

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## EDITORIAL

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

***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding”***

To trust in the Lord means to trust in His word, to trust Him in what He has spoken or said. In His parable of the wise and foolish men, Christ compared the wise man to a person who hears His teaching and does them; and the foolish man to an individual who hears His teaching and does not do them. (Matthew 7:24-27). This was exactly the point the writer in Proverbs 3:5 was making. All men everywhere need to learn this most important teaching of the Bible. To trust in God does not mean to just believe in Him that He exists, and hears and sees; but it means to do things in the manner in which He has commanded. But man has always violated this serious command of God. We have numerous examples of this in the Bible, from which only one is listed below for our learning.

During the forty years sojourn in the wilderness when the Israelites were in Kadesh there was no water there. So they all began to speak against Moses and his brother Aaron, who were their leaders, appointed by God. Moses and Aaron prayed to God to help them. God heard their prayer and told Moses: “Take thy rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its

water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." What did God say to Moses? He said, go and speak to the rock before their eyes. What did Moses do? We read: "So Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He commanded Him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock? "Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." " (Numbers 20:8-12). God was not pleased with Moses and Aaron. did they not both believe in God? Sure they did. They prayed to God, and God listened to their prayers. But they did not trust God; they did not believe that God wanted them to do exactly as He had commanded them to do, and that He would do what He had promised to do. Later, Moses wrote to the children of Israel, in Deuteronomy 3:25,26, that how he had pleaded with God to let him enter the promised land, but God would not let him do that because He was displeased with Moses on their account.

Not only should we hear and learn from the Bible, but we must do things God has commanded in His book, to be pleasing unto Him and to be eternally saved in heaven.

## ***The Name Of The Whole, Family***

**J.C. CHOATE**

*"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold"* (Proverbs 22:1). Why is the name so important? Because it represents you: who you are, what you represent, the principles and convictions you stand for, and your future. Whether a physical name or a spiritual name, it tells the story within itself.

As members of the Lord's family, we are to wear the name

of the One who saved us. This identifies the One to whom we belong, whom we are following, and whom we wish to honour. That One, of course, would be Jesus Christ and the name we wear would be Christian. To wear some other name would be to dishonour the Lord. In Acts 11:26 we read that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." After Paul had preached to King Agrippa, the king said that he had almost been persuaded to be a Christian (Acts 26:28). Why just a "Christian" and not some other name, or some name in addition to "Christian"? Because Paul and all of his brethren were Christians *only* at that time. Peter said, "*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf*" (1 Peter 4:16). If one believes in Christ and has obeyed the Lord's will, how can he be anything else other than a Christian? If he is something else, *he is not truly a Christian, in the same sense as in the New Testament times.*

Now if one is a Christian as a result of obeying the Lord, being saved, and being added to the Lord's church, then what does that *make a group of Christians*, an assembly, a body of people? Paul answered that question when he said, "*For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*" (Ephesians 3:14,15). Now notice that the whole family—not part of it—but the whole family is named after Christ. Some of its members are in heaven and some are on this earth, but in either case, the Lord's church wears His name. Why would we wear any other name if we are truly the church of Christ? In Romans 16:16, when Paul was speaking of a group of congregations, he identified them as being "*the churches of Christ*".

The scriptures also speak of *the body of Christ*, which is *the church of Christ*, (1 Corinthians 12:27), *the kingdom of Christ* or *the church of Christ* (Ephesians 5:5), *the house of God* or *the church of Christ* (1 Timothy 3:15), and numerous other descriptive and identifying titles showing that this body of people belongs to Christ and wears His name.

James says, "*Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?*" (James 2:7). What were they called? They were called Christians as individuals and the Church of Christ as a body. James said there were those in his day that were *blaspheming that name, mocking it, and condemning it*, but

also there were those who were *wearing that name*. Likewise, today, when one wears some other name, or some man-made name, it means that he is forsaking the Lord's name; he is rejecting the name that is above every name, the name of Christ.

How can anyone today even begin to think about wearing some name that is not found in the Bible, or some word or name that is in the Bible—such as “Pentecost” or “holiness,” but was not intended to be worn by a follower of Christ or by his church? You may choose to wear another name if you wish, but in doing so you are rejecting the Lord. *To reject the Lord's name is to reject Him*. In this world or in the world to come, you will finally be faced with the truthfulness of that statement.

