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# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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Vol. 31

October 2000

No. 6

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## EDITORIAL

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

***“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able”***

Christ made the above statement, at Luke 13:24, in answer to the question of one of His disciples, who had asked: “Lord, are there few who are saved?”

Notice, Christ first said, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate.” The gate or the door which leads one to heaven is narrow! One has to struggle, or proceed with great difficulty and effort to enter in it. “Enter by the narrow gate,” said Christ in another place, “for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matthew 7:13,14). Because the way is difficult and the gate is narrow which leads one to eternal life in heaven, therefore, few will be who will find it, said Christ, strive therefore to enter! Christ Himself is the way (John 14:6), and Christ Himself is the door (John 10:9). He said, “If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” (Luke 9:23). To possess the eternal life in heaven one must deny self, and be ready to carry his cross

daily, which is the symbol of pain, suffering and death, and follow the Saviour.

God want all to have the eternal life, in heaven with Him, after this life of earth is over. And what a price He has paid to deliver man from the wages of sin which is death or eternal separation from God and living in hell eternally. He made Him, Christ, who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21). But as Isaiah had said, in Isaiah 53:1, "Who has believed our report?" How many on earth do really believe in the Good News of God? How many do really believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of all humanity? How many believe in Him enough to do whatever He has asked man must do to be saved? (Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27). How many really believe that Christ did build His church, according to His promise in Matthew 16:18 and adds all the saved ones daily to His church only, as it is written in Acts 2:47? Is not Christ's church the house of God? (1 Timothy 3:15). Is He not the head of His church and the Saviour of His church? (Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23). Has he not authorised how God's people must worship Him today? (John 4:23,24; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15).

Yet many today are saying that there are many ways and many Saviours, and one is as good as another. Many are saying that there is nothing that man must do to be saved, just believe in Christ to be saved. Many believe that one church is as good as another. And many believe that in whatever way man worship God, it is acceptable to Him, if that is done with sincerity and devotion. No wonder then, as to why Christ declared, "for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able." No doubt, all wish to go to heaven. But most want to get in there on their own terms! As though there is no God and He has not revealed His will for man; and he has no standard by which to judge man. Many will miss heaven, because they seek to do their own will or the will of their religious leaders or organizations, but not the will of the heavenly Father.

# *The Sinner's Prayer*

J.C. CHOATE

In our day it is not uncommon to hear a preacher ask his audience to say the sinner's prayer with him. It is so often done by so many preachers that you may find it shocking to hear that there is no such prayer in the scriptures, and no where do we read an example of any of the Apostles, or other gospel preachers of their day, asking their audience to say the sinner's prayer with them. The sinner's prayer, as it is called, originated with man and not with the Lord. Not only that, but it is an unscriptural prayer. That prayer calls on the Lord to save one from his sins by simply asking for the forgiveness of his sins. No where do you read that in the scriptures. You don't. Not one time do you read it. So when these preachers use such a prayer then they are deceiving their listeners, and the very fact that they use such, indicates that they are false teachers.

A sinner is a child of Satan, not a child of God. That is why he is a sinner. Now it certainly wouldn't help for him to ask Satan to save him because Satan is not in the saving business. But if a sinner is not a child of God then how can he call upon God as being his Father when God is not his Father? And if God is not his Father, how can he expect God to hear his prayer and to answer his prayer and to save him so that God might be his Father? Now I know that this sounds like strange language because most of you who read this have always heard that all you need to do to be saved is to say the sinner's prayer that God will save you, but that is just as untrue as it can be.

Do you remember the blind man that Jesus healed? Hear what he had to say about these matters. But you might say that he was just a man. He was a man, a blind man, and a man that Christ healed. What he said was also by inspiration and Christ did not deny it. He said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." (John 9:31). Did you hear what he said? He said that God heareth not sinners. Why does he not hear sinners? Because they are not his sons and daughters. If God is going to hear people like that then what advantage does

Christian have over the outright sinner? Listen, I will hear my children's requests and grant those requests, if it is for their good, but I would not grant such requests to those who are not my children. Now all may be blessed of God in the general way, but when it comes to being born again and becoming a child of God, the Lord has nowhere promised to forgive the sinner, the one who is not a child of God, through prayer.

