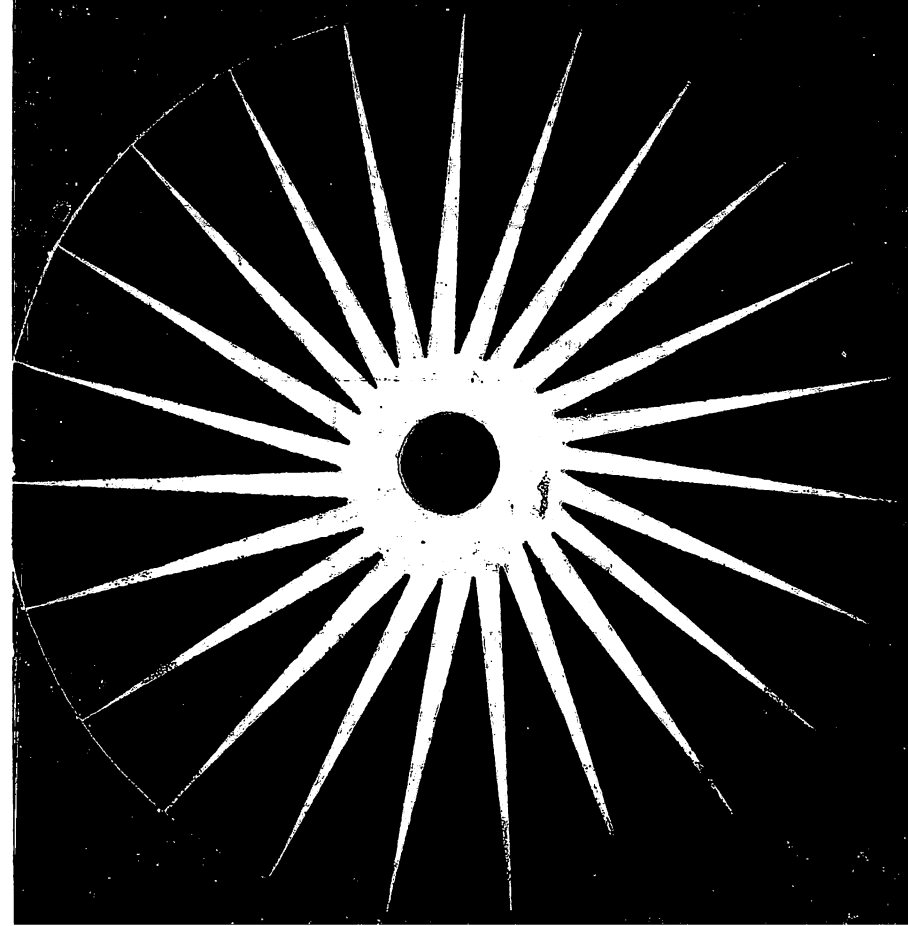


# the bible teacher



## “सत्य सुसमाचार”

हमें अपने श्रोताओं को यह बताते हुए बड़ी प्रसन्नता का अनुभव हो रहा है, कि रेडियो श्रीलंका से प्रसारित किए जा रहे “सत्य सुसमाचार” संदेशों को अब आप एक आकर्षक पुस्तक के रूप में मुफ्त प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। १७२ पृष्ठ की इस पुस्तक में १७ प्रभावशाली संदेश हैं। आज ही केवल २५ पैसे का डाक टिकट भेजकर अपनी प्रति प्राप्त करें।

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प्रत्येक शुक्रवार को रात्री ८:४५ से ९:१५ तक सुनिये  
हमारा विशेष कार्यक्रम

“सत्य सुसमाचार”

यह कार्यक्रम रेडियो श्रीलंका से २५ तथा  
४१ मीटर बेंड पर सुना जा सकता है।

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :

**J. C. CHOATE**

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Associate Editor :

**SUNNY DAVID**

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## EDITORIAL

### Confession Of Faults

One of the most difficult things in the world for one to do is to say, "I have sinned." In reading through the Bible you will note that very few had the courage to make such a statement. Not only so, but from that day to this mankind has not changed on this point. And yet, man is a sinner and can always say, "I have sinned." This is true not only of the non-Christian but of the Christian as well.

On obeying God to become a Christian one should be faithful to the Lord. That does not mean that a person can live a perfect life and never make any mistakes, but it does mean that one can put forth every effort to be as true to his calling as possible. In doing this then he is able to walk in the light as he is in the light and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses him from all sins. (1 John 1 : 7). But all do not remain faithful. Many fall by the way. They turn back. They err. They sin. Although still children of God, they are erring children. In this state they are lost and at the same time do the Lord's cause a great deal of harm by their example. What needs to be done in this cause? What can be done?

Those who are unwilling to repent so as to enable them to

return to their first love should be dealt with in a scriptural way by withdrawing fellowship from them. (1 Corinthians 5 ; Matthew 18 : 15-17). Those who are willing to return to the Lord should be encouraged to do so. As a matter of fact, every effort should be made to bring them back. For them to return, however, they must comply with the conditions that are stated in the scriptures.

It is wonderful to know that once one sins there are provisions made whereby he can be restored. The Bible does not teach that once saved always saved and neither does it teach that once one departs from the Lord that he must forever remain lost. To say that it is possible for one to sin and then be forgiven does not mean that the Lord is encouraging sin, but rather it suggests that the Lord has left man in the position of being a free moral agent where he has the ability to decide whether he will obey God or not and whether he will remain faithful or not. It also leaves man in a position where it is possible for him to repent and return to the Lord once he has gone back into sin. Just knowing that this is true makes one thank God all the more for his longsuffering, grace, and mercy. Read the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15.

Of course the Lord does not want one to go back into sin and there is no assurance that once one does that he will ever make it back to the place of safety. Therefore, for one to backslide, to err, and to sin then it means that he has fallen away and that he is lost and that he will remain lost as long as he is in that state.

For one to return to the Lord, and therefore to safety, then there are certain things he must do. First of all, he must genuinely repent of all of his sins. We not only have the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15) that illustrates this but we also have the story of Simon the sorcerer who obeyed God and then tried to buy the gift of God with money. Peter told him in no uncertain terms, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou has neither part nor lot in this matter : for thy heart is not right with God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine

heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." (Acts 8 : 20-24 ). That is, one must repent, turn away, or quit doing those things that are bad and wrong. If he continues in them then he has not repented. Next, he must confess his faults. I think we see in the case of Simon the sorcerer that he acknowledged his sin. Then James wrote, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, they ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5 : 16). So one must be willing to confess his sins or acknowledge them. That does not necessarily mean that he must name them one by one or go into great detail. But if he knows what he has done, and those to whom he is confessing knows what he has done, then when he says, "I have sinned," that should be enough. To say, "If I have sinned", or other such expressions is not enough. One has sinned. If he is going to confess his faults then he should confess them. Finally, prayer, should be engaged in for the purpose of asking God's forgiveness. This is brought out in the case of Simon, in James 5 : 16, and in other verses. Only by doing this can an erring Christian return to the status of being a faithful Christian. Once this is done he should be forgiven and accepted back into full fellowship.

