

THE BIBLE TEACHER

A stylized sunburst graphic consisting of several white, rounded, fan-like shapes radiating from a central point, set against a black background. The shapes are arranged in a semi-circular arc.

*The
Bible
Teacher*

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THE BIBLE TEACHER

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EDITORIAL

What Young People Should Bring To Their Marriage

Marriage is ordained of God. (Genesis 2:18). It is his way of uniting man and woman to make them one, to make them happy, and for the purpose of reproduction. (Genesis 2:21-25; 1:28). There is no acceptable substitute. While some try to take shortcuts by ignoring marriage altogether or by turning marriage into a game of divorce and remarriage, such people will have to reap the consequences for their careless and foolish ways. (Matthew 19:9; Romans 6:23). Such is to say that we as Christian parents need to teach and prepare our children for the serious step of marriage. They need to know what marriage is, what it involves, what will be required of them, and that it is for life. They need to be convinced of the necessity of choosing a Christian mate to enable them to have a Christian home. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). There will be enough problems along life's way to cope with where both are Christians. How foolish to create problems and difficulties, and perhaps to lose one's soul, and souls of the children, by marrying a non Christian.

As important as the foregoing may be, at this particular time we want to discuss what a young man or woman should bring to their marriage. It is natural and normal for one to grow up and desire to have a companion for life. (Ephesians 5:31). While many things may be expected of that chosen one, what about you and what you may have to offer? You have an obligation likewise. What will you bring to your marriage? What you present at the time of your wedding may determine the kind of marriage you have. Please think seriously about the things that we are going to suggest in this article.

Let's begin with the young man who is looking forward to marriage. Yes, just as much is expected of him as the young woman that he will be making his wife. (1 Timothy 4:12). There is no double standard in this case. The girl has as much right to expect the best out of the man that she is going to marry as he has right to expect of her. In the first place, we are talking about a situation where this young man has not been married before. We are also talking about him having chosen one who has not been married before. That means that he, as well as she, may marry scripturally. (Matthew 19:9; Luke 16:18). But there are other things also that should be considered. He should bring to his marriage a moral pure body, one that has not been involved in any type of immorality. (1 Timothy 5:22). It is certainly not right for a young man to think that he can have affairs with one or more young ladies and then expect his future wife to be a virgin. He should also offer himself in marriage as one who is morally pure. He should be one who has practiced cleanliness and he ought to have good habits. Smoking, drinking, gambling, cursing and such like should have no place in his life. (1 Thessalonians 5:22). He should also bring to his marriage a good character and a good name. (Proverbs 22:1). If at all possible he should have a good education, a job, and some definite plans for the future. He should be wise in his use of money. He should be a hard worker, suitable, and dependable. Of course above everything else he should be a Christian and a faithful Christian. Surely the foregoing would suggest such. In offering himself, good morals, and anything else that he may have in the way of

material things, name, or position, he really could offer nothing greater than being a faithful Christian. (Romans 12:1,2). That means that he brings the very best to marriage, that this assures his wife, and later his children, that in having a Christian marriage and a Christian home that they have the basis to have the best life possible. While other marriages may fail, or may be filled with all kinds of problems, difficulties, and unhappiness, surely the Christian marriage, family, and home, will come nearer surviving and bringing happiness and fulfillment to its members than could be had in any other way. Therefore much depends on what this young man brings to his marriage, whether he can have the respect of his future wife, be the kind that will be able to give leadership and guidance to his future family, and be the husband and father that will make the marriage work. So there is much involved and no young man should enter into it without much thought, prayer, and preparation.

But now let's turn to the young woman and discuss the things that she should bring to her marriage. We are also assuming that she is in position to be scripturally married, as well as the one that she is going to marry. She should be a Christian, and a faithful Christian (Revelation 2:10), and she should likewise marry only a Christian. Surely if she is a faithful Christian then she will settle for no less. But she should bring to her marriage a good name, a good reputation, and a pure body. (1 Timothy 5:1,2). She should come to her partner on the wedding night as a virgin one who has not been involved in immoral and ungodly acts and practices. (1 Corinthians 7:25; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Titus 2:5). She should be taking care of her health and thus present a healthy body in anticipation of her future children. She should also come with good habits, keeping her body and clothes clean, and abstaining from all bad habits. She should know how to keep a clean house, wash, iron, cook, and all the other things that will go with being a wife, a mother, and having her own house. (1 Timothy 5:14). She should not be thinking of being rich, with lots of servants to wait on her and the family, with the latest luxuries, with nothing to do but to attend

parties and gossip and thus to neglect her husband and family (1 Timothy 6:9; 1 Timothy 5:13). She should come to marriage with an understanding that she will now belong to her husband, respect him, and that they will have their own home. (Titus 2:4, 5; 1 Peter 3:14). This means that she will have to cut loose from the parents and her past life, that every time there is some little misunderstanding that she cannot run off and go back home to her mother for sympathy. (Ephesians 5:31). She will have to be mentally prepared to adjust to this new and different life. When the children are born she will have to be prepared to care for them, give them love, and to teach and train them along with her husband. (Titus 2:3, 4). Yes, much will be required and a lot will be expected of her when she comes to the point of marriage. She must be as well prepared as possible. She also needs to come educated so she can stand with her husband, be his wife, his partner, and his friend. She will want him to be proud of her and to be able to introduce her gladly as his wife and the mother of his children. No doubt there are many other good things that need to be brought, but these are enough to suggest that it is a serious matter to contemplate marriage.

