up the local church or congregation of the Lord's people, the church itself is described as the temple of God. Speaking to the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22). Here the writer is describing the church as being the household of God or the family of God, built upon Christ as the chief corner stone, with Christ being in the church and the church being in Christ. Therefore, the

church is spoken of as being the temple of God. That means also that the church belongs to the Lord and that he dwells in and through the church which is his spiritual body.

Does Christ dwell in you? Does he dwell in the church of which you are a member? If not then you do not belong to the Lord and that means that you are lost. Let me encourage you to obey God by believing in him, by repenting of your sins, by confessing him as the Son of God, and by being baptized in water for the remission of your sins. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). On doing this, Christ will save you and add you to his church. (Acts 2:47). As such he will come to live with you as an individual. You will also be a member of the church and he will dwell in the church, and serve as its saviour and head. Both as a Christian and the church, God's dwelling place, they are to be kept pure and holy to the honor and glory of God.



**associate  
editorial**

## Did You Ever Think?

Through our literature and also through our radio broadcasts you should have noticed that we teach only the New Testament Christianity, that is, the Christianity which is revealed in the New Testament of the Bible. Also you should have noticed the fact that we urge people to obey what the New Testament of Christ teaches, and nothing less and nothing more than that. We speak against man-made religious commands and traditions and creed books of men, and plead with all people to follow the New Testament of Christ only and to be only Christians and members of the church that Jesus Christ himself promised to build (Matthew 16:18), and actually built of on the day pentecost (a Jews feast dey), in A.D. 33, in the city of Jerusalem, when about 3000 people were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins and as a result of their obedience to

the Lord's command the Lord added them into the number of his disciples, the apostles, which became his church, the called out body of the saved people. (Acts 1:1-9; Acts 2:37-47).

We have pointed out to you that the denominationalism is wrong because it means division, which is contrary to the plan and teaching of God. (John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13). God hates division (Proverbs 6:19), he is not the author of it (1 Corinthians 14:33). He wants unity among all His people. For the unity of all the believers of Jesus Christ God through His Son and the Son through the apostles has revealed a perfect plan of oneness which is written for us in Ephesians 4:1-6.

According to the Bible it is very simple to become a Christian and a member of the church of Christ anywhere in any age. Jesus said, and he is the saviour, that to be saved one must believe in him and be baptized, (buried in water for the forgiveness of sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost—Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-5), in Mark 16:16. This is exactly what the people on the day of Pentecost did, and as a result of their obedience to the Lord's command the Lord himself, added, them to THE CHURCH, and it also says there that those who would be saved by doing the same thing the Lord would add them too to his church in the same way. (Acts 2:38, 47). His church wears his name (Romans 16:16), and his church, that is, the saved people in his spiritual body, worship alike as His New Testament teaches, (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7), without the help of any man-made books, such as Manuals, discipline, or catechism, etc. The church of Christ does not have a doctrine of its own, but the church abides in the doctrine of Christ which is the New Testament of Christ. (2 John 9). In the church of Jesus Christ there are no Fathers, Reverends, or special Priests. (Matthew 23:8-12). All Christians are brothers and sisters. In the church of Christ preachers are never called Pastors or incharge of the church, but they are ministers of the gospel. When in a congregation of the Lord's church, however, there are men qualified, through the study of God's word and by being faithful to the Lord, according to 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9, then they are appointed to serve as elders and deacons in the congregation where they are members. Elders take care of the spiritual matters of the

church and deacons likewise take care of the physical matters of the church under the supervision of the elders. The church of Christ does not follow any commands and traditions of men. (Matthew 15:8, 9). But the Lord's church believee in rightly dividing the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15), and speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent. (1 Peter 4:11). From the beginning the church of Christ has preached only one gospel which is the death and the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ the Lord, (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 1:-6-9), and those who hear the gospel and wants to be saved by it to them the answer is given, that they should believe in Jesus Christ and repent of their sins and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins, as the Lord Jesus and his inspired apostles commanded. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

Did you ever think of becoming a New Testament Christian and a member of the church of Christ? You need not to be a Catholic or a Protestant, in fact, you should never become one, because you can become just a Christian and a member of the church of Christ, by believing in Christ and repenting of your sins and by being baptized for the forgiveness of your sins. However, if you are already a Catholic or a Protestant you too can become a New Testament Christian and a member of the church of Christ. In this case you already are a believer, but you need to repent, that is, turn away from following men to following Christ through his New Testament. It also means to quit being a Catholic or a Protestant, accept that you have been religiously wrong so far and that now you want to be right religiously by doing what God says in His book. This is repentance. (Matthew 21:28-31). And then you also need to be baptized scripturally for the forgiveness of sins or wrongs. When you will do this the Lord will save you and will add you to his church and you will become a New Testament Christian and a member of the church of Christ. Remember, the Word of God warns by saying, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12). Christ is the only way. (John 14:6). Only he can lead us to heaven. We need to hear him (Matthew 17:5), and do what he says us to do (Matthew 7:21-27). I will be happy to hear from you if you want more information or need help for obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# The Glory To Be Ours When Saved By Hope