Now let's go one step further and consider how publically of this should be. First, if one has sinned before God and no one knows about it but himself and God then he should take it to God and settle it right there. In this case no one else need to be involved. Second, if one has sinned before a friend, neighbor, or some other such being, then he and that person should settle it among themselves without having to involve anyone else with it. Third, and final, if one has sinned publically, that is, where a number know about it, then it should be taken before the church so that one and all may know that he is correcting his life. One must therefore consider his sin as it relates to others and take the steps necessary for the matter to be cleared up.

If you are an erring Christian, will you not return to the Lord while you still have the opportunity. This is in your interest and the interest of all that you so do. There are those who are praying that you will. Above all, the Lord invites and pleads for you to come home.



**associate  
editorial**

## The Elephant And Salvation

Once there were four blind men who were very anxious to see an elephant. So they were taken to the zoo and one by one were led to the elephant. The first blind man touched the side of the elephant and that was the only part of the elephant's body which he touched. So he went away with the impression that the elephant is like a wall. Then the second blind man was likewise taken to the elephant. This man touched only the leg of the elephant and this was the only thing of the elephant's body which he touched. So he decided that an elephant is like a tree. Then the third blind man was taken to the elephant. He touched only an ear of the elephant and this was the only part of the elephant's body that he touched. So he concluded that an elephant is like a leaf. And then finally the fourth blind man was led to the elephant. This man touched only the tail of the elephant and this was the only thing of the elephant's body that he touched. So he went away with conclusion that an elephant is like a rope. Now when they got into a discussion they were in great confusion with each one of them giving a different picture of the same creature. Yet, all of them had touched the same elephant. Their problem was, however, that they did not realize that since they all had touched the same one elephant they therefore should conclude that an elephant consists of all of the parts that they had touched.

The subject of the Bible is Jesus Christ and his great salvation that he brought to mankind. The Bible says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him : for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11 : 6). Christ said that without faith in him people will die in their sins. (John 8:24). The scriptures also teach, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at ; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." (Acts 17 : 30). Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13 : 3). And then in Romans 10 : 9, 10 the Bible says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Jesus said that if people would confess him upon earth before men he would also confess them before God in the last day. (Matthew 10 : 32, 33). And again, the Bible tells us, "And now why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22 : 16). Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; and he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16 : 16).

Now from the foregoing what should we conclude ? Should we say that salvation consists of only faith, or are we saved by repentance, or by confession only, or by baptism only ? No. The conclusion is, since the same Bible teaches them all, therefore all of them, i.e., faith, repentance, confession, and baptism are necessary for one's salvation from past sins. And just like a side, a leg, an ear, and a tail, all of them are parts of an elephant ; so likewise, faith, repentance, confession and baptism are parts of salvation.

Many people are blind to the truth. They believe one can be saved by faith only because they have read one or more verses in the Bible that teaches so. Their lack of investigation and searching of the Bible is responsible for their blindness. But Christ said, "Ye shall know the truth shall make you free." (John 8 : 32). And when he was praying to God, he said, "... thy word is truth." (John 17 : 17).

# Purchasing A Bible

Pat McGee

We live in an age of widespread ignorance of the Bible in spite of the fact that the Bible remains on the best seller lists world-wide. Men are slowly coming to realize their need to study the Bible and the last decade has witnessed an unprecedented interest in the translation and distribution of the sacred text.

But not all of this is good. Some of the "New Bibles" are not Bible at all but rather skilful and clever attempts on the part of men to sell a particular dogma, viewpoint, or denominational slant. The Christian must always beware (Col. 2:8 ; I Cor. 16:13 Mat. 7:15), "prove all things" (I Thes. 5 : 21) and be very careful in his actions (Eph. 5 : 15). "Fools rush in where angeles fear to tread" is not scripture but it is indeed true.

Every Christian should have his own Bible and should carry it to every worship service and Bible study. Every Christian should engage in daily study and meditation of the scriptures (Ps. 1 : 2). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3 : 16).

There are many good and acceptable translations available today and the Christian should be aware of those that are most useful and conform to the original Biblical texts. The 1611 **Authorized Version** is by far the most popular version ever on the English market. The 1901 **Standard Version**, which is really an updating of the 1611 KJV, is clearly the most correct and literal of all the English translations. The **New American Standard**, **New International Version** and **Berkeley Version** are also conservative and useful translations for the Bible student. The interested and diligent learner would be wise to use all of these in comparison as he searches the scriptures daily (Acts 17 : 11 ).

In the judgment of this writer, **all** of the other major translations on the market today should be used with great care for they **all** show the influence of either denominational and



sectarian creeds or bear the impress of liberal and modernistic theories. In fact, some of them do not even deserve our use at all! If you are thinking of buying a Bible these facts should be kept in mind. **Some of the so-called "New Bibles" are not versions but rather perversions!** They are a deliberate attempt to corrupt the true and original word of God.

A case in point is the "**Living Bible—Paraphrased**", translated by a Baptist Churchman, Ken Taylor. This book, which is really a denominational commentary, is neither a **Bible** nor is it living. If obeyed it will bring death and not life. It has been quite aptly described as a denominational tract bound in Bible form. Indeed it is.

Here is a list of some of the false teaching to be found in the **Living Bible**.

1. It teaches that a body is born a sinner and born with evil nature. Psalms 51 : 5 ; Eph. 2 : 3.
2. Isaiah 2 : 3 teaches the premillennial theory that "the world is going to be ruled from Jerusalem". Other passages made to teach this error are Ezekiel 38 ; Dainel 8, 9 and 11 ; Zech. 2 : 13 ; Rom. 8 : 18-23 ; II Tim. 4 : 1.
3. The false doctrine of inheriting Adam's sin is taught. Rom. 5 : 12, 13, 18.
4. It teaches the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ (Phil. 4 : 5) and that "the world is ending soon" (1 Pet. 4 : 7). (See also Rev. 22 : 20). This makes Paul, Peter and John liars for it is a fact that in comparison with the time that they penned there verses Jessus did not come soon and the world did not end.
5. In Matt. 21 : 32 he says, "If you don't repent, you cannot believe". This puts repentance before belief, a mental and Biblical impossibility.
6. It teaches that light social drinking is acceptable. I Tim. 3 : 8, 11; Titus 2 : 3.
7. In Mark 1 : 4 he says "baptism is a public announcement of your decision to turn your back on sin," instead

of "baptism for the forgiveness of sins", as the Greek text has.