*Especially For Women*

## ***Search for Truth Heaven!***

**BETTY BURTON CHOATE**

“Andrew, when you come home from work we need to go to the hospital to visit Martha and to comfort her family. She's growing weaker day by day, and the doctors give them no hope that she'll recover. I know she's old, but they're such a close family, and losing her will be hard for them—for all of us, because she's been a faithful part of the church for so many years. It will seem strange to assemble for worship and not to see Martha there, and not to have her help in the other work we do as a group.”

“I know how you feel. I've been thinking about their grief, and the grief of the church. I've decided to teach a lesson on this subject Sunday.”

The visit was made, though Martha was too weak and ill to know that Andrew and Rachel were there. They talked at length with Martha's sons. Jonathan was a Christian, but Anthony lived in a distant city and had had no interest in spiritual things. He had been surprised to see the concern shown by the church, the steady flow of visitors, and the food that had been brought daily

to Jonathan's house. In his own life, he realized the absence of such support.

On Sunday, Andrew got up to present the lesson for which he had made special preparation. He had prayed earnestly that God would help him to put into the minds and hearts of the Christians the hope and joy he, himself, felt after having re-studied the promise of eternal life with God—Heaven!

"All of us know that Martha is at the point of death," he began, "and we have conflicting emotions about her illness. Naturally there is grief, because we will miss her as a part of our family, but we remember the words of Paul when he said in 1 Thessalonians 4:13,14 that he did not want us to sorrow, '*... as others who have no hope, For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*'"

"This morning we need to ask ourselves again, 'What is this life all about?' There are those who don't believe in God, who think that nothing exists after the death of this body. They live only for money, food, and the pleasures of this world. And usually their 'pleasures' destroy them.

"Others believe that there is a God, and that they must worship him. They call him by many different names, portray him in carvings with many different forms and faces, and worship him in many different ways. Some have such shallow faith that they could be called 'believers' in name only. Others do acts of penance, often inflicting great physical pain and torture to their own bodies as a means of worshipping and serving their 'god'.

"But who is God? What do we really know of Him? How much can the human mind, with its limitations, understand of God?

"And why ask such questions? We ask because we can't really know about the place He has promised as our eternal home unless we know something about Him! We can learn about God in His word—how much He shows of His heart there! But we can also learn as we study the things around us. Paul wrote to the Roman church, '*... since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead. . .*' (1:20).

"When Darwin was developing his theory of evolution, neither our powerful microscopes nor telescopes had been developed, so he could not see the wonders that today's

scientists can see. There are still those, like Darwin, who are looking for any explanation for man and the universe that excludes belief in God. But there are also scientists who are simply studying the wonders that exist, using the powerful equipment available to them. Such true scientists are actually studying and trying to understand the mind and works of God!

"Darwin thought that a cell was only a small bit of matter, nothing at all complicated, but he couldn't see the miniature universes contained within each cell! He couldn't see the 10,000-volume library that makes up the center of the cell, containing all the instructions for every activity for every cell of the body—yet somehow each cell knows exactly which page of which volume of this huge library to open and read, for the specific directions for its own work! Within each cell are factories for building from raw materials whatever that cell is supposed to make. There are also storage places, transportation systems, and disposal systems. And as scientists are able to look deeper and deeper into the cell's systems, they see even more miniscule systems and parts, perfectly designed and working together to make the cell work properly. And the cells work together to make the organ work properly, and the organs work together to make the body work properly, and even all of the separate species of life—along with non-living things—are all so interconnected and interdependent that we can't survive without each other!

"Within each cell is a marvelous world of design and knowledge, showing the mind of God. And within each human body are 100 trillion of these amazing cells, each doing its own work, and each building its own replacement as the body renews itself! Some cells are replaced every few hours, some every seven days! Most of the body is less than one month old, with the exception of brain cells and nerve cells! What an amazing and wondrous creation we live in, yet we take it as a common thing, just because we've always lived in these bodies and because they work so amazingly well! In a lifetime, for the body to be sick is the exception, not the rule.

"To study the human body, seeing its wonders, teaches us a great respect for the power of God, for the knowledge of God, and even for His love for us, that He would entrust to our care such an astounding piece of equipment!

"But God has done more than that. We go from the parts of

a cell, some of which are millions of billionths of an inch in size, to consider the entire universe. How large is it? Who can know? Actually, is not space endless, like eternity? Even trying to think in such terms staggers our minds. Yet whole worlds of galaxies and heavenly bodies are out there, testifying to the awesome power of God.