While we have been discussing what both the young man and woman will want to bring to their marriage, may we emphasize again that marriage for them can be one of the most important wonderful, and beautiful things that can ever come into their lives. They need to face it seriously, prayerfully, and recognize that it is for life. They need to come with lots of love for each other, patience in dealing with one another, and a forgiving spirit in handling the faults of the other. They need to come with respect for one another, recognizing the need for each other, being dedicated to be faithful to one another for the rest of their lives. They need to come with the spirit of working together, helping each other, and sharing what they have with one another. What a beautiful thought—for a couple like that to come together in marriage, to be united as one, to have a family, and to live for one another and for God for the remainder of their life time.

You have probably concluded that I have depicted in the foregoing young people who are perfect, without fault, and

that those who are unable to measure up to such a standard would be unfit for marriage. It is true that I have tried to show what ideally young people should bring to their marriage, and certainly all should aim for such high standards, but I realize that there are many people, different types of people, even some Christian people, who have made mistakes, morally and otherwise, but who have a desire to do better and who want to marry and have a good home. May I suggest that one, or a couple, who is scripturally eligible for marriage, should bring to their marriage the best that they have to offer. That's the whole point of this lesson, and it is my prayer that those of you who are planning to be wed now or later will attempt to do just that. For in this case it is not just you that you must think about, but you must also think about the one that you are marrying and you surely want to offer the very best you can give. And if both of you feel this way, and if you agree to accept each other in marriage, in spite of the mistakes of the past or the faults that you may have, then may you have a wonderful marriage and a Christian home. Surely the Father in heaven will bless such a marriage and home.



**associate
editorial**

“Pleading For The Restoration Of Pure New Testament Christianity”

This is the sentence inscribed on every issue of this magazine, “The Bible Teacher”. The word restoration means to bring back to original state or to re-establish. The word pure means something unmixed, unadulterated, or perfectly in tune. Thus, we are pleading with all religious people to come back to the original state, to unmixed, unadulterated Christianity perfectly in tune with the word of God. But why is this so?

1. Because the Bible says, there is only one body (Ephesians 4:4) or the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27), and it further explains that this one body is the church (Ephesians 1:22,23). Also, that Christ or his body is not divided. (1 Corinthians 1:13). But people through the years have brought in existence various bodies, churches with conflicting brands and doctrines.

2. Because the Bible says, there is only one baptism. (Ephesians 4:5), and it further teaches that this one baptism is a burial or immersion in water. (Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:12; Acts 10:47; Acts 8:35-39). But contrary to this fact denominational churches teach sprinkling or pouring of water. Not only so, but they also teach that baptism has nothing to do with one's salvation but it is just a sign of obedience. On the other hand, the Bible teaches that one must be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16), and for the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38).

3. Because the Bible says, there is only one gospel and only one way of salvation (Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 1:16); therefore, it teaches all men to believe in Christ, and to repent of sins, and to confess Christ the Son of God, and to be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8). But men preach today a perverted gospel of 'faith only' and encourage people to merely believe in Christ or to pray for salvation.

4. Because the Bible says, there is only one name given whereby we can be saved, the name of Christ. (Acts 4:12; Philippians 2:9). At least three times at different places in the New Testament the disciples of Christ are called by the name. *Christian* (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). But people today are called by various unscriptural names. Since salvation is in the name of Christ, how can a person expect to be saved when he is called a Methodist, or Baptist, or Pentecostal, or Brethren, or Lutheran, etc., etc. ?

5. Because we are admonished, "Now I beseech you, brethren," said the apostle Paul, "by the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10). And commanded, to "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all". (Ephesians 4:3-6). And exhorted, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation," says Jude, the disciple of the Lord, "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3).

Yes, for these and other similar reasons we are pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity. And we hope and pray that as you continue to read this magazine in future, you will see the truth and by obeying it you too will become a part of pure New Testament Christianity which is unmixed and unadulterated, and perfectly in tune with God's word.

He Could Not Be Hid

Garland Elkins

The New Testament reveals numerous characteristic of our Lord. One of these is set out in Mark 7:24, "And from thence he arose, and went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a house, and would have no man know it; and he could not be hid." The statement "and he could not be hid" was not only true on that occasion but is also just as true in numerous other ways. He existed with the Father before the beginning of time. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1-4). In the patriarchal age he was

revealed to Abraham, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8:56). The many altars and sacrifices kept alive the expectation of his coming. In the Mosiac age, the sacrifice offerings, tabernacle services, priests and other things pointed to his coming. (Gal. 3:16-29; Hebrews 9, 10).