8. John 3 : 5 has a footnote which says that "born of water" means your physical birth.
9. I Pet. 3 : 21 is made to say that in baptism you "show that you have been saved", not are saved as the original text states.
10. Gal. 3 : 26-27 changes the words of Paul to mean that baptism is not what makes one a child of God.
11. John 1 : 12-13 states that all men need to do to be saved is trust God and "all those who believe this are reborn".
12. In Romans 4 : 12 he uses "faith only". This false teaching is found again in Col. 1:23 & Rom. 1 : 17. There is no justification for the use of these words. James says justification is not by faith only (James 2:24).
13. Romans 6 : 3 is made to say that you become a Christian and then are baptized. Rom. 6 : 4 states, "Your old sin-loving nature was buried with him (Jesus) when he died..." Not when he died but when we did and are baptized. Nothing could be further from the truth than Taylor's Rom. 6 : 3-4. He has it just like the denominations like it. (See also Col. 2 : 12).
14. Romans 16 : 16 omits the churches of Christ. Also "shake hands", for the holy kiss.
15. I Tim. 3 : 15 says, "the church **contains** and holds high the truth of God". Since when did the church **contain** the truth? We read in Jn. 17 : 17 that God's word contains the truth.
16. II Tim. 4 : 1 says that when Jesus comes again he will set up his Kingdom.
17. Mat. 3 : 2, 11 : 12-14 has the Kingdom-Church established in the days of John the Baptist.
18. Mat. 5:17 has Jesus saying he didn't come to **cancel** the Law of Moses instead of the correct rendering "destroy". He did cancel it. (Rom. 7 : 6)

19. Women may teach and preach in public according to the Living Bible. I Cor. 11 : 4-5, 16 ; 14 : 34-36 (see footnote).
20. Paul says it is a shame if a man has long hair (I Cor. 11 : 15) but Taylor translates it, "a man with long hair tends to be ashamed".
21. I Cor. 11 : 19 is not only completely wrong, it is senseless.
22. It wrongly says that Christians shall govern the world. I Cor. 6 : 2.
23. I Cor. 6 : 12 says "I can do anything I want to if Christ has not said so". A simple comparison with the standard translation will show the error and danger here.
24. Rom. 14 : 1 it says we are not to criticize others for having different ideas from ours about what is right and wrong. Imagine such ethical foolishness. Again Taylor is seriously wrong.
25. Rom. 8 : 16 says that the Holy Spirit speaks to the Christian deep in his heart and tells us that we really are God's children. This doctrine of the direct operation of the Spirit is Calvinism, not Bible.
26. I Cor. 2 : 14 is made to say that you can't understand the Bible unless you have the Holy Spirit in you. More sectarian error.
27. Rom. 11 : 26 says that all the Jews are going to be saved. The Bible nowhere teaches such.
28. I Cor. 13 : 10 is translated, "But when we have been made perfect and complete, then the need for these inadequate special gifts will come to an end and they will disappear". Taylor says this will happen someday when we see Jesus face to face, v 12. He has rewritten the whole verse to make it say what he wants. He has miraculous gifts lasting till Christ comes again whereas Paul had them ceasing in his day.

29. Acts 2 : 1 has all the believers being baptized in the Holy Spirit.
30. Acts 2 : 38-39 has the Holy Spirit as the gift and says Christ promised him to all the called.
31. "Barny the Preacher" Acts 4 : 36 for Barnabas.
32. II Cor. 3 : 6 teaches that men do not have to obey all of God's law to be saved.
33. II Cor. 13 : 5 teaches that the test to prove whether you are a Christian is do you **feel** Christ's presence and power more and more within. Sorry Mr. Taylor but this is not the test. Feelings don't prove God's favor.
34. Eph. 4 : 13 teaches that some Christians didn't believe alike about Christ and salvation.
35. James 2 : 24 is made to teach the exact opposite from what the original text reads, i.e. "not by faith alone".
36. The impossibility of apostasy by the true Christian is found in I Cor. 15 : 1-2.
37. In I Cor. 15:29 he has the Mormon doctrine of vicarious baptism taught where one is baptized for the dead.
38. I Cor. 7 : 39 wrongly states that the Christian widow can only marry a Christian. The original text states "in the Lord".
39. Eph. 5 : 26 is made to say "washed by baptism **and** God's Word" instead of the correct "with the washing of water by the Word".

Here therefore is an extended list of serious doctrinal errors to be found in the so-called **Living Bible**. Add to this list the dirty and obscene language put into the Bible (see I Sam. 20 : 30 ; Jn. 9 : 34 ; I Kgs 18 ; 27) and the result is not something in pattern with the good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom. 12 : 2). The **Living Bible** is not the Bible-God's true word. It is rather the words, opinions, and beliefs of a denominational preacher.



**QUESTION :**

A letter comes from a reader in Mizoram State. We are happy to hear from that part of the country. The writer says :

“Dear Mr. Choate :

Warmest greetings in the name of the Lord.

Please continue sending me your magazine, The Bible Teacher. It is interesting and encourages me.

Now I am 15 in this year and studying class X in K. M. High School, Aizawl, Mizoram State. As you know, Mizoram is a Christian State situated at the Burma border of the corner of India. I am despaired of studying in the physical school as I am not born again. I am not interested in being a missionary that Rev. Theodore Williams has called me for.

Before I would like to study theology in any way I need to be born again. I am not born again now. Help me.

My progress in class IX was not good enough so that our headmaster, an elder at the local Presbyterian church, told me to quit taking Bible Correspondence Courses. Now I have received 8 diplomas from various places but I can't yet be born again.

Please help me to find some no-children parents to live with. Preferrably of English speaking whites, because I would like to take English as my mother tongue...I am now aiming toward going to the U.S.A. but I cannot find the way. Please help me !

I would like to give some questions to be entered in the Bible Teacher magazine.

(1) When a men of bad character gives donations in a

large or small amount for Christian works, will the Lord bless him ?

- (2) In what book/s of the Bible mention long hair ? Was our Lord Jesus not fitable ? Cite the chapter and verse.

May the good Lord bless and keep you.

Sincerely"

ANSWER :

Thank you for your good letter. Besides your questions, you have touched on several things that need to be discussed.

You say that Mizoram State is a Christian State. Of course you mean by that, that it is a State where the people believe in Christ. That does not mean, however, that it is a Christian State. For the people there to be Christian then they would have to be free from division instead of being divided by denominationalism. Christ prayed that we might all be one, not that we should all be divided. (John 17). He further built his church, not denominational churches.