"Light travels 186,000 miles per second. That works out to be about 6 trillion miles in a year of time. But scientists tell us that they have detected stars that are billions of trillions of miles away from the earth. **BILLIONS OF YEARS OF TIME AWAY FROM US!** How can we even begin to conceive of the greatness of a God who could create all of this by the simple word of His mouth!

"And yet this tremendous universe works so perfectly together that scientists can measure and study the heavenly bodies in their relationship to each other, and they can figure the exact split second when they can fire a rocket and send up a space ship to go to Mars or a satellite to go into an orbit around the earth! This requires tremendous intelligence and ability on the part of man, but he is only performing a small incident in the midst of the unspeakably marvelous creation God has put into place!

"The earth itself is turning on its axis at the rate of 1000 miles an hour! Do you feel even a small vibration of that movement? Do you feel a single breeze? Do you live in fear of being sucked off the planet by the hurling strength of that rotation at such a speed? No, we feel nothing! Nor do we feel that we are moving at the rate of 12,000 miles an hour as our earth makes its yearly revolution around the sun! And we feel nothing of the speed as our entire galaxy is flying through space at the rate of 120,000 miles an hour! What holds us on the earth? Why don't we feel this movement? Scientists say it's gravity, but they don't really know what gravity is or what causes it or how it works!

"Hebrews 1:3 says of Christ, the Word of creation, *'who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power. . .'* Such a God made us and loves us, and such a God has said, *'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not*

*so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.'* (John 14:1-3)

"We pinch this arm and we feel substance! We touch the dirt under our feet, and subconsciously we feel that we're on solid ground—substance—REAL THINGS! Somehow, to the physical mind, *this* is the real—and, in contrast, that promised *spiritual* world is the nebulous, the almost imaginary world without substance. But we're wrong! Every second since our births, these bodies have been in a state of decay and coming death! This world is not lasting! Nothing that seems solid and real to us is of enduring substance!

"Yet the God who is eternal, who is of imperishable substance, the God who made all of this that is so wondrous to us—that God has promised, '*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man things that God has prepared for those who love Him*' (1 Corinthians 2:9). And He said through the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:20,21 concerning these amazing bodies in which we live, these bodies that are dying day by day: '*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body, that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*'

"This is our promise as His children, our hope, our expectation. This is the new heaven and new earth which awaits all those who are born into His family and die in faithfulness to Him, according to Revelation 2:10.

"Just before coming here to speak to you, word was brought to me that our sister Martha has died. My first feeling was sorrow, but then I thought, 'Martha has passed through the door into that real world! Martha knows—now, *this minute*—the splendors and wonders of that world, without the limitations of the physical! She has reached that goal all of us are looking toward! What victory! What freedom! What life!

"Brethren, let us keep our eyes fixed on that goal as we live through the dangers and hardships of this world, and let's keep heaven always in our hearts. This is the promise we have of our God! This is the God we serve!"



# **Blame Game**

**FRANCIS DAVID**

When Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee's Agra summit was concluded, a news item caught my attention. In this news item, the writer had written about how the summit got failed, and each one is blaming each other for the failure of the summit. The blame game is an old game. To save ourselves from the awkward situations, we sometime take the help of blame game. When children play together they too try to blame each other. To tell you the fact its an ancient game. The political parties blame each other for their failure. The ruling party will blame the opposition and the opposition will blame the ruling party. The families are also affected with this game. The husband blames the wife or the wife blames the husband for some failures. Sometimes, when children are not able to make a good career they usually blame parents. So, we see the this games goes on and on.

The word of God also tells us about this blame game. If we turn to our Bibles we read in the book of Genesis that how Eve and Adam were involved in this game. The third chapter of Genesis tells us, about the temptation and the fall of man. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, he ate. They heard the sound of the LORD GOD walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD GOD among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him "Where are you"? So he said, "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." And He said who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the man said, "The woman who you have gave to be with me, SHE GAVE ME of the tree, and I ate." And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent (devil) deceived me, and I ate." Here we see how each one blamed other to hide their sin.

Because of their sin and disobedience they were punished, and were driven out of that beautiful garden.

Since man in his nature has a tendency to blame others, we see this thing among christians too. We can see this blame game even in the church. We can see there are members who have quit the church and now are unfaithful, they sometime blame some members or the preacher for their unfaithfulness. They do not realize their mistake and what wrong they have done but instead they blame the church.