(Romans 8:18-25)

Martel Pace

This is another comforting part of Romans but one of the most controversial. We will not lessen that controversy by this article but probably add to it. One is particularly reminded of Peter's comment on Paul's writings when we come to this passage; some things are indeed "hard to understand." (II Peter 3:16).

It answers the question, "Is life worth living even with all its troubles?" Paul's answer is a positive, "Yes!" Why? "Because of the glory to be revealed in us." It may seem that we suffer so much here that we are not really God's children. Don't worry! All will be changed one day. Now read the text of Romans 8:18-25.

Romans 8:16-18 reaches the grand climax showing what the gospel provides. Even the sufferings endured provide a helpful benefit. It is difficult for us to imagine what it was like to be a Christian when Paul wrote. One was subject to mockery, scorn and false accusations. It was common to hear their Saviour denounced. They said he was the illegitimate son of a Nazarene girl and a Roman soldier. His followers were counted as fools, they lost their jobs, businesses and property. They were accused of eating babies in their Communion and of being atheists (they had no God that could be seen)!

But none of this would compare with the glory coming. It is truly a "light affliction" (II Cor. 4:17). It is light because the time is relatively short. It is light compared to the eternal reward's being so far more glorious.

What is the "creation" of Romans 8:19-23? One writer said there are eleven different views on this! Where there are so many different views it does not pay to be dogmatic. The problems are over "the creation," "first fruits of the Spirit" and "we our selves." Most make it apply to the *natural world*. Their view is that all animals and even vegetation is groaning, waiting for our revealing as God's sons! I have trouble believing my dog and my peach tree

are groaning until the whole world sees I am a child of God. Who can believe that? Claiming that Paul here uses poetic license is too much license for me.

The passage speaks of a glorious deliverance from death. Another view is that all creation suffered the curse of death because of Adam's sin. But where did we get the idea that death came upon animals and vegetables because of Adam's sin? Surely Adam and Eve could eat fruit before they sinned. Did big fish refuse to eat little fish until after the Fall?

It is silly to say of vegetables that they "were subject to futility but not of their own will" (8:20). They have no will of their own nor are they to be delivered to glory (8:21). This is hardly a "bold personification"; that would be too bold and too personifying to be sensible!

Remember the purpose: 8:19-23 was written to encourage Christians to endure suffering. With that in mind the word "creation" may be more readily explained. The footnote of the A.S.V. on II Cor. 5:17 says "creation" for "creature." It is the same word here as in Romans 8:19-22. Only Christians are concerned with the great event of v. 21b (being "delivered from the bondage of corruption"). The church was "created" in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:15, which has the verb form of "creation"). What Paul says in Romans 8:18-19 is true of the church and only of the church.

Who are the "ourselves" and "firstfruits of the Spirit"? (8:23). All Christians have the indwelling of the Spirit but it hardly seems appropriate to say that all Christians have the "firstfruits." The *latter* perhaps, but not the first fruits. "Firstfruits" alluded to the first and best of Israel's crops that were devoted to God. Certainly the apostles had the "firstfruits" and could perform amazing miracles as a result. Paul is saying, "Don't be surprised that the whole church suffers, because even we leaders of the church—the apostles—have to suffer and groan." They were even a "spectacle" to the world (I Cor. 4:9).

But things will balance out for our good (8:28). The tormentor, Nero, did not light his garden by burning on a cross as did



God's saints. He did die of his own hand on June 9, 68 A.D., while waiting for soldiers to take him away to be executed for his crimes. His last days were spent in terrible fear. He was only 31 year old! Two years short of our Lord's life. There is hope for the *creation* (God's church) who suffered and died but not for Nero.

We are saved in hope (8:20, 24-25). Other than Jesus, Paul was the world's greatest optimist. Worldly men lose all hope when they suffer. H. G. Wells was a wonderful optimist at the turn of the century when he felt evolution was lifting us all to a higher plane. But shortly before his death in 1944 he wrote: "Man, who began in a cave behind a wind-break, will end in disease soaked ruins of a slum." Such is the end of humanism; it will drive all to despair.

Paul saw the ruin of man's world, but he also saw hope. At the end he had an "eager expectation" (8:19). The word *apokaradokia* meant "a leaning forward, looking eagerly for the first rays of dawn's glory." Because of this hope, Paul could never be totally in despair.