Next, you say that you have not been born again. Do you know how to be born again ? This is not brought about by prayer, feeling good, joining a denomination, etc. In speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born ? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (John 3 : 3-7). Jesus makes it plain that this new birth does not involve a physical birth. Although it includes a physical act, the act of baptism, it is for the purpose of saving the soul. Being born of the water takes place when a person believes the Lord enough to obey his teaching, and when he believes that strongly then he is willing to repent of his sins, confess with the mouth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,

and be baptized by going down into literal water and being buried in that water in obedience to the Lord for the remission of sins, and then by coming up out of the water which is a coming forth or a birth. In coming out of the water then one is being born of the water, and in following the instructions of the word of the Spirit, and by putting the old man of sin to death, and by burying him in water to have the soul cleansed of all sin, then when one comes up out of that water he is a new man in Christ. Peter says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter 1 : 22, 23). Then Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5 : 17).

The new birth has reference to that of being saved, becoming a Christian, and becoming a member of the church. If you learn what to do to be saved then you learn how to be born again. For instance, the scriptures tell us that in order for one to be saved he must hear the gospel (Romans 10 : 17), believe in God and Christ (Hebrews 11 : 6 ; John 14 : 1-3), repent of all sins (Acts 17 : 30 ; Luke 13 : 3), confess Christ as the Son of God (Matthew 10 : 32 ; Romans 10 : 10), and be baptized to be saved or to have the remission of sins. (Mark 16 : 16 ; Acts 2 : 38).

You refer to the Presbyterian church. You cannot follow the instructions of this church and hope to be born again. Among other things they teach sprinkling for baptism, but sprinkling is not baptism. Baptism is a burial in water and is done in order to have the remission of sins. (Colossians 2 : 12 ; Acts 8 ; Acts 2 : 38). Not only that, but if you were born again you could not be a member of the Presbyterian Church or any other denominational church. When one is saved he is added to the Lord's church (Acts 2 : 47) ; when one is born again he is automatically born into the family of God or the church.

If you have taken a half dozen Bible correspondence courses then you should have learned the truth long ago on the new birth and many other subjects. Evidently though you have been taking various denominational courses and you will never learn God's will through these. Why would your headmaster, an elder in the Presbyterian church, object to you taking these Bible courses unless he is afraid you will be directed away from that church? This brings out again the curse of denominationalism. The Bible tells us of only one church and that one is the one that Christ himself promised to build and did build. (Matthew 16 : 18 ; Acts 2).

As for helping you to find some parents, "no-children parents," "English-speaking whites," I can not. Neither can I help you go to America. This is not my job. Rather, my work is to point you to God's truth and to encourage you to obey it.

Coming now to your first question, you want to know if a bad man makes a donation to a Christian work if the Lord will bless him. It is always good for anyone to give to some good cause, and the gift that is made may be of great help at the time, but the giver cannot hope to bribe the Lord to bless him because of such gifts. Such an individual needs to be taught, converted, and then as a Christian he can use his material blessings to help with the Lord's work. If given sincerely and according to God's will then indeed the Lord will bless such an individual for his liberality.

The next question has to do with long hair and I assume you want book, chapter, and verse where it would condemn the Lord for having long hair. To begin with, we have no reference in the scriptures of the Lord having long hair. It is true that imaginative pictures of Christ most always portray him as having long hair, but there is no scriptural basis for this. Such pictures originated in the minds of men. To the contrary, from what the Bible says about long hair then we would have to conclude that surely the Lord would have been in direct conflict with the scriptures. Concerning long hair, Paul wrote, "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" (1 Corinthians



11 : 14). In the context he is showing that a woman is to have long hair. In other words, one of the things that distinguishes man from woman is the length of their hair. For the man, his hair is to be short, but the woman is to have long hair. But how short is short and how long is long? Most people know. Even those who do not abide by these divine injunctions know. They may offer excuse or make arguments, but still they know what is short and what is long. It is not necessary to measure the length of hair to know but when a man's hair is long enough that it begins to look more like a woman's hair than a man's hair then it is definitely too long. Beyond that, it might be wise for one to keep his hair even shorter especially if he is in an area where people in general have their own concept of long hair and would frown on those who would let their hair grow too long. Such is to say that we should not follow the fads of the world and end up in becoming stumbling blocks.

I hope these comments have been helpful to you and should you like any of these points discussed further then we would be happy to have your questions.

## Calling On The Name Of The Lord

**Basil Overton**

Obviously, many do not understand what the Bible means by the words "calling on the name of Lord." Everyone in the church should understand these words so he can teach others who do not know. It is not enough to just talk about evangelizing; we must evangelize by teaching people the truth.

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10: 12, 13,) There is no question but that people must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved; the question is: How does one call upon the name of the Lord? Therefore, Paul raised the following questions in the next verse in Romans chapter ten. "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?" The obvious answer to these questions is that one cannot call on the name of the Lord without first hearing and believing the gospel.

In verse 16 he said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" Paul had said: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Then he said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel." That was the same as saying: "They have not all called on the name of the Lord." Hence to "call on the name of the Lord," and to "obey the gospel" are the same.

We know that saying "Lord, Lord" is not the way to call on the name of the Lord, for Jesus said: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7: 21.)

Often, Jesus emphasized the importance of doing God's will. He came down from heaven not to do his own will, but to do the will of God. (John 6: 38.) It was altogether fitting and proper therefore that he do all he could to get others to do God's will. He certainly made it clear that just saying "Lord, Lord" was not a substitute for doing the will of God.

### **Calling on the Lord and Baptism**

Calling upon the name of the Lord, and "doing the will of the Father" are the same thing. Paul said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel." He then said that Esaias (Isaiah) said they would not all obey the gospel when Esaias said: "Lord who hath believed our report (preaching)?" (Rom. 10: 16.) Here "believed," and "obeyed" are used interchangeably as those words are so often used in the Bible. These same Roman brethren had been saved or made free from sin by obeying the form of doctrine delivered them. (Rom. 6: 17, 18.) They had been baptized into Christ and into his death (the benefits of his death). (Rom. 6: 3, 4.) Hence in

calling upon the name of the Lord to be saved they had been baptized into Christ. Paul himself was told to : "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22 : 16.)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said that Joel had said of the Christian age ..... "That whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts 2 : 21.) His audience soon asked : "What shall we do ?" (Acts 2 : 37.) Peter told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. In telling them this, Peter told them how to call on the name of the Lord !