He Could Not Be Hid While On Earth

It can be seen by the great crowds that followed him that he could not be hid while on earth. "And from thence he arose, and went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered into a house, and would have no man know it and he could not be hid." (Mark 7:24). His teachings, miracles, and life were not concealed. By implication even his enemies admitted that the entire nation of the Jews were disturbed by his teaching. (Lk. 23:1-5). Before the sermon on the mount people from many regions followed him. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria : and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." (Mt. 4:23-25). "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him." (Mt. 8:1). When he withdrew into the desert places people came to him from every place. "But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places : and they came to him from every quarter." (Mark 1:45).

He Could Not Be Hid In The Lives Of His Disciples

The principles of Christ were visible to all in the lives of his followers. Even the wicked rulers of the Jews took note of this. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they

marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13). He could not be hid in the life and countenance of Stephen the first Christian martyr. "And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." (Acts 6:15). "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep". (Acts 7:59,60). Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20). He carried about in his body the marks of Jesus. "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

Attitudes and Deeds of Present Day Christians Cannot Be Hid

Someone has said, "You cannot communicate across a gulf as wide as that between the church and the world." How utterly mistaken! When possible we must teach the truth to the world. This Jesus commanded us to do "And he said unto them, Go, ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15, 16), "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15). When the world will not allow us to speak to it, we must remember that world has eyes as well as ears, and when the gulf is too wide to speak across, it is not too wide to shine across. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Mt. 5:16).

Peter instructed wives that through the practice of this principle they might gain their unbelieving husbands. He said, "Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." (I Pet. 3:1).

We communicate attitude to a great extent. A little girl asked her mother, "Are you happy, Momie?" The mother replied that she was happy. "Then why don't you tell your face that you are happy?" asked the child.

It was not only the words of the apostles and other faithful Christians of the first century that made them so powerfully influential. It was their words and deeds. Their words and deeds were fused into light that broke through darkened minds bringing them face to face with the Lord and the truth of his gospel. This important function of the early church is very beautifully set out in Philippians 2:15, 16. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither, laboured in vain."

The Size Of Noah's Ark

The ark that Noah built thousands of Years ago in pre-secular history to save himself, his family and the animals from the flood was the largest ship built by man until the 18th Century of our era. According to the Bible, the ark was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. The cubit in Biblical times measured anywhere from 18 to 25 inches depending on what ancient nation's standards were used. Assuming the 18 inch cubit the ark would be 450 feet long 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. The proportion of length to width to height is still used by modern ship builders, the GREAT EASTERN built in 1858 that laid the North Atlantic transcontinental cable, was 629 feet 83 feet x 58 feet.

An ark of these proportions, built not as a pleasure craft but for the preservation of man and animals, would be almost impossible to capsize.

The ark contained 1,518, 750 cubic feet. The three decks totaled 101,250 square feet. The water displacement of the ark would be 43,300 tons (which is nearly equal to the great TITANIC that sank April 14-15, 1912).

The ark was made of gopher wood, which is probably the same (or similar to) what we call cypress. The Phoenicians built their boats of cypress wood. Alexander the Great built his fleet of this wood at Babylon. The doors of St. Peter's church in Rome are of cypress wood and they are now over a thousand Years old.

The ark (literally in the Hebrew..., "box") was caulked ("pitched") inside and out with an asphalt, tar-like substance called "pitch". This would make it watertight and allow it to swell and shrink without leaking.

Noah did not have to go on an "African Safari" to gather the animals because God caused them to come to him (Gen. 6:20). We do not know how many species Noah took in the ark. He could have taken a dog-kind, a cow kind, a cat-kind, a horse-kind, etc., and all the modern breeds and species we are familiar with today could have come from these original pairs. We do know that all men on the earth today came from Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen. 9:19; 10:23). There are about 190 different racial types of men and over 1000 different body shapes and sizes today. The same thing could be true with the variety of the animals. In the beginning God put within all creatures vast genetic structures. Different species and breeds of animals could have developed in time because of the power of genes. For example, Noah did not take a Siamese cat on the ark because it was breed developed by man a long time after the ark was past history. (The same goes for many modern breeds of cattle, horses, dogs, etc.).

Assuming though that Noah did take with him on the ark all the species available at the time of the flood this would not be impossible. Sixty percent of all species today are marine and would not be on the ark since only land living

creatures were destroyed. One half of all land creatures are smaller than rats about six hundred land creatures are between the size rats and sheep, and only three hundred land creature are larger than sheep. According to dimensions of the ark Noah had room 500 railord boxcar loads of animals. Noah had plenty of room because if he took the minimum amount necessary to replenish the earth with the earth's species today it would only take 167 boxcar loads.