But notice again that that man who was healed not only said that God does not hear a sinner, but rather those who worship the Lord and do his will. Who worships the Lord in spirit and in truth? (John 4:24). The child of God or children of God. Then how does one become a child of God? By doing the will of the Father in heaven. Read Matthew 7:21-23. But in all of the cases of conversion in the book of Acts you will notice that the gospel was preached, sinners heard it, they became believers in God and Christ, they repented of their sins, they confessed Christ as the Son of God, and they were baptized or immersed in water to be saved or to have the remission of their sins. Read Acts 2; Acts 8; Acts 9; Acts 16; and Acts 22. Read all of Acts. Those who did that were saved or born again and became children of God and members of the Lord's church. (Mark 16:16; John 3:3-5; Galatians 3:26,27).

Now in all of the forgoing, did you see anything said about the sinner's prayer? Did you notice where Peter, Paul, or other preachers requested their audiences to say the sinner's prayer with them? No you didn't, and the reason you didn't is because that is not the Lord's way of saving people.

Now when one becomes a Christian and a child of God he can call upon his Father to forgive him when he sins. James said, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16). Also, read 1 John 1:5-10).

If you are not a Christian we urge you to obey the Lord today so you can be saved and be a child of God and have all of the privileges and blessings that the Lord has in store for those who belong to him. Then if you pray, and pray according to his will, he will hear you and answer your prayer. (1 John 5:14,15).

# ***Worship Of The Church Of Christ What To Expect?***

**FRANCIS DAVID**

Perhaps, you might have attended some Christian gatherings before. You might have seen different ways or modes of worship in various churches. Some places, you must have seen all kinds of rituals, ceremonials and other things that people do in their worship. Most of these gatherings have some special type of people those who do all the leading in the worship. Some may have some special dresses. The church leaders you must have seen wearing all kinds of robes, particularly white colour robes. Another thing that you might have noticed in their gatherings that they will be using beside Bibles their creed books on which their all doctrine is based on.

We come to the new testament of the Bible and there we see when the Church was established in Acts chapter two, there were 3000 people, baptised and these people were asked to meet on the first day of the week that is Sunday. In verse forty two we read and it says: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. The church of Christ has its worship based entirely on the Scriptures because we believe we are under the authority of Christ and we take the Bible as our final authority. We do not follow any creed book. Through our worship we try to please God and want to do everything according to His will. In John chapter 4:24 we read "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him MUST worship Him in spirit and truth. We would like to worship the almighty with all our heart and mind. No rituals and no formalities. Our minds should be tuned with the Spirit and to worship with the truth means to worship according to the word of God which is the truth. When you visit the church of Christ on Sundays and attend the worship, you will find the things exactly that we are going to discuss here. You may find our worship simple or it may seem strange to you, but I tell you, this is the kind of worship our Lord wants from us. He is not pleased with worship which is based on human doctrines and commandments. Jesus once said: "these people draw near to

Me with their mouth, and honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Why? because in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. (Matt. 15:8,9). Our worship must be based on New testament pattern. God wants true worship. When you visit the church of Christ you will see the following acts of worship.

1. We have prayers. The men in the congregation lead the prayers. In I Timothy 2:1-8 we read and it says that prayer should be made for all men. In our prayers we give thanks to God for our physical and as well as spiritual blessings. Prayer is a part of Christian life. We must pray without ceasing. (I Thess. 5:17).

2. There will be singing by the congregation. We all sing together to praise God. There will be no special choirs etc. Since Bible commands all to sing and make melody, and that is why all the members raise their voices in praises to the almighty. (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16). This singing will be with spirit and with understanding. It would not be an entertainment type of thing. There will be no musical instruments but rather we will tune our minds and hearts with our heavenly Father and offer him the fruit of our lips. (Heb. 13:15).

3. In our worship we remember the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and this thing is done every first day of the week that is Sunday. The disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week (Acts. 20:7). This is a very precious moment in our worship because we realize that His death was most important for us. His sacrifice on the cross was very essential. Its because of his death on the cross we are today in his kingdom and have the hope of eternal life. (2 Cor. 5:12-17; 1 Cor. 11:23-29).

Jesus our Lord instituted this supper before His death and He wants that we must remember his death (Math. 26:17-30). This fellowship is called the Lord's supper. The two elements that are being used in this memorial are simple unleaven bread and fruit of the vine that is fresh grape juice. These two elements are symbolic to remind us the body and precious blood of Jesus. This juice is not alcoholic or intoxicated. Two or three brethren will come before the table and the thanks will be offered for the bread and grape juice and these will be distributed to the



members. We must understand, that this is not a *prasad* but rather a memorial to remember the death of Jesus, till He come back. He said: "Do this in remembrance of Me." Isn't it simple? This is the way the early Christians used to do in their worship.