How horrible is all the world's suffering! What if you could hear it all rolled together as God can. Who could stand the wail of the human race? The slaughtered Abels? The groaning of the wounded on all battlefields and even conquerors as they look at the price of victory? Titus at Jerusalem called God to account that the suffering was not his doing.

We don't see that hope yet (8:24), meaning we don't fully possess or enjoy it. We speak of "seeing a good time" or much sorrow or pain. We mean we haven't experienced these things. But that hope we have is truly our anchor of the soul that keeps us moving onward. Why hope for heaven? Because there our Father will wipe away our tears, where we will never die or decay, where we will never sorrow again. What a wonderful hope.

## Sin And Its Consequences

W Edwin Kearley

There is a tendency to reduce the effect of sin, especially our

own. Only God can estimate the enormity of sin. Since God is perfect he can see the offense of sin.

**WHAT IS SIN?** John wrote, "All unrighteousness is sin . . ." (I John 5:17). He also said, "Everyone that doeth sin doeth also law-lessness; and sin is law-lessness." (I John 3:4). When one violates his conscience, it is sin. Paul taught, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14:23). Doing nothing is sin. James penned, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (Jas. 4:17).

**SIN HAS TERRIBLE EFFECT UPON MAN.** This is seen in its consequences. Sin drove Adam and Eve from their paradise home, the garden of Eden. When Eve yielded to the devil's enticement to eat the forbidden fruit, she committed the sin that caused her and her husband, who also ate, to be cast out of the garden. Cain's punishment (Gen. 4:11-15) came to him because of his false worship. Abel had offered the lamb. This was offered by faith (Heb. 11:4). Cain's worship was an act of worship according to his will rather than God's. Without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6). Cain was told he was cursed from the earth. When he tilled the earth, it would not yield its strength. He was to be a fugitive and a wanderer. His reason was, "my punishment is greater than I can bear." (Gen 4:11-15).

The flood was a consequence of sin (Gen. 6). Other instances of sin and its effect are the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 18:20), Israel's fornication (I Cor. 10:8), Achan's sin (Joshua 7:16-26), and David's sin with Bathsheba (II Sam. 11:24; 12:15-23; Ps. 51:3).

The price of atonement shows the awfulness of sin. It cost the life's blood of God's only begotten Son. (John 3:16).

**WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN TO US?** It separates us from God. Isaiah stated the universal principle: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isa. 59:1-2). How keen is your sense of evil? At the university of Southern California, mice were

being prepared for a space flight: The mice were laboratory bred; for generations they had lived in captivity. None of them had ever seen a cat. Yet, whenever a few drops of cat scent were placed in one of two passageways, the mice refused to travel through the one that suggested a cat's presence. Some unknown instinct told the mice that cats are their enemies (Margaret J. Anderson, *Decision*, June 1970, Pg. 14). We must learn that sin is dangerous. Paul said, ". . . abhor that which is evil . . ." (Rom. 12:9).

Sin brings spiritual death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 5:19-20). The sinner often bears physical consequences. One comes to regret every bargain with sin. A twelve-year-old boy was talking to a crippled, old man who was sitting on the park bench. The boy asked, "why are you crippled?" The man replied, "A twelve-year-old boy did this to me." Immediately the boy became all eyes and ears; that was his age. "Yes," said the man, "when I was twelve years old, I began to use tobacco; now my lungs do not work properly. A few years later, I began to drink beer and then whiskey; that damaged my brain: Along with drinking and smoking, I began to gamble. Now I have nothing to my name; I lost everything; I am a poor, broken-down old man. Yey, sir, a twelve-year-old boy did this to me." (*Church Newsletter*).

Others often suffer because of our sin. The alcoholic, the child abuser, etc. often brings havoc upon his family.

The final consequence is hell. (Rev. 21:8).

**ALL KINDS OF SIN BRING CONSEQUENCES.** We shall notice three classes. (1) Sin is a transgression of moral law. Paul wrote, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6:7-8). When we lie, steal, etc. we commit moral sin. (2) Sin is the transgression of positive law. One can commit sin by doing nothing. In Matthew chapter twenty-five, the judgment is illustrated in the condemnation of those who failed to take the stranger in, did not clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison, or feed the hungry. (3) Religious error can dash

one's hope of eternal life. Paul speaks of those who pervert the gospel of Christ. He warns those who teach or accept false teaching will be accursed (Gal. 1:6-11).

**SALVATION DOES NOT VOID THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.** The non-Christian must have faith in Christ (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24), repent of his sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30), confess his faith in Christ as God's Son (Rom. 10:9-10) and be baptized into Christ (Mk. 16:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27).