Is Your Conscience A Safe Guide

Clifford Dixon

Many depend upon their consciences as their guides. Conscience is defined by Liddell and Scott as "a knowing with oneself, consciousness." So the conscience of man is that feeling of pleasure when he does what he thinks is right, and of pain when he does what he thinks is wrong. Conscience backs up man's moral judgment. Saul of Tarsus always did what he thought was right therefore he always had a good conscience. (Acts 23:1; 26:9,10). Saul's information was wrong when he persecuted Christians and his thinking he was right in it was an error of moral judgment. In line with these thoughts we notice that man can religiously be in four states.

1. **He can have the wrong information and the right attitude.** Saul said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." (Acts 26:9). He had been informed by his Jewish brethren and within himself that this was doing God a service. He later said, "Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:15). He had the wrong information and at the same time a great desire to do God's service. Many good people are in this condition today. Such do not need to be old that they are all right. They should be given the right

information and urged to keep their desire to please God and to do him service—but to do the right thing—according to the word of God.

2. Man can have the right information and the wrong attitude. The Sadducees and Pharisees of Christ's day were like this. They saw the miracles that proved Jesus to be the Son of God. They admitted that Jesus did many miracles, yet set about to stop him, which finally resulted in his being crucified. They tried to contend that Christ was casting out devils by Beelzebub, and sought to catch him in some way that would make him contradict himself. They were never successful. We ask, "Why did they not believe on him?" The answer is because even though they had sufficient proof that he was the Son of God they had the wrong attitude. Jesus said, "This people's hearts are waxed gross, and their ears they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and be converted and I should heal them." (Mat. 13:15). If your attitude is wrong no matter how good the information given might be, it will not result in the change of your life. There must also be a desire to do the will of God.

3. Man can have the wrong information and the wrong attitude. Such are deluded by false teaching. Paul gave a grave warning of an apostasy of the church from the truth. He said the man of sin would sit in the temple of God, showing himself to be God and could deceive people with "powers, signs, and lying wonders." He continued, "With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:10-12). The reason these had a strong delusion to believe a lie is that they loved not the truth to begin with. Such people will not endure sound doctrine. They will demand that the wrong information be preached to them so their itching ears will be tickled. (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

4. Man can also have the right information and the right attitude. The right information is the gospel of Jesus Christ, God's power to save men that believe it. (Rom. 1:16). Paul declares, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." (Rom. 2:16). The right attitude is like that of Cornelius, who said, "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." The right attitude like that of Saul when he asked, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). How happy then is the one with the right attitude who is presented with the right information for he will most certainly act upon it and be saved.

Turncoat Christian

Joe L. Connell

Mentioned in the Bible are different persons who turned from the faith they had once embraced. Demas and Judas are two. Peter writes warning us, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (II Peter 2:20-22).

Too many present day Christians have become Turncoat Christians. Why??? May be a study that was made of the Korean war prisoners who had chosen to stay in North Korea can help us understand and help the Turncoat Christians too.

Twenty-one prisoners were finally repatriated. The study showed all twenty-one had four things in common.

1. Lack of love in the home when they were children.
2. Poverty.
3. Provincialism (an expression of opinion or behavior reflecting a background of isolated experience).
4. Illiteracy.

Now let us apply this to Christians who turn away from a family of God. No doubt we will discover they lacked love in their family and somehow the Church, not knowing or understanding, may not have done the best it could. Yet how can the Church be totally blamed for the inner workings of the heart of another man? Spiritual poverty can easily cause a lack of love and commitment.

Others apparently leave the Church because they cannot rid themselves of certain opinions and behaviour patterns that resulted from their social environment, economical backgrounds.

Finally, spiritual illiteracy causes many to turn back. Educational illiteracy refers to anyone ten years of age or over who is unable to read and write in any language. Spiritual illiteracy is anyone who is unable to read, write and talk in the language of the Bible, because of lack of knowledge. In other words, a lack of Bible say things in Bible ways and terms.

It is never too late for a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven to be repatriated. Jesus stands always at the door knocking. Whosoever will let him, COME.

Worship-Singing

Shelby G. Floyd

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19). In our worship to God we must do only that which God has authorized in his word. (Matt. 15:9.) Singing is authorized in worship to God but instrumental music is not. God has commanded us to sing in our worship which not only glorifies him but it edifies man.

In singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, the worshippers are actually speaking to each other. The term *speaking* indicates that one is to use words in order to declare one's mind and disclose one's thoughts. Therefore, in singing, the worshipper is conversing with other worshippers through the avenue of song.

The parallel reading in the book of Colossians goes one step further and indicates that in our singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, we not only speak one to another, but we teach and admonish one another. “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.)

Today there is a dangerous trend in some of the churches of Christ in having special quarters, etc., to perform during the worship services. When Paul said to the Ephesians “speaking to yourselves” he commanded each Christian to sing and take part in the speaking, teaching and admonishing of each other. *Yourselves* is a reflexive pronoun used in this case as a reciprocal pronoun. Therefore, the Ephesians were to sing to each other. This excludes the type of singing which entertains while others sit and listen.