He who rejects the answer Peter gave in Acts 2 : 38 cannot call upon the name of the Lord, for he thus rejects the name of the Lord. For one who is not a Christian to "call on the name of the Lord" he must rely completely on the Lord and his authority, and in obedience to the Lord he must turn from his sins, confessing Jesus as the Lord, and be baptized into the Lord to reach the blood of the Lord. (Rom. 6 : 3, 4.)

### **Christian Must Call on the**

#### **Name of the Lord Too**

Paul referred to people in the church as those who call upon the name of the Lord. (1 Cor. 1 : 2.) This obviously means that Christians are people who must rely upon and look to the name or authority of Jesus Christ.

Paul told the Colossian Christians that whatever they did in word or in deed they were to do it all in the name of Christ. (Col. 3 : 17) Whatever we do as Christians must be by the direction of Jesus Christ who has all authority, otherwise, what we do would not be in the name of Jesus.

Christians are to look to Christ and rely completely on him for guidance. They are to bring into captivity their every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10 : 5.) They thereby call on the name of the Lord.

## And Daily...In Every House

In the New Testament there are at least four major functions of the church of the Lord : 1) the evangelization of the world ; 2) the edification of Christians ; 3) the doing of good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith ; and 4) glorification of God.

Of these four functions, the key function, around which all the other three cluster, is the evangelization of the world—the church's central reason for existence. We can do all three of the other things (to the extent possible under the circumstance); yet, if we leave out the preaching and teaching of the gospel unto others, somehow nothing seems to work out like it should. If, on the other hand, we put soul-winning at the heart of our thinking, concern, planning and action, soon we find these other functions of the church rapidly falling into their proper place and perspective.

In the beginning of the gospel, from the word "go" (teach or preach) until Colossians 1 : 23 announced that it had been preached to every creature under heaven, was from A.D. 33 to A.D. 64—a total of 31 years. A proper understanding of the book of Acts shows that was the heart and core of church life. It was so intended by Jesus himself.

For instance, in Acts 1 : 8, he said to his apostles, "..... and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. As Acts unfolds, it informs us that this is exactly what they did. In Acts 2, they preached the gospel first at Jerusalem; in Acts 8 it went on into Judaea and Samaria ; and from Acts 13 onward it went unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Not only did the early church (under the immediate direction of the apostles themselves) continue "daily with one accord in the temple" (Acts 2 : 46), but "daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5 : 42) Under such a plan of action, "the

Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2 : 47). And as they continued such action, "the number of the disciples was multiplied." (Acts 6 : 1.)

From that day unto this, those churches which have not only met daily but also have evangelized from house to house have grown. If the church today wants to grow as the early church did, let us find out how by studying these passages from Acts and do likewise !

## Christianity By Comparison

**Mike Sinapiades**

The epistle to Diognetus is an anonymous writing which, like any other writing of the early Apologist, while it attacks heathenism and idolatry it defends and expounds the value of Christianity. Following is an excerpt from this epistle :

"For the distinction between Christians and other men, is neither in country nor customs.....This teaching of theirs has not been discovered by the intellect or thought of busy men, nor are they the advocates of any human doctrine as some men are.....Whether living in Greek or barbarian cities,... they show forth the wonderful and confessedly strange character of the constitution of their own citizenship.....They offer free hospitality, but guard their purity. Their lot is cast "in the flesh," but they do not live "after the flesh." They pass their time upon the earth, but they have their citizenship in heaven.....They love all men, are persecuted by all men. They are put to death and they gain life. "They are poor and make many rich;" they lack all thing and have all things in abundance. They are dishonoured, and are glorified in their dishonour, they are spoken evil of and are justified. "They are abused and give blessings," they are insulted and render honor. When they do good they are buffeted as evil-doers, when they are buffeted they rejoice as men who receive life. They are warred upon.....and are persecuted....., and those who hate them cannot state the cause of their enmity. To put it shortly what the soul is to the body, so are the Christians

to this world.....The soul dwells in the body, but is not of the body, and Christians dwell in the word, but are not of the world.....”

Upon another occasion, when Aristides was writing to the Emperor Hadrian around 125 A.D., concerning Christians and the kind of life they lead, wrote :

“The Christians know and trust God. They love one another. If any one among them is needy, and they do not have food to spare, they fast two or three days, that they may supply him with the necessary food. Because of them there flows forth all of the beauty that there is in the world. Truly, this is a new people and there is something divine in them.”

Unwittingly, Aristides simply was verifying the very words of our Master who said, “By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.” (John 13 : 34).

Does our Christianity measure up to theirs ?

## The True Israel of God

John Wadley

The bulk of the Protestant world has been deceived into thinking that the Jews are still God's special people, that they will be restored to Palestine as a nation and the ancient Hebrew ritual resumed. All of this is supposed to happen when Christ comes back to reign on earth for a thousand years, as they erroneously suppose. What is commonly overlooked is the fact that all of those prophecies and promises that were spoken of **Israel**, to be realized in the messianic age, were not spoken of **fleshly Isreal**, but of **spiritual Israel**, Christ's church. The five points that follow will prove this point conclusively.

I. Christians are now **Abraham's Seed**. Paul declares this in Gal. 3 : 29. “If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.” Again in Romans he reasons that Abraham is “father of all them that believe.” 4 : 11. Although we are not literally fleshly descendents of Abraham, we are his descendents spiritually for we have the same faith he had. Today, God does not reckon sonship by the flesh, rather it is by the spirit.

II. In the Christian age Christians are the True Israel of God. “For neither is circumcision (being a Jew) anything, nor uncircumcision (being a Gentile), but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” Gal. 6 : 15-16. Thus the

Hebrews are no longer God's special people. Today, God's people are reckoned by grace, not by race. Again Paul stresses this point in Rom. 9 : 8, "It is not the children of the flesh that are Children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed." In 4 : 16 of Romans he concludes that Abraham "is the father of us all."

III. The Church of Christ is the Commonwealth of Israel today. As Gentiles we were once alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, but now in Christ we are made nigh by his blood. "So that ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow citizens of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets..." Eph. 2 : 12-13, 19-20. God cast off the fleshly Jewish nation, Rom. 11 : 15. Yet He continues to save all who believe in Jesus, irrespective of nationality, adding them to Christ's church, Acts 2 : 47.

IV. The church is the heavenly Jerusalem. The writer to the Hebrews said, "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven....." Heb. 12 : 22-23. So we see that it is not ancient Jerusalem in Palestine, but the Lord's Church that is the heavenly, spiritual Jerusalem and Mount Zion. Those many promises of old concerning Zion in Messiah's day, find their fulfillment in the Church and not in Palestinian Jerusalem.