Some leave the church and their spiritual condition is worse than before. They are no more interested in spiritual things. Apostle Peter Speaks about such people, he says: "For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lust of the flesh, through licentiousness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error." While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for they whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 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 in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit, and a sow, having washed to her wallowing in the mire." The unfaithful Christians make their condition worse by leaving the church but instead blame the church or preacher. This is really sad. Such people must understand that the church or preacher is not responsible for their wretched condition.

A lot of time members do not attend the worship of the church and they blame other members for their not attending the worship. Some say, such and such brother did not talk to me or I asked them some help they refused. The Bible says: "We should not forsake the assembly." (Heb. 10:25). We should not blame the church or some brethren for our own unfaithfulness.

Some religious leaders and teachers say, that because of Adam's sin we are born sinners. This is a wrong teaching. We are not sinners because of Adam's sin. When children are born into this world, they are innocent and without sin. We become

sinners of our own iniquities. The Bible says: "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. . . ." Eze. 18:20. So we see here that sin is not inherited, therefore we should not blame Adam that because of him we are sinners or the children are born with sin.

Let us stop blaming others for our own failures. Instead of putting blame on others, we must correct ourselves and repent of our sins. Please do not blame the church, preachers or some brethren for your own unfaithfulness to the Lord. What we do or what we sow we will also reap and this what apostle Paul writes to the church at Galatia, He says: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. (Gal. 6:7).

## *Some Blessings of God are Outside of Christ and the Church*

**J.K. GOSSETT**

God causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and He sends rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). The sun rises in the morning upon everyone, some who are good and some who are evil. When the rains descend, everyone is benefited by the moisture—saint and sinner alike. One need not be a Christian to be blessed of God by the sun and the rain.

The Lord said in his heart, after the flood, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22). The vilest sinner may sow and reap and prosper, by the law of sowing and reaping. One cannot drive on the highways, observing the fields, and know which field may belong to a sinner and which belongs to a Christian. The sinner is equally blessed of God while sowing and reaping, even though he may deny the existence of God.

Also the law of gravity operates on behalf of all, as do all the other laws of God in the natural realm.

Everyone who is physically alive today is enjoying life from

God. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being. . . ." (Acts 17:28).

God's law of procreation is the same in the homes of atheists as it is in the homes of members of the church.

Since the saint and the sinner both live in the same realm physically they are both alike, subject to God's physical laws and they both alike, enjoy the same physical benefits.

We hasten to add that all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3). These include forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. While billions of people enjoy God's blessings in the natural realm, comparatively few enjoy the bountiful blessings found in Christ. Why is this the case?

## ***Let the Bible Answer***

**ROBERT MEREDITH**

Can one be saved outside of Christ? Many millions of people believe that they can have salvation outside of Christ. There are those who follow other ways and these believe they can be saved outside of Christ. Others trust in "secular humanism" and believe that by exalting man/self they will achieve their goal. However, salvation is only in Jesus.

Jesus, as He was comforting His disciples, said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me*" (John 14:6). The Son of God (and His resurrection proved He was; Rom. 1:4), proclaimed that the only way to the Father was through Him. No other way can provide salvation. Too, the Holy Spirit guided Peter to say, "*neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*" (Acts 4:12). God has provided the salvation man needs only through Jesus Christ. God's wonderful grace has provided Christ and His precious blood which was shed for the sins of the world. (Heb. 2:9; Mt. 26:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Rom. 5:9). Without the shedding of His blood there could be no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22; Heb. 10:4; Rom. 3:23-26). God's grace has been made available to all (Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2; Mt. 11:28; Rev. 22:17). But this

salvation is only in Christ; it is not outside of Him. Paul informs us that all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

How does one get into Christ? When one studies the Bible, he must study everything the Word of God says on a particular subject, not just one verse. After studying the subject completely, then he has the truth on that subject. When studying "How does one get into Christ?" one will see that there is only one way that one gets into Christ. Upon belief that Jesus is the Son of God (John 1:12), the penitent believes (Acts 17:30), confesses his belief in Jesus (Mt. 10:32; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10), and is baptized into Him (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:26-27). His relationship is then changed. He is then in Christ where all spiritual blessings are (Eph. 1). He is added to the church by God (Acts 2:41,47), or as Paul put it, he is then translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13). The Holy Spirit then tells us, "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Rom. 8:1). We encourage you to obey the Spirit. Come to Christ. Take advantage of His gracious sacrifice for your sins. Because outside of Him, there is no hope (Eph. 2:12).