Paul not only specified the kind of music the church is to have in its worship, which is singing, but he also specified the nature of the songs. The church is to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, which therefore excludes every other kind

of song. A psalm is a pious song such as the psalms of David set to music. (cf. Thayer, pg. 675.) A hymn is a sacred song sung in praise of God. (cf. Thayer, pg. 637.) Spiritual songs is a general reference to any religious song of a spiritual nature. In worship to God, the only kind of music which is authorized is singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord. When Paul said to sing and make melody, he excluded every other kind of music.

While everyone will admit that singing is certainly pleasing in the worship to God; some have tried to make it appear that the phrase "making melody" which is conjoined to singing, authorizes the use of instrumental music in the worship of God. Therefore, let us make a close examination of this phrase "making melody." It translates the word psallo, which it is true in classical Greek meant: "To touch or strike a chord; to twang the strings of musical instruments so that they gently vibrate; to play on a stringed instrument, to play the harp, etc.; to sing to the music of the harp." But Thayer says in the New Testament it means, "To sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song." (Thayer, pg. 675.)

The child of God then is to sing and make melody. Fortunately, the apostle Paul told us what instrument the Christian is to use in singing and making his melody. It is not to be a melody played upon a harp, stringed instrument or an organ, but it is a melody which is to be played in the heart.

The phrase "in your heart" is dative of instrument. Therefore the heart is the instrument in which one is to make melody. The heart as it is used here denotes the centre and seat of spiritual life. Therefore, when Paul said "make melody in your heart" he meant that one is to make melody in, "the soul or mind as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavours." (Thayer pg. 325.)

If making melody means that one is to play on a mechanical instrument of music, then everyone would be commanded to do that, but very few people have the ability to play a musical instrument. But, it doesn't mean that. It means that we are to make melody in the inward man, the heart, which

everyone has the ability to do. Everyone can sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. This is what Paul had in mind when he wrote to the Corinthians and said, "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also : I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (I Cor. 14:15).

Some have tried to uphold instrumental music in worship on the basis of the silence of the scriptures. Silence, however, does not authorize anything. Concerning the silence of the scriptures, N.B. Hardeman, the prince of preachers, said, "For about three dozen times in the Old Testament instruments of music are mentioned in connection with the worship of God ; but when you turn to the New Testament, not three dozen times, not even one time, is it thus mentioned, showing beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt that while it prevailed throughout the days of David and Subsequent thereto under Judaism, at the very institution and inauguration of the Christian dispensation and of the church of the living God it was purposely left out. Therefore the silence of the scriptures regarding it certainly ought to have some moment and some weight upon those who rely upon the New Testament". (N.B. Hardeman, *Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons, Vol. II, pg. 268-269.*)

Stop and Think

S.D. Bittle

"Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do : and the God of peace shall be with you" (Philippians 4:8,9). Our Lord, while creating us, gave us a blessing which made us dominant over the other creations. This blessing is a will or

mind. The capability man has to reason intelligently on his own, the power to think, as implied in the text, this is how we bear the image of Christ.

A man is like a goldfish bowl. Whatever is on the inside can be seen without. As you think, you live. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). The way that a man conducts his life is the scrapbook of his thoughts. He who determines to live a clean and pure Christian life must first desire this from the depths of his heart.

Note next that the apostle Paul did not say "some things," but "whatsoever things," meaning all things. In verse 9, we are told to use that which was taught by Paul. What are these teachings?

1. Not to think too highly of oneself; "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3).

2. To rejoice—here, I believe Paul shows the power of comfort which the gospel has for one who is about to be tried for his life. But only to one who has made a total commitment to Christ. He not only rejoices, but bids others to rejoice also (Phil. 4:4). "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice."

3. To pray—"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). Paul was telling us that instead of sitting and worrying about anything to take it to the Lord in prayer and trust that all things work for the good. He mentioned three components in the appeal to God: PRAYER, the pouring out of an individual's soul; SUPPLICATION, asking the Lord of our needs; THANKSGIVING, we should not go to the Lord grumbling and complaining, but instead with a thankful heart for all the many, many blessings which we have.

Paul mentioned the things we have seen in Him that we should exemplify.

1. An example of suffering for the belief we have in Christ (II Cor. 11:23-25). "Are they ministers in Christ? (I

speaking as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep." As Christians we should be proud that we have the privilege to suffer for the cause of Christ.

2. An example of determination. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13,14). As Christians, we can never let sin knock us out. It may knock us down, as we all sin (I John 1:10) but we have to get up and move forward. If we keep looking over our shoulder, behind us, we will never be able to make any progress. That is why Paul says that he forgets those things which are behind and presses on.

3. An example of contentment. "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13). Don't gripe to the Lord or anyone else for the wants you have. Instead, thank the Lord for what we do have. Look at the needs of others and humble yourself.