V. Christians are the true "circumcision" of God in this age. Thus Paul reminds the saints at Philippi, "For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." 3 : 3. He also tells the Colossians that in Christ "ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of flesh, in the circumcision of Christ ; having been buried with him in baptism....." Col. 2 : 11-12. No literal fleshly circumcision is required today. But there is a likeness to circumcision in baptism. For as in the actual circumcision, the flesh was removed that kept a man from being identified with the covenant people, so in baptism the old life of sin is cut off and removed that the recipient might be numbered with God's people. Again Paul declares, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love." Gal. 5 : 6.

When the Jewish nation rejected Christ and murdered Him, they forever forfeited their role as His special people. They cried, "His blood be upon us and our children," Matt. 27:25. They made their choice. Not only the Palestinian Jews, but the Dispersion as well generally thrust the gospel from themselves and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, Acts

13 : 46. Because of this rejection, God turned His attention to we Gentiles, Acts 28 : 28.

We stress again that it was national Israel that rejected the Saviour and national Israel was rejected by God. "By their unbelief they were broken off." Rom. 11 : 20. Today each individual Jew stands before God on precisely the same footing as we Gentiles. They are either saved or lost, solely on the basis of their belief or disbelief in Christ. "And they (Jews) also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again." Rom. 11 : 23. Today as always, there are a few of Abraham's fleshly descendants who believe in Jesus. They are saved and a part of the true Israel of God, not because of the blood in their veins, but because of the faith in their hearts. What a great privilege it is to we Gentile Christians to be joint partaker in the commonwealth of spiritual Israel and to share the rich blessings which God promises to all of Abraham's seed according to the promise. Col. 3 : 29.

## There is a God in Heaven

**Tom Dockery**

Many today question the belief in God. Countless others have a vague belief with great misconceptions of what God is really like. To some He is only a figment of the imagination. God is a disappointment to some because He doesn't do exactly what they want Him to do. Many want God's blessings but not God. He is someone to call on in emergencies. Like the ancient Greeks, many ascribe to God their own passions and then wonder why He doesn't help them.

Man's religion and his God must be real and living in order to help him. However, a God who could be comprehended by the finite mind would be powerless being as weak as man. Although we may not understand Him, this does not mean that He does not exist. There is much evidence that God is alive and active and not just a dream of hopeless man.

1. **A Creation Evidences A Creator.** In the words of P salm 19 : 1—3: "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and the firmament is declaring the work of His hands." Creation demands intelligence, design and acting force. These are things that are associated with personality, and that personality is God.

2 **The Universal Concept Of God Proves His Existence.** All nations and tribes have a religious instinct and a universal belief in a divine being. Cicero once said: "There is no nation so barbarious, no race so savage, as not to be firmly persuaded of the being of a God".



3. **Man's Ability To Conceive Of God Presupposes The Existence Of God.** If there is no God, how could such an idea have originated in the human mind? The fact that men everywhere have conceived of a God shows that there is a reality behind the conception.

4. **The Bible Is Proof That There Is A God.** No one else could have given the world a book that has had so great an influence on the world. All it teaches and reveals show there is a God. Romans 1:20 aptly states, "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse".

5. **The Assumptions Of The Unbeliever Prove The Existence Of God.** If one doesn't believe in God he must assume marvelous results without definite cause. He must also assume the eternity of matter. Finally he must assume that he knows and sees all or else that which he does not know or see may be God.

Truly it is a foolish man who has said there is no God. (Psalm 14:1.) As men lose faith in Divinity, they lose faith in humanity! Where God is outlawed there men are subjugated. Men without God become selfish, immoral, and cruel. All evidence points to God. By faith we accept Him in our lives today as One who guides us toward Eternal Life. "In Him we live, and move, and exist." (Acts. 17:28.) Surely we should take the advice of Jesus: "Have faith in God." (Mark 11:12.)

### **THERE WILL ALWAYS BE GOD**

They cannot shell His temple  
 Nor dynamite His throne;  
 They cannot bomb His city,  
 Nor rob Him of His own.  
 They cannot take Him captive,  
 Nor strike Him dead and blind,  
 Nor starve Him to surrender,  
 Nor make Him change His mind.  
 They cannot cause Him panic,  
 Nor cut off His supplies;  
 They cannot take His kingdom,  
 Nor hurt Him with their lies.  
 Though all the world be shattered,  
 His truth remains the same;  
 His righteous laws still potent,  
 And Father still His name.  
 Though we face war and struggle,  
 And feel their good and rod,  
 We know above confusion,  
 There will always be God!

—H. C. Ede

## कठोर दिल

लेखक एफ० डेविड

आज अधिकतर लोग प्रभु यीशु के उद्धार से वांचित हैं। इसका अर्थ यह हुआ कि लोग खोये हुये हैं। यह बात बिलकुल सत्य है। और इसका एक विशेष कारण है लोगों के कठोर दिल। अर्थात् परमेश्वर के वचन के प्रति लोगों के कठोर दिल। परमेश्वर के वचन की ऐसी बहुत सी बातें हैं जिनके प्रति लोगों के दिल कठोर है। कठोर होने का अर्थ यह हुआ कि वे लोग इन बातों में विश्वास नहीं करते। अथवा उनके दिल पर इस बात का कोई असर नहीं होता। तो आईये उन बातों को देखें :—

आज संसार के अधिकांश लोग परमेश्वर पर विश्वास करते हैं। परन्तु यह बात भी सत्य है कि अधिकतर लोग परमेश्वर के होने में भी विश्वास नहीं करते। बहुत से लोग इस कथन को लेकर अपनी बात की पुष्टि करना चाहते हैं कि “हमने तो परमेश्वर को देखा ही नहीं तो हम क्यों उसमें विश्वास करें ?” लेकिन पवित्र शास्त्र के अनुसार यह बिलकुल अनुचित है। वास्तव में परमेश्वर है। (उत्पत्ति १ : १)। यह बात बिलकुल असत्य है कि परमेश्वर नहीं है। जब हम इस प्राकृति पर नज़र डालते हैं तो हमें कितना ही विचित्र लगता है। प्राकृति में हमें एक ही एक सुन्दर तथा विचित्र वस्तु देखने को मिलती है। क्या यह स्वयं बन गई ? कदाचित्त नहीं। इसके पीछे एक बहुत बड़ी शक्ति है अर्थात् परमेश्वर। ऐसे लोगों के दिल कठोर हैं जो परमेश्वर के होने में विश्वास नहीं करते। वास्तव में बाइबल ऐसे कठोर दिलवालों को मूर्ख की संज्ञा देती है (भजन संहिता १४:१)।

फिर अनेकों ऐसे लोग भी हैं जो इस वास्तविकता पर विश्वास नहीं करते कि यीशु मसीह सारे संसार के पापियों के पापों के कारण मरा। तथा उनको मृत्यु के दण्ड से बचाने के लिए उसने अपनी जान दी। (रोमियों ५ : ८)। आज अधिकतर लोगों के दिल इस सत्य के प्रति भी कठोर हैं। उनका कहना है कि यह कैसे सम्भव हो सकता है कि कोई एक व्यक्ति किन्हीं दूसरे व्यक्तियों के लिए अपने प्राणों की आहुति दे। पतरस अपनी पहली पत्र तथा उसके २ अध्याय में लिखते हुये कहता है “वह आप ही हमारे पापों को अपनी

देह पर लिये हुए क्रूस पर चढ़ गया, जिससे हम पापों के लिए मर 'करके धार्मिकता' के लिये जीवन बिताएं।" जबकि परमेश्वर की प्रेरणा द्वारा लिखा गया वचन यह बताता है तो हम क्यों इस सत्य तथा वास्तविकता के प्रति अपने दिलों को कठोर करें ?