## ***"Lord, To Whom Shall We Go?"***

**CLEM THURMAN**

Jesus had just fed the five thousand. His popularity was at an all-time high. Thousands followed Him, watching what He did and listening to every word. Then Jesus began to teach them about the difficulties of following Him. As He explained some of the difficult things they would be asked to believe and do, they said, "*This is a hard saying; who can hear it?*" And, "*Many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him*" (John 6:60,66). This was a crucial time for the disciples. Would they believe the hard things, do the hard things—or would they turn back? When most of them had left, Jesus asked the twelve apostles, "*Would you also go away? Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life*" (John 6:67-68).

The question today is still, *"To whom shall we go?"* God has not left us without answers to our spiritual needs. For those who would seek guidance from some other source than Jesus, we need to answer the question. *"To whom shall we go?"* Let us apply this principle as we look at our spiritual needs.

### SHALL WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER CHRIST?

John the Baptist had announced the coming of the Christ, then said of Jesus, *"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world"* (John 1:29). Imprisoned for preaching, John sent disciples to Jesus, *"Are thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"* (Matt. 11:3). Jesus merely pointed to His works and told John's disciples, *"Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see."* Jesus knew He was the object of Old Testament prophecies, for He told the Jews, *"The Scriptures . . . bear witness of me . . . If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me"* (John 5:39,46). Not just a few, but literally hundreds of prophecies are fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth, proving Him to be the Christ. John had only to compare what Jesus did with what the prophecies had foretold to know Jesus was the promised Messiah.

The apostles were just as definite in proving His claims. Peter said, *"But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled"* (Acts 3:18). He later said, *"To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins"* (Acts 10:43). Paul preached the same, *"And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in the tomb . . . Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"* (Acts 13:29; 1 Cor. 15:3-4). John asked, *"Do we look for another?"* The answer is clear: there is no other, just Jesus.

### SHALL WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER PROPHET?

The Scriptures had declared that God would send forth a prophet far greater than any previously known. God said to Moses, *"I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren,*

*like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth . . . whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he will speak in my name, I will require it of him"* (Deut. 18:18-19). Has the prophet come, or do we look for another? This is clearly answered in the Scriptures. Peter used this prophecy as he spoke of Jesus, *"Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from your brethren, like unto me . . . Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days"* (Acts 3:22-24). Jesus is that prophet of whom Moses wrote.

The opening sentence of Hebrews states, *"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son"* (Heb. 1:1-2). Jesus took with him Peter, James and John up on a mountain and was "transfigured" before them. They saw Him speaking with Moses and Elijah, and suggested building a tabernacle to honor each. But God spoke from heaven about Jesus, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; hear ye him"* (Matt. 17:5). He is God's spokesman, now and for all time: *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Matt. 24:35). God never promised any revelation through others—not Mary Baker Eddy, Joseph Smith nor David Koresh. If we reject Jesus, we have rejected God's only spokesman.

### SHALL WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER GOSPEL?

Since the time of the apostles, men have been seeking another gospel. Paul wrote, *"I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel; only there are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed"* (Gal. 1:6-8). As noted in Heb. 1:1-2, that word was not delivered in parts and sections, but God spoke through Christ. Christ chose apostles, and told them, *"Whoever hears you, hears me. He that rejecteth you, rejecteth me, and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that sent me"* (Luke 10:16). Those apostles preached and wrote the word of God (1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). *"Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jude 3).

There are still those who seek some kind of "latter day revelation." But the gospel was completely delivered by the apostles nearly 2,000 years ago: *"His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness"* (2 Pet. 1:3). The inspired Scriptures were given, *"That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work"* (2 Tim. 3:17). Please read those again. God has given us, in the Scriptures, everything we need in the spiritual realm. The apostle warns, *"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son"* (2 John 9). We must not *"go beyond the things that are written"* (1 Cor. 4:6). We do not need another gospel. That word was *"Confirmed unto us by them that heard him"* by signs and miracles (Heb. 2:3-4), including the miracles that Jesus did (John 20:30-31). That gospel was preached by men inspired of God, and is *"the power of God unto salvation"* (Rom. 1:16).