The erring child of God must repent and pray and confess his fault and ask the prayers of his brethren (Acts 8:22; Jas. 5:16; I John 1:9; 2:1-2).

Though forgiveness may be ours, we may bear the marks of sin for life. If the alcoholic destroys his health with alcohol, he will have to live with that until death.

"Be sure your sin will find you out." (Num. 32:23).

## Planting And Producing

Raymond Elliott

It will not be very long until the farmers begin their task of preparing the land and planting seed for this year's crops. Even we who have gardens annually anticipate the time when we can enjoy working the soil. It is indeed a wonderful experience to be able to enjoy the vegetables from the garden. There is an age old truth that we would like to bring to your attention once again, that is, you always reap as you have sown. This seems very simple and elementary but it is very profound.

In the study of the parable of the sower or soils as recorded in Luke 8, we learn that Jesus used the common and known to teach the unknown truths to those of sincere and honest hearts (8:10). Jesus said that the seed is the word of God (8:11). God's power of salvation today is the gospel of his Son, (Romans 1:16). The word

never changes. It will always produce after its kind. The soil is also most important because it represents the various kinds of hearts. If there is a failure in reaping, such cannot be blamed on the seed, for therein is the God given power to germinate and reproduce. James said that we should "receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21). Peter declared that we have "been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." (I Peter 1:23). Wherein is the failure? It must be in the soil or the heart of a man. Some hearts are like the hard ground, others like the stony and thorny ground. Please notice the following observations.

1. In order for the seed (gospel) to be effective and produce, the soil (heart) must necessarily be prepared to receive the seed (gospel). It is written that Rehoboam did that which was evil "because he set not his heart to seek Jehovah." (II Chronicles 12:14). In contrast we read of a faithful servant of God: "For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances." (Ezra 7:10).

2. The seed (word) must be sown (preached) in the soil (hearts). This is the responsibility of the sower (Christian). Jesus commands that we are to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone. (Mark 16:15). The more seed that is sown, the greater the harvest. Are you sowing the seed of the kingdom, my brother?

3. The seed (word) will always produce after its kind. In Genesis 1:11,12, we learn that "the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind: and God saw that it was good." This principle is true in the moral and spiritual kingdom: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." (Galatians 6:7,8.) Whenever the gospel of Christ is taught and obeyed, only Christians and churches of Jesus Christ are produced. Nothing more and nothing less. One can be a Christian today just like in the first century by obey-

ing the same gospel. To become a New Testament Christian, one should, as a penitent believer, be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:36-38).

## Steadfastness Or Speed

Barry Fike

As a sports fan, a jogger, or even a fast walker, you know there is a vast difference between a sprint (100-yard dash) and a marathon (more than 26 miles). A burst of speed is good, say if one covers the first 100 yards in 10 seconds, but in the long run, it is the ability to stick with it mile after mile that counts. Steadfastness, not merely speed, determines the winner. The same is true with preaching. Many times men go into a congregation expecting to see immediate results. When such does not happen they leave looking for ground that is more fertile. This was not a practice of those faithful ones in the Old and New Testament.

Take, for instance, Ezekiel. God told Ezekiel in advance he was running a marathon. "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." (Ezekiel 3:4,7-9). Would short term preaching have been enough? Certainly not! God warns him that there were tough times ahead and much hard preaching was needed, but eventually some good would be done.

Who in the Bible that preached the word of God did it in a short time and had immediate success? Did Moses Jeremiah, John the Baptist, even Christ himself? The answer is obvious.

Ezekiel was running up against an audience that would be

callous, hard of hearing, and indifferent to his message. Ezekiel would, and did, need strength for the long run—22 years of it. Are we ready for a long run or a short sprint? “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:14). It is up to the minister of each congregation to look down the road a long ways instead of looking for a chance to go to another congregation. Much good can be done in long-term preaching, but the preacher and congregation, have to be determined to work together toward this end. “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

## Aspects Of Salvation

John Waddey

With a theme as important as salvation one would think every intelligent person would be eager to know its meaning and ramifications. Sadly such is not the case. Few folks have more than a passing knowledge of the subject. Still fewer could discuss it from the scriptures.

What is Salvation? Salvation is deliverance from past sins. From that moment in adolescence when we become morally aware of and accountable for our deeds, we have been accumulating a debt of sin. Our sin alienates and separates us from God. (Isaiah 59:1-2). It carries the penalty of death (Romans 6:23). It burdens us with guilt and remorse. (Rom. 7:22-24). In salvation, God washes away all our past sin and guilt when in faith we obey him in baptism. (Acts 22:16). Peter says when we repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus, we receive remission of sins. (Acts 2:38). This means our sin debt is paid in full. Paul paints a vivid picture in Romans, chapter 5: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son...” (5:8-10). Having paid the price to secure our pardon, Jesus charged his disciples to

“preach the gospel to the whole creation” so that he that believes and is baptized could be saved. (Mark 16:15-16).