A person's good thoughts will make for a good life. A well-lived life makes for a heavenly blessing. Turn your thoughts heavenward and enjoy an inward peace: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee".

The Antioch Church, An Example for Today

Wendell Winkler

I. The Antioch Church was Blessed with Great Preachers

There were the prophets and teachers such as Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Saul, Judas and Silas. (Acts 11 : 26; 13 : 1 ; 15 : 22, 32-35.) Brethren, as goes the pulpit so goes the church ! Weak pulpits will result in weak churches. Strong pulpits will result in strong churches. However, in the eyes of some preaching is almost at the bottom of the totem pole of on the preacher's points of concentration and work, even in the eyes of some preachers ! The power of preaching cannot be overemphasized : (1) through preaching men are drawn to Christ, Jn. 6 : 44, 45 ; (2) through preaching men are saved, 1 Cor. 1 : 21 ; (3) through preaching God manifests his word, Titus 1 : 3 ; (4) through preaching faith is produced in the human heart, Rom. 10 : 13-17. See also 1 Cor. 9 : 16.

II. The Antioch Church was sound in Doctrine

Certain men had come from Judea to Antioch and were teaching that circumcision was binding. The matter was not handled by letting it "die of its own accord." Brethren, this is not the way you deal with error ! Error, like Johnson grass, must be handled from the roots up. It must be reprov'd, exposed and expelled ! Now, in order to handle this question of circumcision it was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other brethren should go up to Jerusalem "unto the apostles and elders about this question." (Acts 15 : 2.) Does not this suggest that they were desirous of having apostolic authority for all that they did ? And, so must we.

III. The Antioch Church was Benevolent in Heart and Hand

When the great famine came in the days of Claudius Caesar the hearts and hands of the Antioch disciples were extended toward the brethren in Judea. Accordingly, we read of the Antioch disciples. "Then the disciples, every man according to his ability determined to send relief unto the

brethren which dwelt in Judea ; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.” (Acts 11 : 27-30.) This response was not just a mechanical action ; rather, such was the spontaneous action of compassionate hearts. After all, were they not all members of the same body ? (1 Cor. 12 : 13 ff.) Such benevolence and generosity as manifested by the Antioch brethren was reminiscent of the same attitude and disposition evidenced in the Jerusalem church. (Acts 2 : 44, 45 ; 4 : 31-37.) Too, such reminds us of the beautiful generosity of the magnificent Macedonians of 2 Cor. 8 : 1-5. Pure religion consists of assisting the needy. (Jas. 1 : 27.) As we have opportunity we are to do good unto all men, especially unto those of the household of faith. (Gal. 6 : 20.) The love of God does not dwell in the heart of him who does otherwise. (1 Jn. 3 : 17.) One of these days God is going to divide mankind right down the middle, and one of the decisive factors involved therein will be whether or not benevolence of heart and hand have been practiced. (Matt. 25 : 31-46.) Brethren, this is not a plea for the social gospel : rather, it is a plea for us to have benevolent hearts and hands to assist people in their need so as to be able to reach their souls in converting them to Christ. Benevolence is to be evangelism at work.

IV. The Antioch Church was Liberal in Giving

Again we refer back to Acts 11 : 27-30 where the Antioch disciples sent relief to the Judean brethren on the occasion of the great famine, thus illustrating their liberality in giving. Though the famine was to reach “throughout the world.” Antioch did not reason. “Let us first see how severe the famine is going to be with ourselves and immediate neighbours : and, then, if we have anything to spare we will send it to our more distant brethren.” They took whatever risk, whatever hazard, so as to be able to send relief to their brethren. What faith ! What love ! what commitment ! It is interesting to note that the most impressive example of liberality took place at the time (1) when much people were being added to the Lord, Acts 11 : 24, and (2) when Barnabas and Saul had assembled themselves with the church and were teaching much people,

Acts 11 : 26. The point is this : liberality always thrives in an atmosphere of evangelism, and will be in direct proportion to the teaching emphasis of the local church.

V. Antioch was a Teaching church

The church grew out of teaching. (Acts 11 : 19-21.) Upon his arrival, Barnabas exhorted the church. (Acts 11 : 22, 23.) Saul and Barnabas taught the church for a whole year. (Acts 11 : 26.) There were teachers in the church. (Acts 13 : 1.) Yes, Antioch was a teaching church. And, they grew ! (Acts 11 : 21, 24.) Why ? They believed in the power of the word ! They believed in the power of teaching and preaching ! They had a mission program "at home." Antioch was a soul-winning church. It was an evangelistic church. Correspondingly it was a teaching church. There is absolutely no substitute for teaching.

