

# *Sermons*

by the Alumni

of

**EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF  
PREACHING**



## THE PHARISEE AND THE SINFUL WOMAN

by Steven T. Eddy

Text: Luke 7:36-50

**Aim:** To get people to appreciate the salvation they have in Christ and to stop looking down on others.

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. Sometimes we forget our origins.
  - 1. There was a time we were not so independent.
  - 2. There was a time we were not so smart.
  - 3. Others have had worse problems than we and have done better.
- B. Looking back on our humble beginnings is nostalgic, but we don't make any efforts to live like that.
  - 1. Will you give up indoor toilets, hot water, TV, cars, electricity, hearing aids, contacts, pacemakers, computers, ATM's, and a thousand other things that modern science and culture have given you?
  - 2. Then why act as if they have always been yours and that you deserve them?
- C. It is easy to start thinking that the spiritual blessings of being in Christ have always been ours and that somehow we merit them.
- D. The story of the Pharisee and the sinful woman shows two attitudes towards sin and our need for forgiveness.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. BOTH PEOPLE SOUGHT THE PRESENCE OF JESUS.

- A. Many have wanted to spend time with Jesus.
  - 1. John 12:21 Certain Greeks desired to see Jesus.
  - 2. Luke 23:8 Herod had wanted to see Jesus for a long time.
    - a. Perhaps he was still superstitious about John.
    - b. He hoped to see a miracle.
    - c. Pleading for forgiveness was not in his mind.
- B. The Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him.
  - 1. Jesus had graciously consented to be the guest.
    - a. Rev. 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock ...."
    - b. John 14:23 Christ abides with the one who keeps His words.
  - 2. The Pharisee was glad to act as the benefactor.
    - a. Do you suppose he thought he was doing Jesus a favor?
    - b. Would he have felt insulted if Jesus was too busy?
- C. The sinful woman humbly approached from behind and wept as she tried to bestow her gift.
  - 1. She chose no gracious words to flatter him. (Psa. 78:36)
  - 2. Her desperate sense of need prompted her to risk rejection.
    - a. Est. 4:16 Like brave Esther, she was totally committed.
    - b. In spirit, she had already made her petition for forgiveness.
  - 3. She knew she was the guest and Jesus was the benefactor.
    - a. She needed him but he could live without her.

- b. Hers was a spiritual errand in behalf of her soul.
  - 4. Her bottle of ointment was likely the best she had.
- D. What about you today?
  - 1. Do you feel you did the Lord a favor by coming here today?
    - a. Does it "put you out" to "go to church?"
    - b. Does it "cost you something" to obey him?
  - 2. Is it a privilege for him to receive your adoration?
  - 3. Does he owe you something because of what you have done?
  - 4. If his teachings infringe on your lifestyle, do you ask him to leave?

## II. BOTH PEOPLE HAD A PARTICULAR NOTION OF WHAT JESUS SHOULD FEEL.

- A. The Pharisee thought Jesus should share in his feelings of disgust for this sinful woman.
  - 1. He was not responsible for her bad decisions.
  - 2. If he thought badly of her, how much worse must a "prophet?"
  - 3. Since it was the prophet's task to condemn sinners, yet Jesus allowed her to touch him, then he must not be much of a prophet.
- B. The sinful woman hoped Jesus would show compassion on her.
  - 1. Psa. 38:4 Her sense of sin made her reach out for healing.
  - 2. Psa. 32:5 The Pharisee's disdain would not make her hide her sin.
  - 3. Ex. 34:6-7 Her actions acknowledged him as Lord.
- C. What about you today?
  - 1. What power was it that made you live such a perfect life?
  - 2. Do you ever find vindication in the failings of others?
  - 3. When was the last time you shed tears over your own sins?
  - 4. What is your notion of how the Lord feels about sinners?

## III. EACH PERSON BESTOWED SOMETHING ON JESUS.

- A. The Pharisee bestowed neglect and criticism.
  - 1. Water for the feet was a act of hospitality.
  - 2. A kiss was a customary greeting in the ancient middle east.
  - 3. He silently questioned Jesus' credentials because he didn't condemn her.
- B. The sinful woman brought her best gifts.
  - 1. The ointment was expensive and she could have lavished it on herself.
  - 2. She didn't bring part of it, but all.
  - 3. Psa. 51:17 The best gift is a broken spirit and a contrite heart.
- C. What about you today?
  - 1. What kind of gift did you offer the Lord this morning?
  - 2. Does the Lord get your things or you and your things?

## IV. EACH PERSON RECEIVED A NEEDED BLESSING FROM THE LORD.

- A. The Pharisee received a lesson on forgiveness and love.
  - 1. Likely he was short on both.
  - 2. His spiritual superiority had made him judgmental and unfeeling.
  - 3. Matt. 7:12 His life was the opposite of the Golden Rule.