4. Studying the Bible. This is considered very essential. The regular preacher or one of the members will preach and give a lesson from the word of God. All the leadership is done by the male membership. Ladies do not speak in the worship of the church because they are commanded to be silent. The Bible tells us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as we read in first Timothy 2:12, "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence, and Paul again says in I Cor. 14:34. "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak." . . . A lady can teach a ladies Bible class or children Bible school but she cannot be in the leadership of the church where men are present.

5. We give our collection or offering for the furtherance of the gospel. All the members give from their income as they have been prospered. There is no tithing because this was done under the old law. We are under the new testament law and this is much better law and we should give more and more for the Lord's work. The word of God commands us to give our collection on the first day of the week. We read in 1 Cor. 16:1-2, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper . . . and further we read in 2 Cor. 9 verse 7, "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Dear friend, all over the world the churches of Christ follow the same pattern of worship. If there is a Church of Christ in your area, we would encourage you to go there and see for yourself. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be a part of this church? This church which is not a denomination is glorious body of Christ. If you are interested to know more about the church of Christ, please contact us. If you want to be a part of this church then we would urge you to believe in Jesus, confess him as Son of God, repent of your sins and be baptised for the forgiveness of your sins. As you do these things, you will be added to the Church of Christ

(Acts 2:47), and you will be a Christian. (Acts, 11:26; I Peter 4:16).

## ***Let The Bible Answer***

**ROBERT MEREDITH**

Are there examples in the New Testament of alien sinners praying to God and receiving salvation? When one rightly divides the scriptures, he will see that the Bible answer is no. Often denominationalists will site the parable of the Pharisee and the publican to substantiate their claims of a "sinner's prayer". However, the key word in our question is "alien". Our question is dealing with someone who is not in covenant relationship with God. The question is not dealing with what a child of God can ask for in prayer! Some are guilty of ignoring the context. Let us look at Luke 18:9-14 and see what Jesus is teaching us.

In the context of this parable, Jesus is showing us that one must have a proper attitude when he goes to God in prayer. The Pharisee was self-righteous and did not believe he needed to be pardoned. He spoke about how "good" he was and what all he had done. On the other hand, the publican "*smote upon his breast*" (Lk. 18:13), a sign of a humble and contrite man. Jesus proclaimed, "*I tell you, this man (the publican) went down to his house justified rather than the other (the Pharisee)*" (Lk. 18:14). The Pharisee believed in his heart he was okay. But his heart was wrong. Both of the men in this parable were children of God. Gentiles were not allowed in the Temple and both of these men were there (v. 10). Therefore, they were both Jews, or children of God. This parable is not an example of an alien sinner's prayer, but of a person in covenant relationship already with God. Today a New Testament Christian can go to God, just as the publican did, and receive forgiveness of his wrongs (I John 1:7,9; Acts 8:22).

During the Mosaical age (the time from Moses' receiving the law until Jesus' death on the Cross), God's chosen people were the children of Israel. By virtue of their physical birth they were in

covenant relationship with God (Ex. 3:10; John 8:33). Now, in the Christian age (from the death of Jesus to the end of the world), anyone can be a child of God by means of the spiritual birth (John 3:3-5). Once one has been born again and declared righteous by God (2 Cor. 5:21), he can pray to the Heavenly Father and He will hear him (Heb. 4:16; 1 Pet. 3:12). During the Mosaical dispensation, Israel was God's chosen people. Today, the Israel of God is the church (Gal. 6:16). Paul told the Christians of Galatia, "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:26). How sad it is that many will stop right there. Because, in the next verse, Paul tells them how they became children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*" (3:27). What an opportunity we have to be a child of God and one of Abraham's seed (3:29) by virtue of the spiritual birth.

If you have never obeyed the gospel (Rom. 1:16; 2 Thess 1:8; Rom. 10:16) by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17), believing it (Heb. 11:6), repenting of your sins (2 Pet. 3:9), confessing Jesus (Mt. 10:32), and being baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38), we encourage you to become a child of God. If you have obeyed the gospel, then pray as the publican did (from a contrite spirit) and not as the Pharisee, because this child of God was not justified at all.

## ***You and Eternity***

**JOHNNY RAMSEY**

Few words touch the heartstrings like the beautiful expressions of "immortality" and "eternity." Scarcely anyone can sincerely say that he is disinterested in what transpires after death. The Bible is the only book that truly lifts the veil of the great beyond; God's Book transcends earth's sorrows and tells us of "the land that is fairer than day."