Salvation means deliverance from Satan’s power. Everyone who has lived long enough knows the reality of Satan’s power in our lives. In our foolishness we become willing servants to this evil, tyrannical master (Rom. 6:16). Realizing our miserable condition, we try to save ourselves, but to no avail. Like Paul, what we want to do, we fail in and what we despise we often do. We too cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:22-24). The apostle tells us how we are saved from Satan’s evil dominion. It is through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 7:25). When we obey from the heart that form of doctrine (i.e., the gospel of Jesus), we are delivered and made free from sin. (Rom. 6:17-18). Jesus became a man “that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil: and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Salvation rescues us from God’s wrath of judgment. “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him” (Rom. 5:9). Divine justice demands that sin be punished. The wages we have earned is death (Rom. 6:23), but “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8). Since he bore the penalty due us, God can now *justify* us. That means that we are treated just as if we had never sinned! Rather than impose the penalties we deserved, God can forego our punishment because we are saved.

We are saved from this present evil world, according to Paul. (Galatians 1:3-4). Most folks overlook this aspect of salvation, but it is significant. Sinners may want to live on earth forever, but God’s children anxiously look forward to a heavenly home. (John 14:1-3). To depart and be with Christ is far better. (Philippians 1:23). On earth there are continual trials and tribulations. Pain, suffering and sorrow are our common lot. In heaven all of these are done away. (Rev. 21:3-4). It was a merciful act when God placed the cherubim with the flaming sword at the gate of Eden lest sin-cursed men eat of the tree of life and live forever



in a world spoiled by sin. (Gen. 3:22-24). Because we enjoy salvation in Christ we can pray, "come Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20).

We are rescued from death by our Savior. Though it is the common fate of all men to experience physical death, Jesus will resurrect us from the grave. "The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.....they that have done good unto the resurrection of life..." (John 5:25-29). Even though our natural bodies are buried in corruption and dishonor, they will be raised in glorious incorruption. (I Cor. 15:42-43). We will then be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord and shall ever be with him. (I Thess. 5:17-18).

Our salvation delivers us from the second death. "This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:14-15). All who die in sin will spend their eternity in damnation. (John 8:21). The saved will hear Christ say, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" (Matt. 25:34). Jesus promises those who have experienced the first resurrection that the second death will have no power over them (Rev. 20:6). The first resurrection is that symbolic one every saved person experienced when he died to sin, was buried with Christ in baptism and raised (resurrected) from the baptismal waters to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:1-5)

You can enjoy this blessed salvation *now*. Hear the apostle John: "These things have I written unto you that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." (I John 5:13). To preserve this blessing we must *walk* in the light of his word and the blood of Jesus will keep on cleansing us from all sin. (Such is the meaning of the original Greek text.) If we do sin, we need only confess that and "he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:7-9).

Salvation—what a thrilling thought! It is available to all men of every race. (Mark 16:15-16). It is a free gift from God. (Eph. 2:8-9). Its conditions are simple and easy. (Acts 2:38). It

will last you from now unto eternity (Heb. 5:8-9). Will you not claim this marvelous gift today?

## Give Me The Bible

Jerry L. Fausz, Sr.

*Marriage* is a Bible subject. One must study the Bible to understand and fully appreciate marriage—truth which is painfully neglected. Originating with God, marriage began in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:24). Marriage is the cleaving together, after forsaking all others, of one man and one woman, and these two become one flesh. God, and not man, joins husband and wife together (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6). God warns man not to temper with this union. All the applicable information is in the Bible. Anything which contradicts the word of God, regardless of its source, is without authority. Marriages do not fail; people do, by rejecting God.

*Divorce* has become as popular as apple pie and Chevrolet. However, divorce is much more deadly. Divorce (*apoluo*) is defined by Vine: "to let loose from, let go free"; and by Thayer: "used of divorce...to dismiss from the house, to repudiate." The terrible sting of divorce burns deeply within the very heart of society. It gnaws, and often rips to pieces everything for which Christianity stands. This issue must be considered only in light of what the Holy Scriptures teach. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16). Divorce is never commanded. However, God does permit divorce when one mate has committed the sin of fornication. Fornication (*porneia*) is defined by Vine: "one who has unlawful intercourse with another's wife." Fornication includes homosexuality, bestiality, and adultery. Fornication is the only Bible reason given for divorce (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:9; Romans 7:1-3). God's law is universal. It applies with equal authority to both Christians and non-Christians alike. Marriage is sacred, and must be entered with this understanding.