- B. The woman's sins were forgiven.
  - 1. Psa. 86:5 She believed in the God who believes in forgiving.
  - 2. Matt. 1:21 She believed in Jesus' mission.
  - 3. Acts 5:31 She went home with the greatest blessing of all.
- C. What about you today?
  - 1. Do you see sinners as the object of God's love?
  - 2. Or do they just clutter up the church building?
  - 3. Which person are you like?

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. Why do you want Jesus in your life?
- B. What do you expect of him?
- C. What gift do you bring him?
- D. What message do you need to hear from him?

# ONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Grady Scott

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. Legend tells us of a great Roman warrior, Cincinnatus, who was called upon to hold a vital bridge, leading into ancient Rome against Barbarian attack. All others fled, only he remained. He stood his ground, fighting off the attackers. One person made a difference.
- B. In 1866 one lone Kansas senator stood against the wrongful impeachment of President Andrew Johnson. One person made a difference.
- C. In 1941 one representative held the balance in allowing the President to pass laws that prepared us for the impending war. One person made a difference.
- D. The Bible talks about a man of war, fighting for King David, who made a difference, even when everyone fled. *"And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the Lord wrought a great victory"* (2 Samuel 23:11-12)

## BODY

### I. LOOK AT SHAMMAH'S ACT.

- A. The danger.
  - 1. The Philistines were gathered together, threatening the Israelites.
  - 2. The prize was a field of lentils.
- B. The reaction of the Israelites.
  - 1. Everyone else fled.
- C. But Shammah stood his ground.
  - 1. The result - "And the Lord wrought a great victory."
  - 2. Because he stood while everyone else fled, he was able to defeat the enemies of God's people.
  - 3. What can we learn from this episode?

### II. THERE ARE TIMES IN OUR LIVES THAT WE REACH A CRISIS POINT.

- A. The New Testament tells us that we will be called upon to stand when others run.
  - 1. Matthew 10:32,33 - "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."
  - 2. 2 Timothy 2:12 - "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:"
- B. Many will be fearful and flee at the crisis point.
  - 1. Most of the disciples fled when Jesus was captured by his enemies.
    - a. Matthew 26:56 - "Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."
  - 2. Even those who are usually dependable will sometimes fail "when the chips are down."
    - a. Galatians 2:12,13 - "For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation."
  - 3. But some will be like Shammah, standing for what's right, in spite of the odds of the enemies.
    - a. Joshua and Caleb.

1. Numbers 13:30; 14:6-8,10
- b. Stephen.
  1. Acts 7:51, 57-58 "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye....Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."

### III. ONE PERSON CAN INDEED MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

- A. God expects each person to make a difference.
  1. 2 Corinthians 5:10
  2. Mark 16:15- "Go YE..."
- B. God wants each of us to stand for what is right.
  1. Ephesians 5:11
  2. 2 Timothy 4:2-4 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned ~~at~~ fables."
  3. Philippians 1:17 "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."
- C. We can stand alone when we are assured that God will stand with us.
  1. 1 Samuel 14:6 - "And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few."
  2. 2 Timothy 4:16-17 "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."
  3. Romans 8:31 - "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"
- D. You can, and must, make a difference in the local congregation. (I help shape this congregation)
  1. Do I stand for the truth?
  2. Am I interested in the growth of the congregation?
  3. Am I friendly to visitors?

### CONCLUSION:

- A. In these times when no one wants to get involved, when many abandon their convictions in the face of any opposition, when no one seems to want to take a stand for what is right, let us stand like Shammah, willing to face danger for the right.
- B. In these perilous time for the church, with enemies from within and without, will God find us willing to stand, or find no one with courage.
- C. I pray that we be not like the Israelites of Ezekiel's day. "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel 22:30-31).

## LET US GO FORTH TO HIM OUTSIDE THE CAMP

Hebrews 13:10-14

David N. Powell

### INTRODUCTION

- A. In concentration camps during World War II our enemy found that the best way to get information was not physical torture, but solitary confinement (deprivation of fellowship). Men are weakest alone.
  - 1. Jesus is a personal Savior but He only saves the individual as He adds him to the group, the church.
  - 2. As we go forth to Jesus, we do so together.
- B. The background of this passage is the Day of Atonement.
  - 1. Reference Leviticus 16:21,22,&27.
  - 2. The "Camp" represents fellowship, whether with God or the world.
  - 3. The "Altar" we come to now is the sacrifice of Jesus.
  - 4. Our altar is better than the Jewish altar, it is outside the camp of the Jewish altar.
- C. The Hebrew brethren addressed in this book were under pressure to return to or at least mix in Judaism with their Christianity. That is a danger which simply does not exist for us. What dangers do we face today that tempt us to leave or dilute "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"?
  - 1. It took courage for our early brethren to leave their world, families, & religion. Let us have courage.
- D. LET US GO FORTH TO HIM...