### SHALL WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER CHURCH?

Much has been preached about "the church of your choice." As a result, many people question whether or not the true church even exists on earth today. Jesus promised, *"I will build my church"* (Matt. 16:18). He died for that church, *"Gave himself up for it"* (Eph. 5:25) and purchased that church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). That church is the body of Christ: *"He is the head of the body, the church . . . There is one body"* (Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4). That church is composed of those who are saved, *"The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved"* (Acts 2:47). Jesus never built "churches." He built one church. He never built denominations, so people could have a choice. Jesus loves His church, and gave Himself for that church (Eph. 5:25). Should we "look for another?"

Some may argue their "right" to the church of their choice. But does the Lord give them that right? He built His church, He purchased that church with His own blood, those whom He saves He adds to His church, and He is the Savior of His church (Eph. 5:23). Then why would anyone want to look for another? *"In none other is there salvation, neither is there any other name under heaven, given among me, wherein we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). On Pentecost, people believed in the Lord and were



told, *"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins"* (Acts 2:38). Their response? *"As many as received his word were baptized, and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. . . The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved"* (Acts 2:41,47).

Today, when people obey the same *"form of teaching"* (Rom. 6:17) those folk did, the Lord adds them to the same church. That is the church Jesus built, of which He is head and which He purchased with His blood. We don't need another Christ. We don't need another prophet. We don't need another gospel. And we don't need another church. Let us learn to accept Christ, to accept what He does for us, and to accept His plan for us. *"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."*

## ***How Is One Saved After Baptism?***

**JOHNNY RAMSEY**

The apostle Paul writes, *"Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"* (Rom. 6:3). Because baptism puts us *"into Christ"* (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27) and is *"unto the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:38; 22:16), it is no wonder that Jesus promised, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"* (Mark 16:16). But the Bible does not teach that immersion in water saves us eternally! The act of baptism ushers us into the body of Christ (Acts 2:41,47; 1 Cor. 12:13). It is then that our life as a soldier in the army of the Lord begins (Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Tim. 2:4). We should then *"continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching in fellowship, in breaking of bread and prayers"* (Acts 2:42), as we *"do good unto all men"* (Gal. 6:10).

Being baptized into Christ does not guarantee that we will never sin. In fact, Christians are told, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us"* (1 John 1:8-10). When we sin, after becoming Christians, we are to repent of those sins, confess our faults and pray to

God through Christ for forgiveness (1 John 1:7-9). Our relationship with God after baptism is that of a child with his Father. We have the privilege of prayer through which to call upon Him. Because we have been *"baptized into Christ Jesus . . . baptized into his death"* (Rom. 6:3), we have the promise that His blood will continue to cleanse us as Christians. *"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"* (1 John 1:7). To walk in the light means that we constantly strive to live for God, *"Growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"* (2 Pet. 3:18) as we endeavour to *"keep yourselves in the love of God"* (Jude 21).

According to 1 John, the doctrine of "sinless perfection" is false. That doctrine essentially states that a child of God cannot commit sin, that he can never be lost and come under the condemnation of God. But, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"* (1 John 1:8). And two verses before is found this warning to Christians, *"If we say that we have fellowship with him [God] and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth"* (1 John 1:6). Christians can sin, they **DO** sin (1 John 1:8,10), and if they persist in sin—thus *"walking in darkness"*—they are no longer in fellowship with God (1 John 1:6) and are under His just condemnation. It is true that the dedicated child of God does not lead an habitual life of sin (Rom. 6:12; 1 John 3:6-9), but is also true that Christians do commit sin. When we thus sin, we should gratefully remember that *"the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin"* and that *"we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous"* (1 John 1:7; 2:1).

## ***Christianity—A Unique Religion***

**WALTER SWAIN**

A unique quality of the Christian faith is its uniqueness. It is "One of a kind." This fact has been forgotten by some, and deliberately overlooked by others. Yet, the church of Jesus Christ has always been separate, and different from all other

religions, movements, denominations, or sects in the world. It stands alone as God's kingdom in the world. It cannot be assimilated into any existing religion, nor can it co-exist with and fellowship any denomination or sect.

The early church suffered persecution because it would not merge itself with the existing Jewish faith. Paul said that those who did such were 'fallen from grace' (Galatians 5:1-4). Later, gnosticism raised its ugly face in the church, claiming a "secret knowledge" apart from the revealed Word. John condemned such, along with all others who would go beyond the teaching of Christ (II John 9-11). As time went on, another danger confronted the church as it merged with the existing Roman government to form the Holy Roman Empire. This completed its total apostasy from the truth.