VI. Antioch was Missionary in Outreach

All three of Paul's missionary journeys started from Antioch. Are we not grateful that Antioch did not work on the basis that "charity begins at home"—and stay there ? They had an outreach to the unreached. Brethren, we must reach out or fade out. If a church is not a missionary church, it will soon be a missing church. Evangelism is the life of the church. It is evangelize or fossilize. Any church that is not a mission hurch will soon become a mission field. When passion for lost souls disappears in the local church God writes "Ichabod" over the portals. Yes, Antioch took the great commission seriously. (Matt. 28 : 18-20 ; Mk. 16 : 15, 16.) The early church took the gospel to the then known world. (Col. 1 : 23.) Marching beneath the same orders and with the same gospel, but with far greater resources and larger numbers, why cannot we do the same !

CONCLUSION

As Antioch became the base for Gentile evangelism, may congregations of the Lord's church throughout our great and wonderful brotherhood be the base of reaching out in to the areas of the world where Christ is not yet known.

What About Easter?

Dan Jenkins

It may come as quite a shock to some to learn that Easter does not find its beginning with the resurrection of Jesus. In fact nowhere in the New Testament can you find any evidence at all that the festival called Easter was kept by the followers of Jesus. The idea that one special day each year should be reserved for celebration of His resurrection is unknown in the Bible and violates the principle of not adding to the word of God. (See Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18,19.)

Where did Easter come from if it is not of Christian origin? In various pagan societies were found many festivals connected with the advent of spring. Among the ancient Sumerian culture in Mesopotamia exists an early explanation of spring. According to this legend Tammuz (whose name means "true son of the deep waters") was married to Inanna (also called Ishtar) the "mother goddess". When Tammuz died, Inanna followed him to the underworld. Due to the absence of Inanna, the earth lost its fertility, crops ceased to grow, all life was threatened. When Ea, god of water and wisdom, sent a messenger to the underworld they were allowed to return from the realm of the dead six months each year, thus the advent of spring.

This ancient legend spread throughout the pagan world with only slight changes in the account and the names adapted to fit each culture. In Greece Tammuz was called Adonis, Inanna was called Aphrodite. In Asia Minor they were Attis and Cybele; in Egypt they were Osiris and Isis; in Syria they were Adon and Astarte.

Each culture gave something to this festival. The Egyptians added the aspect of Tammuz being brought back in an egg. When he emerged from the broken egg, spring had come. The Persians, too, used the egg in celebration of their spring festival. Chambers' Encyclopedia states, "The ancient Persians, when they kept the festival of the solar new year in March, mutually presented each other with coloured eggs."

Among the Germans the practice was to have a bonfire before the advent of spring and then a sunrise service where all the

people faced east to welcome the coming of spring. (Others, because of its fertility, added the rabbit to their celebration.) When the sun arose a joyous day followed with various rites and games. A favourite game among the children was the finding of hidden coloured eggs, some of the eggs were given as an offering to the spring goddess and the others were eaten.

At its beginning the spring goddess in Germany was known by the local name, Sunna. When people from the east moved to this area they gave the name Ishtar to this deity. The Germans pronounced it slightly different, Eostre. As more and more people from the east moved into this part of Europe the festival became more popular. This is the background of much that is commonly associated with Easter today.

As already noted there is not one thing that would associate Easter with Christ in the early church. One must look to the beginning of the Catholic church to find Easter being a part of "Christian religion". Following the death of the apostles a gradual departure developed. In spite of repeated warnings by Christ and the apostles the early Christians were to find their compromising spirit so polluted the pure religion of Jesus that within a few hundred years little remained of the church begun by Jesus.

When "Christianity" spread with real force into Germany the practice of celebrating a spring festival was centuries old. As Judaism was a problem in the first century church and many wanted to adopt Judaistic practices into the infant church so this pagan festival became a problem to the followers of Jesus in Germany. The first century church recognized that the religion of Jesus has Jesus as king, and not one thing could be added to the church begun by Jesus without taking Him from the throne and putting their own wishes there. Unfortunately such a spirit did not prevail in Germany.

The practice of the apostate church was to be so concerned about numbers and growth that they tried to make the religion of Jesus more attractive to the masses by adapting local pagan customs in their own teaching. As the resurrection of Jesus and the advent of spring were almost at the same time of the year they simply brought over into the "Christian" religion

that which has no origin with Christ! At the sacrifice of truth the bunny, the eggs, the sunrise service were simply accepted with only slight modification.

How tragic it is that the Protestant reformation lost sight of its original aims. There were many aspects of Catholicism that were rejected, there simply was no authority for them! How unfortunate it is that all that finds its origin in the apostate church was not laid aside! The truth of the matter is there is just as much authority for having Easter as there is for having the pope! The very reason one could give for rejecting an unauthorized pope could be given for rejecting the setting aside of one day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Before you celebrate Easter as a religious day I urge you to study the matter carefully. I know of no source that would indicate that Easter was celebrated by the first century church. The Encyclopedia Britannica states, "There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers." Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia says the following about Easter, "It embodies traditions of an ancient time ante-dating the raise of Christianity." Later in the same article it discusses the goddess Eastre. "Her festival was celebrated on the day of the vernal equinox, and traditions associated with the festival survive in the familiar Easter bunny, symbol of the fertile rabbit, and in the equally familiar coloured Easter eggs originally painted with gay hues to represent the sunlight of spring."