### BODY

- I. ...OUTSIDE THE CAMP OF THE WORLD AND ITS PLEASURES.
  - A. Hebrews 11:25-26, Moses knew how to bear reproach.
  - B. How would you feel if your spouse or children went constantly to a neighbor to have their needs met? The same way the Lord must feel when we constantly turn to the world for satisfaction.
  - C. Hebrews 12:15-16, Esau was not evil, but worldly.
  - D. Romans 12:2, do not be conformed to this world.
  - E. Hebrews 11:32-38, the world did not satisfy them.
- II. ...OUTSIDE THE CAMP OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
  - A. Family can put great pressure on us to compromise, Matthew 10:36-38.
  - B. Matthew 12:48-50, the family outside the camp.
  - C. Sometimes the faithful have to go against family to do what is right.
    - 1. Job's wife, "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9).
    - 2. What if Abel were more afraid of Cain than God?
    - 3. Joseph did what was right in spite of his brothers.
    - 4. Moses chose the affliction of God's family.
    - 5. The mother & father of the blind man in John 9 were afraid to stand up for him and the truth.
    - 6. Aaron could not even mourn the sinful death of his sons to be right with God (Leviticus 10:1-6).



III. ...OUTSIDE THE CAMP OF DENOMINATIONAL RELIGION.

- A. After the "Golden Calf" incident Moses and the faithful moved outside the camp, Exodus 33:7. We must also separate ourselves from false and divisive religion.
- B. Hebrews 11:7, Noah's faith condemned the world.
- C. Hebrews 10:32-33, If you are faithful and stand up for faithful preachers, the denominational world will oppose you (2 Timothy 3:12).
- D. Some brethren will hate those in error, other brethren will embrace them. Both are wrong, we must love their souls but hate their doctrine.

IV. ...OUTSIDE THE CAMPS OF RELIGIOUS SNOBBERY AND APATHY.

- A. We do not endorse those who sit behind stained glass with clear consciences (denominations), but are we those who sit behind clear glass with stained conscience? Are we doing what we can to convert them?
- B. They will lose their souls for practicing error. Some of my brethren will go to Hell for knowing God's righteousness and practicing self-righteousness (or nothing at all).
- C. We have brought a lot of people to the church building but how many have we taught to go forth to Him outside the camp?
- D. James 2:1-9, this is religious snobbery. Money talks louder than the gospel to some brethren. "Let's not have any poor folks enter our building, or for that matter blacks, or loud children, or divorced people..." We should be taking people in and teaching them rather than deciding who is a good candidate for salvation.
- E. We ought to be bowing before God, smiting ourselves on our breasts saying, "Be merciful to me a sinner".

CONCLUSION

A. DON'T GO OUTSIDE THE CAMP IF YOUR GOAL IS...

- 1. Peace with the world, for He came to bring a sword.
- 2. Acceptance of friends and family, because He came to set father against son, and mother against daughter.
- 3. Easy religion, for you are to "contend for the faith".
- 4. Relax in the church, He came to disturb those who are at "ease in Zion".

B. SAFE IN THE CAMP OF JESUS

- 1. Revelation 20:9-10, we must leave all other camps to be safe in the Lord's camp.
- 2. There is a very real danger of returning to these camps, Hebrews 3:12.
- 3. Deuteronomy 23:14, the Lord's camp is serious business.
- 4. Why go to the pain and effort of going forth to Jesus outside the camp? Hebrews 13:14 has the answer.

## A PROFILE OF JESUS

Lonnie Smith

Introduction: Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5).

- I. GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS (Gen. 1:26-27)
  - A. Spirit
  - B. Character
  
- II. MAN LOST HIS IDENTITY AFTER SIN (Gen. 3:9, "Where art thou?")
  - A. Christ came to earth to show us how God intended for man to live (John 1:14, 18; 10:10; Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10).
  - B. Christ was ordinary (Mk. 6:3; Phil. 2:5-12).
    - 1. Born in Bethlehem (Mt. 2:8)
    - 2. Lived in Nazareth (John 1:46)
    - 3. Father was a carpenter (Mt. 13:55)
    - 4. Jesus was a carpenter (Mk. 6:3)
    - 5. Jesus did not go to the best schools (Mk. 6:2)
    - 6. Jesus did not wear clothes of royalty (Is. 53:2)
  - C. Jesus came to serve (Mt. 20:25-28)
    - 1. Jesus teaches greatness is found in service (Mk. 9:33-35; John 13:1-17).
    - 2. Service is a daily work (Lk. 9:23).
  