Today, the church faces another great danger. That of the philosophy of pluralism. The dominating philosophy in our nation today declares that there are no absolutes. Everyone can believe what they want, and no one is to challenge them, or tell them that they are wrong. This philosophy has crept into the church and some of our preachers and teachers are saying the same thing. You might recognize it as what the denominations have been saying all along.

There are four important factors which make the Christian faith unique:

### **(1) WE HAVE A UNIQUE AUTHORITY, THE BIBLE**

There is no other book like it in the world. It is the only book from God. The only book inspired by the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:16-17). It contains all we need to know to obey God and to get to heaven. In fact, we are warned not to add to it, or take from it in any way. Thus, all other authorities are excluded.

### **(2) WE HAVE A UNIQUE SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST**

He himself declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). The only way to God is through Jesus Christ. He alone was God, in human flesh. He alone lived a perfect life. He alone died as a sacrifice for our sins, satisfying the justice of God. He alone arose from the dead, never to die again. Christianity is unique,

because it offers the only way for man to make himself right with God, and to obtain eternal salvation in heaven.

### **(3) WE HAVE A UNIQUE ORGANISATION, THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

There is no other group in the world like the Lord's church. It alone follows God's pattern for His people, and thus is of God. All other groups are of men. It alone is the spiritual body of Christ in the world, composed of all the saved. It cannot be a denomination, for it is one body (Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 1:18). Its worship, teachings fellowship and mission are unique, and separate from all other organisations.

### **(4) WE HAVE A UNIQUE WAY TO ENTER THE CHURCH, THE NEW BIRTH**

Jesus declared that you must be born again, of the water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). No religion in the world has anything comparable to the new birth of the Christian faith. Only those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God, repent of their sins, confess Him as the Son of God, and are baptized into Christ in water, for the remission of their sins, are saved. There is no other way to obtain salvation. Those who obey the Gospel in this way are added to the one body of Christ (the church) by God and have the hope of eternal life if they remain faithful.

The Christian faith is unique and exclusive. It allows for no other way. It cannot be merged with any other way. Only those who accept its authority and Savior and obey its commands will be saved (John 12:50a).

## *Mirrors*

**JOHN WEBSTER**

One of the most honest things in the world is a mirror. It is impossible for a mirror to lie. A mirror's function is simply to reflect what is put in front of it. Many times, the image that is reflected is less than desirable. For example, when a person first

gets out of bed in the morning, chances are this reflection is not very pretty. A mirror reflects that exact image put before it.

"For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in the mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But, he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:23-25).

The Word of God is like a mirror. A person can read the Word of God and it will reveal an exact reflection of that person. The person will be able to compare what he reads in the Bible to the way that he lives his life and thus a revelation of himself. If the Word reveals a faithful Christian, then the challenge is to remain faithful. If the Word reveals a sinner outside of Christ, then the challenge is to change your life.

If a person looks into a mirror and finds he needs to make changes to himself, he has several options.

### **(1) IGNORE IT**

Many people believe if you ignore a problem long enough, it will go away. In this situation, that is not true. One cannot ignore the status of his own salvation.

### **(2) MAKE A FEW OUTWARD CHANGES**

If a person realizes he is not the kind of Christian he ought to be, he can make a few outward changes simply to satisfy his own conscience. Of course, this is not what God expects of him.

### **(3) CHANGE HIS LIFE**

If a person looks into the law of liberty and finds there are things he needs to change, God expects this person to change his life to meet the requirements of salvation.

What does your reflection look like?

## ***The Unchangeable Gospel***

**CHARLES E. COB**

Men everywhere enthralled and enticed by modern

technology, are trying to change everything to bring it all “up-to-date.” The Gospel of Jesus Christ was up-to-date before technology as we know it ever came along. The Gospel of Christ will be with us when men finally decide that technology does not offer all the answers. It will be the same Gospel that greeted men centuries ago, yesterday—and will greet him tomorrow.

If the Gospel does not change, then why try to change it as some are seeking to do? Men in their arrogance or ignorance would change the church for which Jesus died (Acts 20:28). As the church abides in the doctrine of Christ, it will be the same today as yesterday and will be the same tomorrow, if by the grace and will of God tomorrow comes.