To celebrate Easter as a religious festival is to follow a practice that began, not with the resurrection of Jesus, but with the goddess Easter. Easter as a religious celebration is pagan in origin, it is not a "Christian Holy Day". We need to honor Christ in the way He teaches on the day He authorizes and not follow the Catholic church in simply adapting pagan practices and calling them "Christian".

“WE DON'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST”

J.C. Choate

Recently a brother told me about an experience he had with some denominational people who operated a printing press. He said that on going to them to check about some printing costs that they responded by saying, “We don't want to have anything to do with you people of the church of Christ.” Another brother told me that his Pentecostal classmates reacted in a similar fashion when he invited them to worship. And on and on I could go with other such instances which would indicate that for some reason a lot of people have a disliking for the Lord's church. But why should this be?

Please think with me for a few minutes. Why would anyone not like the church of Christ? Why would they want to shun it, not have anything to do with it? What have we done to cause such feelings on the part of our religious friends? Have we done them some wrong? Have we hurt their feelings? Could it be that we are not teaching the truth? Or could it be that they have such feelings because we are teaching the truth?

As far as I know we who are members of the church of Christ love all people. We even love those who disagree with us religiously. We try to be kind and friendly with all. We encourage everyone to come and worship with us and to study the Bible with us. If we differ doctrinally, we try to keep an open mind and stress the importance of allowing God's Word to settle all differences. We certainly do not desire to drive anyone away from us, and especially from the truth.

I suspect, however, that the real reason that a lot of religious people don't want to have anything to do with us is because of what we teach. Not only that, but because of that teaching we are unable to fellowship them and thereby they feel rejected. But if we teach the truth, and we are shunned because of this, then that means that these people are not just opposing us but they are opposing the truth and God himself.

Doesn't this remind us of the attitude the Pharisees and Sadducees had toward Christ? They found fault with him, condemned his actions, rejected his teachings, bitterly opposed him, and were even responsible for his death on the cross. Why? Because he condemned their religious error, pointed out their hypocrisy, and asked them to repent and obey God. When we do likewise in dealing with our denominational friends of today we get the same response. It is the truth that makes all the difference in each case.

To create such strong feelings in the people of our own time then the next question that would automatically come to one's mind would be, "What do you teach?" We try to teach the truth in all matters. But all would say this. Then we will be a little more specific. We accept the Bible and the Bible only in dealing with spiritual matters. (2 Timothy 3:16,17). We teach that every accountable being must believe and be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16), and that the saved are added to the Lord's church. (Acts 2:47). We teach that Christ built the church (Matthew 16:18), on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), that there is but one church (Ephesians 4:4), that he died for it to purchase it with his blood (Acts 20:28); that he is the saviour of it (Ephesians 5:23), that he is the one and only head of it (Colossians 1:18), that it wears the name of Christ (Romans 16:16), and that its members are Christians only. (Acts 4:12; Acts 11:26; I Peter 4:16). We are opposed to denominationalism because this is of man and represents division, whereas Christ prayed that we might all be one. (John 17:20-23). As Christians, we believe that we should meet on each first day of the week (Acts 20:7), to worship God (John 4:24), through prayer (Acts 2:42), singing (Ephesians 5:19), studying God's word (2 Timothy 2:15), partaking of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-29), and through giving. (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2). Any other worship is vain and according to the doctrines and commandments of men. (Matthew 15:9). And on and on we could go with many other truths that are set forth in God's word that we both believe and teach and practice.

Now it is because of such teaching that marks us and distinguishes us from all others. It is also for this reason that our religious friends often shun us, reject us, and even oppose us. They don't like us because we will not compromise with them and have fellowship with them. They accuse us of saying that we are better than everyone else and that we are the only ones going to heaven. Actually, because of such statements the hearts of many are prejudiced against us and this leads them to refuse to study with us when really they don't know who we are and what we teach. This is sad indeed.

(contd. last page)

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ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO LISTEN

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I would like to encourage you to come and see us. Visit with us. Don't listen to what others say about us but come and see and hear for yourself. If you don't agree with us, tell us wherein we are wrong. If you love souls, and believe you are right, then you should come and study with us and teach us the truth. If you will invite us to come and study with you then we will be happy to do so. Then once we learn God's will we can all obey it and be saved. What could be wrong with that? For sure, we must take caution so as not to end up in opposing the Lord and his church, but the only way we can be sure is through a study of his word. We wish to extend to you once more an invitation to come and study the word of God with us. If you will, you will find that you are among friends, that no one will force or pressure you to accept anything. Then through our study if it is found that you have the truth then we will want to accept that truth, but if you should find that we have the truth then we would hope that you would also want the truth and that you would obey it. In either case, if we are honest and sincere with one another, and with God, through such a study we should end up being united in Christ and his church. Surely that would not be wrong but rather that would be good for all involved. May God help us to so do.

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