*Remarriage* can represent the beginning of a full and happy life. Attack by the horrible monster known as divorce does not

mean that one must stop living. However, the Bible authorizes remarriage in only two instances: (1) death of one's husband or wife or (2) unfaithfulness on the part of one's mate, through fornication. Divorce for any reason other than fornication is the automatic forfeiture of the right to marry. There is only one ground for divorce and remarriage. Those entering marriage without scriptural authority, enter into adulterous relationship. Eternal torment is imminent since such cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19,21). God's will demands that this adulterous relationship be severed. Difficult situations exist because many have failed to heed. When all is said and done, each shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (II Corinthians 5:10).

*Maturity* is essential. Marriage is for mature adults. Success will not come by accident. This writer believes that marriage ought to be special. Too many merely exist. Please consider these suggestions: (1) Remember that marriage is the uniting of two, and that it is a relationship which is bigger than the individual alone. (2) Loving is giving, and giving is love made visible. Do not expect always to be on the receiving end. (3) Marriage is not always a bed of roses. It brings challenging and stressful moments. Both husband and wife must learn to adjust together. (4) Communication between mates equals the difference between wedlock and deadlock. (5) Become involved in things both enjoy, and spend time together. Study the Bible together. Pray together.

Marriage must be guided and sustained by the infallible word of God if it is to be special. Why not? It originated with God. Marriage is the second most important decision in life. May God help us to consider and appreciate it accordingly.

## “What A Friend We Have In Jesus”

Doug Milligan

“A faithful friend is a strong defense: and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure.” The ancient Hebrew proverb, recorded in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, undoubtedly has

merit. While uninspired, the saying points out the fact that good friends are much to be desired and should be deeply appreciated when once developed. The Sage of Israel wrote in Proverbs 18:24, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Friendship is indeed an important commodity sought by all. Christians ought always to be thankful for the exclusive privilege of friendship with God. We often sing the song, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." That Jesus truly is our friend is manifest by many clear and palpable truths.

We know that Jesus is our friend because he said he is "the way, the truth, and the life," and that through him we may come to the Father. (John 14:1-6). It is in this same reference that Jesus announced to his followers that there are many places of abode in his Father's house and he was going to prepare a place for them. Surely one can see the love and tender care in the gentle words of the Master in this passage. Our Lord seeks to quiet the fears of the disciples prior to his crucifixion. In so doing, he also provided hope for all the faithful of years to come. It is through this promise of our Blessed Friend that we are assured of an eternal home if we remain faithful unto death.

Our gracious Saviour further affirms his friendship through his mediation on our behalf. Paul declares, "for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5). John continues this thought in I John 2:1-2: "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The scriptures clearly reveal that Christ, as our High Priest has entered into the Holy Place to make atonement for our sins with his own blood offered as the appeasing sacrifice. Thus Jesus is pictured as sitting at the right hand of the throne of God making intercession for us. This particular aspect of Christ's friendship is exemplified in the account given in Luke 22:31-32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and when

thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Apparently, Jesus requested that Simon Peter not be tempted above that which he would have been able to bear. Even at this, the omniscient Messiah knew beforehand that Peter would deny him. The Lord's true friendship looked beyond the apostle's immediate shortcomings to his ultimate penitence and faithful continuance in the Gospel. The advocacy of Jesus is available to all who would cast down their sinful practices and call upon his name. Thus it is written that Jesus is our propitiation (I John 2:2). That is, his salvation is available to all men.

There is another way in which Jesus is our friend. Jesus is a friend who helps bear our burdens. Notice that there is a burden to be borne! We are instructed to deny ourselves and take up our crosses daily and follow him. Brethren, there must be trials and burdens, yet our Lord said that he would make them light-(Matthew 28:18-20). Paul wrote, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (II Corinthians 4:17). Let us always sing with the spirit and understanding, What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear: What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer."

## Our Worship

Douglas Sims

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20). Some Christians seem to think of worship as an unpleasant duty which must be performed to appease the wrath of an angry God. It would seem that some great catastrophe might befall them if they don't go through the motions of worshipping. Worship offered with an attitude like this is just time wasted for the worshiper. When we examine the items of worship God has ordained for us, we see a benefit for the worshiper as well as an offering of praise and devotion to God.

**SINGING:** Surely, we are praising God in this act, but much more. Paul said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16). Thus, the singing in worship will teach us and inspire us to be better Christians.

**PRAYER:** Did God give us the privilege of prayer just to make requests of our needs? Could we not offer prayers of praise and thanksgiving specifically as an act of worship to our God? Paul said, ".....in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6). Prayer will be the greatest source of strength a Christian can find.