Every religious person feels the need of doing something about eternity. The universalist conveniently affirms that all will be saved. The skeptic states that none will be lost. The so-called

"Jehovah's Witnesses" strive to take the sting out of hell while retaining the bliss of eternal life. Mohammed told his followers that a perpetual Utopia awaited the faithful Moslem; a paradise where he would be attended by "seventy-two black-eyed maidens."

Friends, the hope of a Christian far surpasses any of the foregoing. We do not look for a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, nor for a fountain of youth or a place of materialistic prestige. The humble child of God just strives to so live here on earth that one day heaven might be his eternal abiding place. *Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.* Read John 14.

Death holds no pangs of remorse for the Christian. Notice these passages: "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21); "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Revelation 14:13); "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory (over death) through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57). *Are you a Christian?*

No soldier of Christ should ever be ashamed to present God's message even unto kings (Psalm 119:46). Our spirits should stir within us as we observe the idolatry of the nations (Acts 17:16). This should propel us into world evangelism as it did the early Christians (Acts 5:42; 8:4).

Today, how can we keep silent concerning the horrendous divorce rate in America and around the world since "God hates divorce." (Malachi 2:16). How can we be quiet on the subject of illicit sex and pornography when we know that only the pure in heart shall see God? (Matthew 5:8; Hebrews 13:4). Why are we so reluctant (remember Jonah) to cry out against the loss of so many of our young people to the works of the flesh? (Galatians 5:19-21). Across the land the words of II Corinthians 6:17 and 7:1 should echo and vibrate loud and clear:

Come out from among them and be ye separate ... cleanse yourselves of all defilement of the flesh and spirit ...

How can we be silent when eternity is in view and the souls of men are dying in sin? let us obey Jude 3 and contend earnestly for the faith. Cowards to the rear, please!

# ***Standing Between Life and Death***

**JOHNNY RAMSEY**

In Numbers 16:48 we learn that Moses and Aaron formed the line of Demarcation between the living and the dead. In this awesome section of Scripture we read of the rebellion of Korah and those who perished because of improper attitudes and motivations. Decisions that bordered on the ridiculous changed the eternal destiny of thousands of old. Sin was rampant and Satan rejoiced over the shallow ideas of carnal minds.

The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the Snares of death (Proverbs 13:14).

The consequences of foolish alliances and sinister plans will overflow the banks of Hell!

The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy (Proverbs 14:10).

In Jude 11, centuries later, men were warned of the gainsaying of Korah! What a price to pay!

Today there are vital people that stand between death and life. Their loyalties, for good or bad, help decide for others the route they will take and the path they will follow. Will we join the vast multitudes on the broad way that eventually ends in torment? Or, will we wisely traverse the narrow way with the few who find the golden strand of glory (Matthew 7:13-14).

But let all those that put their trust in thee Rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. (Psalm 5:11).

Parents are an integral link in this chain that propels children to victory or defeat at the end of the spiritual journey. Mothers and Dads have a tremendous role on the stage of life. They literally stand between the living and the dead. Millions will be in heaven because of devoted, holy and Christ-like parents that taught and lived earnestly the gospel of grace (Acts 20:24). Conversely, due to weak and insipid guardians, tragically, thousands will go to perdition. If we all had mothers like Hannah, Lois and Eunice we

would have more sound preachers like Samuel and Timothy! When men like Joshua take a stand for truth offspring grow closer to God! No one shines brighter in the hall of fame of spiritual leadership than a parent that puts Christianity absolutely first.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid (Matthew 5:14).

Gospel preachers stand between the dead and the living. The truth they preach can make men free whereas the truth they hold back can result in lost souls on Judgment Day. How sad it would be to stand in the shoes of cowardly evangelists when we stand before the Master Teacher in that final hour!

How deeply grieved our soul will be,

If some lost one there should cry in deep despair,

You never mentioned Christ to me,

You met me day by day and knew I was astray

And, yet, you never mentioned Him to me . . .

What a haunting cry! The beauty of the glad tidings must be shared with the lost and dying world. Our magnificent obsession must be the message of redemption proclaimed.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and his ways past finding out! (Romans 11:33).

According to Ezekiel 3:17-20, When we stand between the living and the dead and fail to warn them, we, too, shall die. What a terrible price to pay because we were spiritually tongue-tied as God's silent partner!

Jesus and the plan of salvation stand powerfully between the dead and the living. John 8:21 clearly states that men who die in sin cannot spend eternity with Jesus and the redeemed. In Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16 we read verses of definite clarity that demand belief, repentance and baptism prior to salvation.