बाइबल हमें केवल एक कलीसिया के विषय में बताती है परन्तु आज संसार में चार सौ से अधिक कलीसियाएं विद्यमान हैं। जिनके अपने-अपने नाम हैं। बाइबल में हम केवल एक कलीसिया के विषय में पढ़ते हैं (इफिसियों ४:१-६), दूसरी अनेक कलीसियाओं को मनुष्यों ने बनाया है परन्तु बाइबल की कलीसिया को प्रभु यीशु ने बनाया है (मत्ती १६ : १८)। तथा वही इस कलीसिया का सिर है (कुलुस्सियों १ : १८) यह कलीसिया प्रभु यीशु का नाम अपने ऊपर रखती है (रोमियो १६:१६) आज संसार में ऐसे अनेक लोग हैं जो अपने को मसीही कहते हैं परन्तु उनके दिल इस सत्य के प्रति कठोर हैं। उनका कहना है कि संसार में जितनी भी कलीसियाएं वर्तमान हैं सब प्रभु यीशु की हैं। सब कलीसियाएं परमेश्वर की है। परन्तु ऐसा नहीं सोचना चाहिए। प्यारे मित्रो, कलीसिया के नाम पर ही आज मसीहीयत बुरी तरह से बंटी हुई है। यदि आज मसीही केवल मसीह की कलीसिया के ही सदस्य होते तो संसार में मसीही लोगों में इतनी फूट नहीं होती। लेकिन सत्य तो यह है कि ऐसे लोगों के दिल इतने कठोर हो गये हैं कि वे इस सत्य को स्वीकार ही नहीं करना चाहते।

आइये अब देखें, उद्धार के विषय में। सदा से ही मनुष्य का यह स्वभाव रहा है कि वह किसी न किसी प्रकार से उद्धार प्राप्त करना चाहता है। अनेक लोगों का कहना है कि यदि हम अच्छे काम करें, दान दें तो हमें हमारे पापों से मुक्ति मिल सकती है। लोगों का कहना है कि जानवरों की बलियाँ चढ़ाने से उद्धार प्राप्त हो सकता है। बहुत से बाइबल सिखाने वालों का कहना है कि केवल प्रभु यीशु पर विश्वास करलो और तुम उद्धार पाओगे। हां, बात तो सही है कि उद्धार पाने के लिए यीशु मसीह पर विश्वास करना चाहिए, परन्तु जब बात आती है कि केवल विश्वास करके तो यह बाइबल के अनुसार सौ प्रतिशत गलत है। दूसरे धर्मों से संबंध रखनेवाले भी ऐसे बहुत से लोग हैं जो प्रभु यीशु पर विश्वास करते हैं। प्रिय मित्रो प्रभु यीशु का उद्धार पाने के लिए तथा उसका अनुयायी बनने के लिए और दूसरी भी अन्य आज्ञाएं हैं जिनको कि पूरा करना अतिआवश्यक है। हां तो देखें बाइबल उद्धार के विषय में क्या कहती है: जैसा कि हमने देखा कि उद्धार प्राप्त करने के लिए

विश्वास करना बहुत आवश्यक है। बाइबल भी इस बात की पुष्टि करती है।

इफिसियों २ : ८ में पौलूस लिखते हुये कहता है, "क्योंकि विश्वास के द्वारा अनुग्रह से ही तुम्हारा उद्धार हुआ है....." और विश्वास बिना उसे प्रसन्न करना अनहोना है, क्योंकि परमेश्वर के पास आने वाले को विश्वास करना चाहिए कि वह है....." (इब्रानियों ११ : ६) तथा प्रेरितों की पुस्तक में पौलूस फिलिप्पी के दरोगा से कहता है कि "प्रभु यीशु पर विश्वास कर, तो तू.....उद्धार पाएगा।" यीशु मसीह ने कहा "जो विश्वास करे और बपतिस्मा ले उसी का उद्धार होगा....." और भी बाइबल में बहुत से पद हैं जो इस बात की पुष्टि करते हैं कि उद्धार के लिए विश्वास करना आवश्यक है। परन्तु याकूब कहता है कि यह विश्वास कर्म सहित होना चाहिए अन्यथा यह अपने स्वभाव में मरा हुआ है। (याकूब २ : १७)

क्योंकि बाइबल में "मसीही" शब्द का उपयोग केवल परिश्रमी तथा मसीह के आज्ञाकारी शिष्यों के लिये ही हुआ है, अतः यह सत्य है कि मसीही बनने के लिए केवल विश्वास ही काफी नहीं है। हां तो अब देखें कि विश्वास के पश्चात् क्या करना चाहिए। इससे पहले कि मैं आपको बाइबल में से इसके विषय में बताऊं मैं आपको यह बता देना चाहता हूँ कि आज अनेकों लोगों के दिल उद्धार के इस विषय के प्रति भी कठोर हैं। बाइबल में प्रेरितों के काम नामक पुस्तक की मन-परिवर्तन का पुस्तक भी कहा जाता है अर्थात् इस पुस्तक में आठ मनपरिवर्तन की घटनाओं के विषय में हम पढ़ते हैं।

यह आठों घटनाएं हमें बताती हैं कि किसी मनुष्य को उद्धार पाने के लिए क्या करना आवश्यक है। उन घटनाओं में हम पढ़ते हैं कि उन लोगों ने सुसमाचार सुना, प्रभु यीशु पर विश्वास किया, पापों से मन फिराया (पश्चाताप) मसीह में विश्वास का अंगीकार किया तथा पापों की क्षमा के लिए बपतिस्मा लिया। बाइबल के अनुसार इन बातों को पूरा करे बगैर मसीही बनना असम्भव है। अतः मसीही बनने के लिए :