**BIBLE STUDY:** How many modern-day Christians really study the Bible? Not many, I am afraid, seeing the amount of Bible knowledge displayed by some. Obviously, Bible study is for the purpose of obtaining knowledge. Paul said, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). Bible study helps us to know God, and to increase our faith in him in bad times. Those who diligently study will not need to worry about any judgment day surprises.

**GIVING:** Some have said this is not an act of worship. Some have even made attempts to separate it from the worship. God made giving a part of the activities of the church when it came together to worship. We are told how to give and with what attitude we are to give. Our attitude toward giving is truly our attitude toward the Lord's kingdom. Our giving is really a test of our faith and our love. Paul said "...see that ye abound in this grace also... prove the sincerity of your love." (II Cor. 8:7-8).

**THE LORD'S SUPPER:** Some Christians believe that partaking of the Lord's Supper will forgive sins without any additional action on their part. Some come to the worship service, and after partaking of the Lord's supper leave before the rest of the worship is completed. The supper was given as a memorial of the death of our Saviour. As often as we partake of it we are to be reminded of his death and of his promised return. When we face difficulties in this

life we should be encouraged by the fact that Jesus has promised to return for the faithful. (John 14:3).

There are many benefits for the worshiper, if the worship is sincere and offered "in spirit and in truth." What we receive from our gathering together will be determined by what we put into it.

### *HINDRANCES TO WORSHIP:*

1. *Trying to worship without preparation.* The world is filled with "instant" products. You just add water and use. "Instant worship" is just going too far. It is just not possible to turn the world off and turn on our worship at a moment's notice.

2. *Tardiness.* This is a problem in practically every congregation. Constant tardiness indicates a lack of desire to worship. It seems to indicate we feel our worship is an unpleasant obligation we would rather leave off. Some who would not think of forsaking an assembly actually miss several during a year's time by being late so many times. Tardiness hinders the worship of those already assembled when one comes in late.

3. *Indifference.* The worship means little or nothing. Some have just a "form of godliness." Such an attitude will surely be accompanied by an unwillingness to heed any teaching done.

4. *Preoccupation.* A preacher can look at the face of many people whose thoughts are far away. The cares of the world have always choked out the word of God in the hearts of many. Worship requires our attention.

5. *Disturbance.* Children need to be brought to worship. Children also need to be taught how to behave in the worship. A constant flow of children in and out of the worship will hinder almost anyone from concentrating. Teenagers and adults account for much of the disturbance. Talking, clipping the nails, fumbling through purses, and a multitude of other things indicate a lack of involvement in the worship.

Our worship to God is one of the most important things we will ever do in this life. We must do all in our power to make sure

our worship is acceptable if we hope to be among those who praise God around the throne throughout eternity.

## Will You So Will

### Dalton Key

David hid the word of God in his heart (Psalm 119:11). Jesus was able to recall appropriate passages from Deuteronomy during his confrontation with Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). The Lord chided the Sadducees for "not knowing the scriptures" (Matthew 22:29). Paul advised Timothy to read, meditate upon, and give himself wholly to the scriptures. (I Timothy 4:13, 15-16). Again, the aged apostle instructed his "dearly beloved son" to "study... the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

These examples remind us of our need to know the Bible. Because faith is proportionate to Bible knowledge, we would do well to become better acquainted with the scriptures. (Romans 10:17).

And yet many of us are sadly lacking in this area. Why? Could this lack be blamed upon lack of opportunity? We think not. The Bible is still the world's best seller. It is readily available to anyone interested in perusing its sacred pages.

Could our deficiency of Bible knowledge be attributed to a mental inadequacy? Hardly. The small space between our ears has an enormous capacity. The brain's storage capacity has been estimated at one quadrillion bits of information—that's a million times a billion. Most of us use only about 10 to 15 percent of our brain's potential. No, the fault does not lie with meager mentality.

Perhaps our lack of Bible knowledge is due to our lack of will—our lack of will to delve deeply into Bible study. Until we desire to know more about, and more of, God's will for us, we will



remain spiritually and Biblically ignorant. We must desire Bible knowledge as we would desire physical food. (Matthew 4:4).

Christ taught. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of teaching". (John 7:17, ASV). Yes, we will know more when we will to know more, and when we put that will to work! Friend, will you so will?

## **"We Preach..."**

**Ancil Jenkins**

A modern parable tells of a new church building that had these words on the wall behind the pulpit, "We preach Christ crucified..." Below this a pot of ivy was placed. This plant grew up the wall until the last words were covered and all one could read was ' "We preach..."