Recently, a woman told a gospel preacher:

"I will die and go to hell before I will be baptized."

She did not realize how true are those words.

Where do we stand right now in regard to life and death?  
Deuteronomy 30:15 is a proper verse to close with:

I have set before this day life and good and Death and evil  
... What shall be our decision? Will it be light or darkness?

## ***“What Are You Afraid Of?”***

**MIKE WINKLER**

“What are you afraid of?” The Bible speaks of two kinds of fear. First, there is the fear which is often referred to as respect or reverence. It is this kind of fear that we are commanded to manifest toward God (Ecc. 12:13; Prov. 9:10). The second kind of fear is synonymous with dread, anxiety, and distrust. It is this kind of fear that Christians are forbidden to have (Psm. 9:5; Luke 12:32). It is in conjunction with the fear of dread that we ask the question, “What are you afraid of?”

Are we afraid of failure? It was the fear of failure that caused the one talent man to bury his talent and do nothing (Matt. 25:25). Yet, the Christian's responsibility is to do everything that he can with the talents, gifts, and opportunities God has given Him (Matt. 25:15). Remember, we never fail when we do our best!

Are we afraid of responsibility? Again, it was out of fear that the one talent man refused to accept his responsibilities (Matt. 25:25). Too, fear causes God's people to shirk their responsibility in conquering the promise land (Deut. 1:22-26). Remember, fear and only fear will keep one from fulfilling his responsibilities that God has trustfully given (Luke 5:10).

Are we afraid of what others will say or think about us? It was the fear of others that prompted Peter to cowardly deny Jesus (Matt. 26:69-75). Solomon was right when he said, “That fear of man brings a snare” (Prov. 29:25). What really matters is not what man thinks, but what God thinks!

Remember: To fear God is good and right, however, to fear life is foolish.

# ***Rightly Dividing The Bible***

**GLENN COLLEY**

How important is it that we divide the Bible in the right way? Second Timothy two verse fifteen says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Consider some of the ways we must correctly divide the Bible and some problems if we do not.

We must divide the Bible in reference to the Old and New Testaments. The Old law, or covenant, was given to the Israelites.

"And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even us, who are all of us here alive this day*" (Deuteronomy 5:13).

However, that law has filled its mission and has been done away with.

"Beware lest any man spoil you though philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.



Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Colossians 2:8-19).

That old Law lasted until Christ went to the cross. We cannot today please God by keeping the commands of that Law (Gal. 5:2-4; Gal. 1:13-14). We are under the Law of Christ today (Gal. 6:2).

This division of the Bible is never more important than when trying to sort out different churches teachings on what a man today must do to be saved. Suppose someone suggested to you that to be saved one must pray the sinner's prayer found in Luke 18:9-14. Could you answer him with the truth? Suppose someone claimed that we should be saved today like the thief on the cross. Would you know what to say?

It is true that a man prayed in Luke 18:9-14, and it is true that he prayed these words: "God be merciful to me a sinner." And yet, when people are being encouraged to become Christians using this verse, the teacher is failing to rightly divide God's word. The man who prayed this prayer was a publican who lived (and perhaps died) before the death of Jesus. He lived under the Old Testament. He wasn't trying to become a Christian with this prayer, for there were no Christians at the time. He wasn't trying to have his sins washed away with Christ's blood, for Jesus had not died. He wasn't trying to obey the Law of Christ, for that law (under which we live today) was not yet in effect. people today are in error who teach that people should pray this prayer for salvation today. They fail to rightly divide the word.

Consider also the thief on the cross. Often preachers today will hold the thief's case as an example of how people can be saved today without baptism. They assert, "The thief was saved without being baptized, so can we." The error in such reasoning

is in a failure to rightly divide the word of God. Remember that the thief had this conversation with our Lord before the Lord died. Therefore, these statements were made in the context of that Old Law, not the New Law under which we live. While the thief went to paradise without being baptized (unless he was earlier baptized with John's baptism) he was taken to paradise without some other things too. Can we be saved without these things? He was saved without being a member of Christ's church, because the church wasn't established until Acts two. Can we? He was saved without the death of Jesus, because when Jesus declared his paradise destination, Jesus had not died. Can we? He was saved without believing in the resurrection of the dead. In fact, he was dead before, Jesus rose from the dead. Can we be saved today without believing in the resurrection? In 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 the apostle Paul makes it clear that the-gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In verse two he says we are saved by that Gospel. The thief was not.