(१) सत्य को सुनना चाहिए। "सो विश्वास सुनने से और सुनना मसीह के वचन से होता है।" (रोमियों १०:१७)।

(२) परमेश्वर में तथा यीशु मसीह पर विश्वास करना चाहिए कि वह है और अपने खोजनेवालों को प्रतिफल देता है। (इब्रानियों ११:६)।

(३) अपने पापों से पश्चाताप करना चाहिए। "इसलिए परमेश्वर

अज्ञानता के समयों से आनाकानी करके अब हर जगह सब मनुष्यों को मन फिराने की आज्ञा देता है।” (प्रेरितों १७:३०) ।

(४) हमें मसीह को परमेश्वर का पुत्र स्वीकार करना चाहिए। “कि यदि अपने मुँह से यीशु को प्रमु जानकर अंगीकार करे और अपने मन से विश्वास करे कि परमेश्वर ने उसे मरे हुआओं में से जिलाया तो तू निश्चय उद्धार पाएगा। क्योंकि धार्मिकता के लिए मन से विश्वास किया जाता है, और उद्धार के लिए मुँह से अंगीकार किया जाता है।” (रोमियों १०, ६, १०) ।

(५) फिर यह कि पापों की क्षमा के लिए बपतिस्मा लेना चाहिए।” पतरस ने उनसे कहा, मन फिराओ और तुम में से हर एक अपने-अपने पापों की क्षमा के लिए यीशु मसीह के नाम से बपतिस्मा ले तो तुम पवित्र आत्मा का दान पाओगे।” (प्रेरितों ३:३८) ।

पवित्रशास्त्र के ऐसे और भी अनेक पद हैं जो इन बातों के विषय में बताते हैं ।

प्यारे मित्रो, मेरा पूर्ण विश्वास है कि अनेकों लोग इन सत्यों को भलि भाँति जानते हैं। वे यह भी जानते हैं। कि यह सब वास्तविकता है। परन्तु इन सबको न मानने का एक विशेष कारण है, उनके कठोर दिल। देखें बाइबल ऐसे लोगों के विषय में क्या कहती है “क्योंकि इन लोगों का मन मोटा हो गया है, और वे कानो से ऊँचा सुनते हैं, और उन्होंने अपनी आँखें मूँद ली हैं, कहीं ऐसा न हो कि वे आँखों से देखें, और कानों से सुनें और मन से समझे, और फिर जाएं……” (मत्ति १३:१५) । फिर पवित्रशास्त्र में एक अन्य स्थान पर पौलुस ऐसे लोगों के विषय में कहता है, “क्योंकि ऐसा समय आएगा कि लोग खरा उपदेश न सह सकेंगे पर कानों की खुजली के कारण अपनी अभिलाषाओं के अनुसार अपने लिए बहुतेरे उपदेशक बटोर लेंगे और अपने कान सत्य से फेरकर कथा—कहानियों पर लगाएंगें (२ तिमथियुस ४: २-४) ।

आज हम अपने विषय में देखें, क्या हमारे दिल तो सत्य के प्रति कठोर नहीं हैं। क्योंकि इब्रानियों का लेखक लिखते हुए कहता है “सो हे भाइयो तुम जो स्वर्गीय बुलाहट में भागी हो उस प्रेरित और महायाजक यीशु पर जिसे हम अंगीकार करते हैं ध्यान करो। जो अपने नियुक्त करनेवाले के

लिए विश्वासयोग्य था, जैसा मूसा भी उसके सारे घर में था। क्योंकि वह मूसा से इतना बढ़कर महिमा के योग्य समझा गया है, जितना कि घर का बनानेवाला घर से बढ़कर आदर रखता है। क्योंकि हर एक घर का कोई बनानेवाला होता है, पर जिसने सब कुछ बनाया वह परमेश्वर है। मूसा तो उसके सारे घर में सेवक की नाई विश्वासयोग्य रहा, कि जिन बातों का वर्णन होनेवाला था, उनकी गवाही दे। पर मसीह पुत्र की नाई उसके घर का अधिकारी है और उसका घर हम हैं, यदि हम साहस कर, अपनी आशा के घमण्ड पर अन्त तक दृढ़ता से स्थिर रहें। सो जैसा पवित्र आत्मा कहता है, कि यदि आज तुम उसका शब्द सुनो तो अपने मन को कठोर न करो, जैसा कि क्रोध दिलाने के समय और परिक्षा के दिन जंगल में किया था। जहाँ तुम्हारे बापदादों ने मुझे जाँचकर परखा और चालिस वर्ष तक मेरे काम देखे। इस कारण मैं उस समय के लोगों से रूठा रहा और कहा, कि इनके मन सदा भटकते रहते हैं, और इन्होंने मेरे लोगों को नहीं पहचाना। तब मैंने क्रोध में आकर शपथ खाई, कि वे मेरे विश्राम में प्रवेश करने न पाएंगे। हे भाइयो, चौकस रहो, कि तुम में ऐसा बुरा और अविश्वासी मन न हो जो जीविते परमेश्वर से दूर हट जाय। बरन जिस दिन तक आज का दिन कहा जाता है, हर दिन एक दूसरे को समझाते हो ऐसा न रहो, कि तुम मे से कोई जन पाप के छल में आकर कठोर हो जाए।” (इब्रानियों ३:१-१३,)। और इब्रानियों के इसी अध्याय के उन्नीसवें पद में हम पढ़ते हैं कि वे अर्थात् इस्राएली लोग अपने अविश्वास के कारण विश्राम में प्रवेश न कर पाए। उन लोगों ने अपने मनों को परमेश्वर के प्रति कठोर बनाया तथा नाश हुये। यदि आज हमारे मन भी अविश्वास के कारण कठोर हैं तो हमारे लिए स्वर्ग के राज्य अथवा अनन्त जीवन की कोई आशा नहीं है।

एक और स्थान पर इब्रानियों का लेखक लिखते हुये बताता है “क्योंकि सच्चाई की पहिचान प्राप्त करने के बाद यदि हम जानबूझकर पाप करते रहे तो पापों के लिए फिर कोई बलिदान बाकि नहीं”। (इब्रानियों १०:२६)। यदि हम सत्य को जानते हुये भी जानबूझकर पाप करें तो यह कितना बड़ा स्राप होगा। जरा सोचिए.....आपका दिल.....इन सत्यों के प्रति कठोर है अथवा नम्र ? आइये हम अपने तथा मनुष्यों के विचारों को त्यागकर अपने दिलों को परमेश्वर के प्रति नम्र करें तथा सत्य को मानें। “और सत्य को जानोगे, और सत्य तुम्हें स्वतन्त्र करेगा।” (यूहन्ना ८:३२)।



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