The church was not established to be a denomination among denominations. It is the body (singular) of Christ (Colosians 1:18). Jesus rules and reigns as the head of it. Clothed in eternal majesty, our Lord lives and intercedes for His followers and this will not change. Why should it?

Strive as they will, men cannot change the lifestyle to which God has called us. Sin is still sin and righteousness is still righteousness and incidentally, this determination and definition has been made by the omniscient God. How foolish it is for men to try to manipulate God and change His will to please the selfish ambition of the creature.

God is not going to change His infinite mind about the structure of the church. He will not change His mind about marriage being male and female—not male and male or female and female.

He may provoke the liberal-minded by setting forth the fact that men are to be the public preachers of the Gospel. If God had wanted women to “occupy the pulpit,” He would have so instructed us. It is not within our province to decide that God somehow made a mistake—for God is without mistake. *He makes no mistakes!* We may not always be able to fathom God's reasons. Suffice for us to learn, know, believe what God wants of us. To impose the will of man over the will of God is a sure and certain way to ultimate destruction. Take note of the demise of ancient Israel as an example. God will not forever tolerate man's insensitive treatment of His divine and perfect will.

It is hoped that we as a people shall awaken to our responsibility to hear and obey that which our Creator has set

before us. He made us. He surely knows, in every case that which is best for us. By the way, polls are not going to change the Gospel or the mind of God.

Let's believe God, refuse to try changing His perfect will, and be happy to love and serve our God always to the best of our ability.

## ***Cast All Your Care On The Lord***

**DAVID MACY**

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). No doubt, you have carried such a heavy load you almost felt your arms would break before you reached your destination. What a relief it would have been, if someone had happened by, just at the right time, and said, "Give your load to me, I will gladly carry it a while, and give you some rest." All of God's children have that kind of relief, when sometimes the cares and burdens of life seem almost unbearable. We can cast all our cares on our loving heavenly Father because He truly cares for us, and happily bears all our burdens, and our sorrows, no matter what befalls us. There is absolutely no reason for you even to attempt to shoulder the burden alone. God wants to help you; He has promised to help you, so never fail to ask Him for His blessed help, when the need arises. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; and I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find a rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Jesus lovingly invites all who are burdened down with heartaches and cares to come to Him. He gives an unwavering promise to exchange rest for their heavy burdens. The yoke Jesus puts on His faithful disciples is light and quite easy to carry in vivid contrast to the heavy, often almost unbearable burdens Satan's followers must carry daily. Burdens of shame, burdens of regret, burden of corruption, burdens of heart-wrenching disease, and finally both physical and eternal death. A wise Christian doesn't even attempt to bear the burdens of life alone.

He knows this is both foolish and unnecessary.

When he has a need, or is in trouble, he turns without hesitation to God in prayer, and without fail, he receives the help or comfort he needs, according to God's will.

When you have someone on whom to cast all your cares, it makes life so much sweeter and easier. Do you have this: If you don't what are you waiting for? Do the smart thing and come to the Lord today, believing in Him and obeying His simple commandments. Then, every day, every hour, every minute, you can cast each and every burden on the One Who told you to, knowing this is what is needed. No wonder we sing, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, O, what a foretaste of glory divine."

## ***"Am I My Brother's Keeper?"***

Gen. 4:9 "and the Lord said unto Cain, where is Able thy brother? And he said, I know not, am I my brother's keeper?"

Should we be concerned about the spiritual, moral and physical welfare of our brothers and sisters in Christ? Is it being nosey to ask "Is there a problem? Can I help you in any way? Is it being to concerned to pull a brother or sister aside that is overcome with problems, and say I'm praying for you, let me help you? Instead of a lengthy article being written on the need to do such things, let's just consult the book of spiritual etiquette: Read - Gal. 6:1-2; Phil. 2:1-4; James 5:13-20; I Peter 1:22 & 3:8; Jude 20:24.

If someone is missing, give them a call: Heb. 10:24-25

If someone is sick, visit: Matt. 25:36

If someone is hungry, feed them: Matt. 25:35

If someone is sorrowful shed with them a tear: Rom. 12:15

If someone is lost, struggling with sin lead them back to the way: John 14:6

Let's let our faith come alive. Reach out to each other! Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers, our fears, our hopes. Our aims are one, our comforts and our cares we share our mutual woes; our mutual burdens bear, and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear!

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