Do you see? The importance of rightly dividing the word is huge. Rightly dividing the Bible is what makes us know that we are not personally commanded to build an ark; that we are not to offer animal sacrifices today; and that we cannot be saved as were the people who were responsible to the Old Law.

## ***The Liberated Woman***

**W.A. HOLLEY**

Adam, the first man, was created from the dust of the ground. In the course of time, God saw that it was not good for man to dwell alone. By His mighty power, God put Adam to sleep and removed from his side a rib from which he made woman, Adam's companion and help meet. How did God do this great Act? We are not called upon to explain God's miraculous works, but we are required to believe them (Hebrews 11:1-3,6). We submit that miracles cannot be explained!!

When Adam saw her, he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman,

because, she was taken out of man (Genesis 2:7,18-23). If Eve had not been created, Adam could never have had a family. Woman is able to share man's responsibilities, respond to his nature with understanding and love, and wholeheartedly cooperated with him in fulfilling God's great plan for the human race.

In the ambrosial bowers of Eden's paradise, Eve must have stood in all the charms of intellectual grandeur, moral purity, and physical beauty. But in an evil hour she hearkened to the deceitful eloquence of Satanic flattery, and touched the alluring fruit of the forbidden tree. John Milton wrote, "Whose mortal taste brought death into the world, and all our woes." "... She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave it unto her husband with her, and he did eat" (Genesis 3:1-6, ASV). Thus, she contributed to her husband's fall from God's grace. Eve was beguiled, but Adam was not (1 Timothy 2:14-15).

After the tragic fall, God said to the woman, "I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16-20). Pregnancy and childbirth would be attended by pain—both physical and mental. God assigned a certain role to woman and a certain role to man. Woman is not a man; nor is man a woman. God arbitrarily made this distinction and these distinctions are not to be confused!! Lesbianism is hereby refuted. (See I Corinthians 6:9-11).

"But I would have you know that head of every man is Christ; and the head of woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). God's order is: God, Christ, man, woman. There is no inequality of the sexes here. As long as the Divine Order stands, women must be in subjection to men. Some modern women may be unhappy with God's order, but they cannot change it.

Jesus' disciples "marveled that he talked with a woman" (John 4:27). Jesus appreciated women. He knew their power and influence over their families. He gave them stature and status in society which they never possessed before.

God highly honoured woman when He chose to bring the Messiah into the world through her (Genesis 3:15; Psalm 132:11; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). "But when the fullness of time was

come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4:4). Hence, God has bestowed upon woman a high honour and the distinct privilege which no man can attain.

We recognize that good and bad women have always been in our world. We can read of the Jezebels and the Athaliahs who disgraced themselves. But, thank God, all women have not been like these.

There are many good and great women mentioned in your Bible; these represent the truly liberated women, for they followed the will of the Lord. For example, Sarah was the faithful wife of Abraham; Rachel was the beautiful wife of Jacob; Deborah was a fearless patriot; Ruth was a young widow who became a humble gleaner and finally an honoured mother; Esther was a great queen who was instrumental in saving her people; Hannah is the woman who personifies ideal motherhood; Huldah was a prophetess; Elizabeth was the joyous mother of John the Baptist; Mary, probably a seventeen or eighteen year old virgin, became the mother of Jesus, the Son of God; Martha and Mary were close sisters who often befriended the Savior; Dorcas was a woman who with her needle embroidered her name ineffaceably into the beneficence of the world; Priscilla is a woman who is always paired with her husband, Aquila; harmoniously, they laboured together in the service of the church and to the Lord; Phoebe was a servant of the church in Cenchrea; the Syrophenician woman was commended for her great faith; and Lydia was a business woman who became a hospitable Christian woman.

The liberated woman is not the woman who becomes the elder or preacher or song leader of the Lord's church. The Bible reads: "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (1 Timothy 2:12, ASV). Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law" (1 Corinthians 14:34, ASV). These words do not represent one of Paul's cultural hangups, as is alleged by unbelievers. When one reads 1 Timothy 2:13-15, one will understand Paul's argument is based on God's order of creation. No woman can ever be an elder of the Lord's church, for she can never be "the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2). In these

verses read the qualifications of an elder (I Timothy 3:1-7).

What shall we say more? We thank God for the many faithful women in the Lord's church today. These women work very hard for the advancement of the Cause of Christ. Paul wrote, "... help these women, for they laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:3). Paul gave Lois and Eunice, grandmother and mother, praise for the good training they provided for Timothy (II Timothy 1:5).