Some have tried to bring an indictment against preaching, to blame it for some of the problems churches face. It may be that preachers are the cause of some problems, but this method of teaching is not at fault. It may seem foolish, but it is the method God has chosen to save men. (I Corinthians 1:21). Preaching, to be acceptable, must incorporate these elements.

**PREACHING MUST HAVE THE RIGHT CONTENT.**  
The approach the preacher uses in preaching will depend on the hearers and the message. Paul preached differently to the Athenians than he did to the Corinthians. However, the content must be the same, no matter what approach is used. Paul said he preached Christ crucified, and nothing else. (I Corinthians 1:23; 2:1).

He told Timothy to preach the word. (II Timothy 2:2). God's word must be at the heart of all preaching. It must be taken, explained, and applied to our lives. It is a mistake to reverse the process by taking some men's word of inspiration and beauty, add scripture to it and call it a sermon.

**PREACHING MUST BE WITH POWER.** An old preacher advised a young one, "It is all right to thunder, if you have lightning." Volume, activity, and enthusiasm cannot be substituted for power. This power is in the Word. (Romans 1:16). When used properly, the word has more power than a twoedged sword (Hebrews 4:12).

However, for the sword of the Spirit to be powerful, it must be applied where it will accomplish its purpose. The sharpest, strongest, sword ever made is powerless unless it is drawn. It is powerless if it is only waved in the air or applied to a place where it cannot penetrate the armor.

**PREACHING MUST BE PRACTICED.** I read recently of a man who was converted to Buddhism. He gave as his reason for leaving the church he belonged to: "It was not that they didn't practice what they preached—all they did was preach." Paul's strongest words to the Jews came on this point. He showed them that they did the very things they condemned among the Gentiles. His conclusion was, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." (Romans 2:2,24). One translated this, "the world hates God because of you." Preachers must practice what they preach. Even more, churches must practice what is preached when it is true, Biblical, and powerful.

God, give us more preachers and hearers. The task is difficult, and the way hard, but never let us rest "till every foe is vanquished and Christ is Lord indeed."

## The Modernist's Penknife

Dan Flournoy

The 36th chapter of Jeremiah records the tragic account of a king's vain attempt to destroy the word of God. In the opening section of the chapter, Jeremiah the prophet is commanded by

God to write down in one volume all the predictions he had uttered against Israel, Judah, and all the surrounding nations, from the beginning of his prophetic ministry.

When this is accomplished, the words of Jeremiah are then read to all the people during a general fast. When king Jehoiakim hears of this, he sends for the roll of Jeremiah and commands that it be read to him. The king was so displeased with the word of God written by Jeremiah that he cut the roll with a penknife and cast it into the fire. This, however, did not destroy God's word. In the last portion of the chapter, Jehoiakim is punished by God and removed from the throne. Jeremiah is commanded to write another volume to replace the one destroyed by the king.

There are those today, who like the wicked king, are displeased with certain things they read in God's book. Therefore, they try to "cut out" certain sections of the Bible by calling them myths or legends. Many so-called preachers have been influenced by critics of the Bible who have tried to up-date and modernize the Bible by downgrading portions of the Scriptures as fiction.

One such preacher had been with a congregation a few years when he was called to the bedside of one of the members who was very sick. "Perhaps you would like me to read and pray with you?" asked the preacher. "Yes," replied the man as he took his Bible and handed it to the minister. When he opened it, he was shocked at what he saw. Many of the pages were torn away, some of the chapters were missing, and a number of verses were actually cut out! The preacher asked reluctantly, "Haven't you got a better Bible than this?" The man replied, "When you came to our church, I believed the entire Book. But as soon as you told us that certain sections were not true, I removed them. When you said that some stories were probably fiction and referred to them as fables, I tore them out. I think if I had another year under your teaching, I would have nothing but two covers left!"

Such is the effect of modernism! The critics have so mutilated

the word of God with their modernist penknife that there is hardly anything left. They have cut out the miracles of the Bible and denied the pre-existence, Virgin Birth and Resurrection of Jesus. The account of creation is said to be of human origin and there never was such a thing as the world wide flood recorded in Genesis. When the critics are through, there is really nothing left of the Bible but the two covers!

However, the modernist's penknife can no more destroy the word of God than could Jehoiakim's penknife in the long ago. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Friends, "the word of our God shall stand forever" (Isa. 40:8). Those who attempt to silence the message of God only bring his displeasure and condemnation upon themselves.

May we, as the good people of Thessalonica, receive the gospel "not as the word of men but as it is in truth, the word of God." (I Thess. 2:13). The Bible is God's word. (II Tim. 3:16). Let us accept its claims, believe its facts, obey its commands and enjoy its promises!

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE !

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