Verily, the so-called Equal Rights Amendment cannot liberate women, insofar as the Lord's church is concerned; it can only enslave them. This conclusion is true because the ERA changed God's order of things. The full and complete revelation of truth has already been presented in the Holy Bible (II Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3; John 8:32; Revelation 22:18-19). The word of God is not subject to addition, or subtraction, or to amendment.

Who are the liberated women? They are those women who have believed on Jesus Christ repented of their sins, confessed His holy name before others, and have been baptized into Christ for remission of their sins, thus dedicating their lives to the perpetuation of the church as revealed in the Bible (Matthew 16:18-19; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-38, 41-47; Romans 16:16).

As far as becoming a Christian is concerned, gender has nothing to do with it. We read, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond or free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (Galatians 3:26-29, ASV).

## ***The Standard of Right and Wrong***

**MEL FUTRELL**

Well over a hundred years ago brother Robert Miligan said, "It will, I presume, be generally conceded that the will of God is

the natural and only proper standard of all that is right, and pure, and virtuous." (Reason and Revelation, 7th ed. 1872, p. 34). As true as our brother's statement was (and we believe still is), nonetheless the perception of so many today is that there is no standard. Brethren, the perceived non-existence of an absolute standard of right and wrong today is deplorable at best. And such an attitude was in the not so long ago simply unthinkable. Brother LaGard Smith tells of His law and Morality students who decry any absolute, claiming they can't impose their value system on any other individual. Now brethren, that is an example of the subjective mentality that denies a standard of right and wrong. Without a doubt the world we live in sees things differently than do we (J. 17:14-16; Rom. 12:2). That there is a standard of right and wrong, WE BELIEVE, and we believe that it cannot be successfully denied (Jn. 17:17, 12:48, 8:32; 1 J. 2:3). All moral and/or doctrinal questions must be answered according to the Scriptures, the Divine Standard. And rest assured the standard hasn't changed, only some people's appraisal of it has changed.

In and out of the Lord's church one is confronted today with examples of things that used to be right but are now perceived to be wrong. Likewise, what used to be considered wrong is in many cases today said to be the right thing to do. One can't help but think of Isaiah's statement, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20). Brethren, we're living in a topsy-turvy world where men are calling no standard, a standard and THE STANDARD, no standard. Many today seem to be more content following the "pattern" of the pattern rejector Cain rather than the pattern of the pattern keeper Able. The writer of Hebrews said, "By faith Able offered unto GOD a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous . . . (Hebrews 11:4). From the standpoint of argumentation the burden of proof always rests with the individual or the group that is advocating change. Therefore, those advocating no standard have the responsibility of proving there is no standard. And those advocating a change away from the standard have the responsibility of showing where their authority is for changing the standard.

Brethren, one used to regularly hear preaching against dancing, drinking, immodest clothing, gambling, sexual permissiveness, etc., but now some would have us believe that things are different, norms have changed. And thus what used to be considered RIGHT preaching is now in many congregations wrong. As you know, the Bible furnished us the only proper and correct standard of morality, and failure to preach and live that standard will bring grave consequences. Along the same lines as the above I would call your attention to the issues of abortion and homosexuality which have gained a national audience. Brethren there was once a general disdain for these sins, but what was once disdain is now acclaim. And the "hands that shed innocent blood" (Prov. 6:16-17), are in many cases today the hands of the abortionist. Their hands are being lifted high in victory by the liberal media of the world. Without a doubt the media is heavily biased towards the pro-abortion position. I would call your attention of what GOD calls "against nature" or "unnatural" (Romans 1:26) and what man calls a lifestyle choice. Furthermore, in I Corinthians 6:9 Paul says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD?" And then he goes on and enumerates ten sins, two of which pertain to homosexuality. These perverted people can now be seen parading up and down the streets of our country demanding their rights. If the inspired writer James were alive today I imagine he would say to all this, "My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).

A final brief word is in order in regard to a couple of doctrinal points. Congregational verbal vocal music, that which is authorized by scripture (Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16), is being assaulted on all sides by the proponents of not only instrumental music but also by those who advocate solos and choirs in and as worship to GOD. Please don't think this is a new issue, it has merely come back around. Our brethren were battling this well over a hundred years ago. But I must say this: The fact that singing in worship is to be congregational rules out the solo and the choir. The fact that it is to be verbal (pertaining to words-expresses in spoken words) rules out humming, whistling, and the simulation of instruments with the mouth. The fact that it is to be vocal (pertaining to the voice) rules out instrumental accompaniment period.

Likewise, what is the proper role of women in the church today has been and is a hot issue we must face. Too many are disregarding the standard (1 Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:1-12) and are making claims that have them wrapped up, tied up, and tangled up in sin.

What was once preached against is now being embraced. I'm afraid many today are more interested in political correctness than Biblical correctness and have in effect, created a new standard for themselves which is in reality no standard at all.

## *Are There "Witnesses" Today?*

GARY COLLEY

We are more frequently hearing some suggest that they think we ought "to witness for Christ," "witness one-on-one," or be "Jehovah's witness" in our 20th Century.

To witness means to bear testimony to that which we have seen, to furnish evidence or proof. A witness is one who has seen or has knowledge of an incident and tells the exactness of that which is in his knowledge.

The beloved apostle John said, "That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (John 1:1-2).

Peter said of his and the other apostles' power to witness, "And we were witnesses of all things which he did in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: (Acts 10:39).

Peter also stated in preparation for choosing one to take the place of Judas, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, **MUST BE ORDAINED TO BE A WITNESS WITH US OF HIS RESURRECTION**" (emphasis



mine, GC) (Acts 1:21-22).

Of these apostles, Jesus himself said, "ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

We are not commanded to "go into all the world and witness" but we are commanded to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel" or "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 18:19-20). We should be humble and honest enough to do what the Lord has commanded, to "speak as the oracles of God," and to cease the desire to be denominational in our vocabulary. At no time should we be ashamed "of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Timothy 1:8), which is the Gospel which has been written in the Book Divine that we might believe (John 20:30-31).

## ***An Astute Observation From Paul Harvey***

**ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.**

Back in December of 1994 he related a story of a little boy at church who listened as the preacher told how there was no room for Mary and the about-to-be-born Christ child in the inn and how they were sent to the place where the animals were sheltered. The alert boy whispered to his mother, "I bet if they had known who He was, they would have made room!" Paul Harvey quipped, "Don't be too sure, son. We know who He is and we do not have room for Him!"

Paul Harvey is right on target in this assessment. Religious people in mid and late December become unusually interested in the Christ of the cradle. For a few days the Babe of Bethlehem of nearly two thousand years ago becomes increasingly important to them. Then on December 26 He is the forgotten factor in their secular lives till near the end of the ensuing year. Before December ends, many of them will join drinking crowds in buying a bountiful supply of liquor to bring in another year. Somehow sobriety does not go well with the evening hours of

December 31 and especially when the midnight hour is reached and a new year is ushered in with the drunkened parties and stoned participants. If the Lord were to return on some December 31, He would find more of his so-called subjects drunk of drinking than any other night of the year. What a disgrace such drunkened department is among those who less than ten days before were singing and telling the world what joy they felt in their hearts relative to God's Son.

No room for Jesus was the story of his life on earth. There was no room for Him in the Bethlehem Inn the night He was born. There was no room for the child Jesus sometime later as Joseph and Mary hurried him from Judea into Egyptian safety to the southwest. There was no room for Him in Nazareth where He grew up as we see reflected in Mark 6. There was no room for Him among the country of the Gadarenes in Mark 5 where He performed an amazing miracle of mercy. There was no room for Him in Jerusalem either during His ministry or at it's end when they tried Him and crucified Him outside its walls. There was no room for Him in the Samaritan City in Luke 9 because His face was set toward Jerusalem. There was no room for Him in the heart and life of Judas as he betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver in Matthew 26. There was no room for His gospel in many of the places where the apostles and early evangelists took it as evidence. Laodicea had no room for Him in Revelation 3. Neither did the spiritually dead people at Sardis who were already in Tombstone Territory.

Far too few today have room for the Christ of creation, the Christ of the cosmos, the Christ of the cross, the Christ of the church, the Christ of the crown or the Christ of the second coming. The comprehensive Christ is not the Christ the twentieth century wants and will welcome. Were He to come back in the twentieth century and taught nothing more or less than He taught in the first century, He would be dismissed by the masses as a gloomy crank peddling a gospel of calamity! What an affront we present to the Lord of glory!



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*Printed and Published by Sunny David on behalf of Church of Christ, New Delhi and Printed at : Print India A 38/2, Mayapuri, I, New Delhi-110064. Editor : Sunny David.*

Licence to Post without Prepayment of Postage

No. U/SE/25/2000

Posted at New Delhi PSO on 10/11 October 2000

Delhi Postal Regn. No. DL-11262/2000

Regd. No. 26921/71

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