- III. CHRIST'S EXAMPLE TEACHES MAN HOW TO LIVE A SIMPLE LIFE
  - A. The simple things of life are powerful when we use them to the glory of God (Mt. 11:25-30).
  - B. God intended man to work.
    - 1. Gen. 2:15
    - 2. Eph. 4:28
    - 3. 1 Thess. 4:11-12
    - 4. 1 Tim. 5:8

Conclusion: Jesus gives us a profile of a servant to the glory of God.

## TRUSTING IN A BRUISED REED

Gary Durham

### Introduction

- A. When it comes to religion, can you trust your beliefs?
- B. Will they be able to stand the test in the final judgment?
- C. Don't be embarrassed and put to shame because you believed the wrong things.

### I. AN INTERESTING SITUATION

- A. Jerusalem is surrounded by the Assyrian army (2 Kings 18:17).
- B. Hezekiah was depending on Egypt (2 Kings 18:19-21).
- C. "Bruised" reed is "broken" -- no strength, not dependable.

### II. THE CONSCIENCE CAN BE A BRUISED REED

- A. "If I think I am right then I am right" -- is this true?
- B. Conscience must be guided by God's word (Isa. 55:8-9).
- C. Without knowledge, feelings can be dangerous (Rom. 10:1-3).

### III. MORALITY CAN BE A BRUISED REED

- A. Is it enough to be simply a "good" person?
- B. Can not be good enough on our own -- still sin (Rom. 3:23).
- C. No salvation without the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:8-9).

### IV. RELIGION CAN BE A BRUISED REED

- A. Not enough to be religious; must be religiously right.
- B. It is important what doctrine we believe (2 John 9).
- C. Paul had to correct some religious people (Acts 17:22-23).

### Conclusion

- A. A bruised or broken reed is dangerous because it provides a false sense of security and will fail in times of greatest need.
- B. This is especially so in the realm of religious matters.
- C. Don't depend upon something which does not have the strength to pass the test.

# “Jehovah’s Witnesses”

George Jensen

## Introduction:

1. Who here has received a knock at the door, and opened it to find a “witness”?
2. Ironically, the name “Jehovah’s Witnesses” was not adopted until after the death of their founder.<sup>1</sup>
3. It will be the aim of this lesson to briefly acquaint the listener with this group and examine some of its claims in the light of Biblical information.

## I. Brief History

### A. Founder

1. Charles Taze Russell was born on January 16, 1852.<sup>2</sup>
2. His parents were Presbyterian, but as a young man he joined the Congregational Church. However, he was troubled by the doctrines of predestination and eternal punishment.<sup>3</sup> \* This is interesting to note since the doctrines later hailed would be: 144,000 get to heaven, the rest of good will get to live on renovated earth, and the wicked annihilated.
3. In 1870 he was exposed to Second Adventism views which sparked his interest.\*
4. He organized a Bible class and later joined N. H. Barbour in publishing a book.\*
5. He later left Barbour and began his own paper titled: “Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence”, the first issue printed July 1, 1879.\*
6. “Zion’s Watch Tower Tract Society was established as an unincorporated body in 1881, with Russell as its manager.” \*
7. Russell died in October 31, 1916. \*

### B. Successors

1. Joseph Franklin Rutherford became the second president.
  - a. He had been serving as the legal advisor.
  - b. When he became president he immediately began encouraging more active “Witnessing.”
  - c. Some split off at this time who were dissatisfied with how things were changed.
  - d. “In 1931, at a convention held at Columbus, Ohio, the members of the society adopted a resolution affirming that, from then on, they were to be known as *Jehovah’s Witnesses*, basing this new name particularly on the words of Isaiah 43:10...”\*
  - e. Rutherford died January 8, 1942.\*
2. Nathan Homer Knorr became the third president.
  - a. He gave emphasis and method to training for witnessing.
  - b. It was also during his administration that the “New World Translation” was produced. The New Testament was released in 1950 and the entire Bible in one volume was published in 1961.
3. Frederick W. Franz. “Franz, chairman of the [translation] committee, eventually took the helm of the organization in 1977.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Handbook of Today’s Religions, Josh McDowell & Don Stewart, Here’s Life Publishers, Inc., 1983, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> The Four Major Cults, Anthony A. Hoekema, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, ©1963, 1984 Reprint, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> Hoekema, Also all “\*” same source

<sup>4</sup> Jehovah’s Witnesses Prophets, Promises... and Problems, Tract, American Tract Society, ©1986.

## II. Some Claims and Doctrines

### A. Eternal Punishment of the wicked

1. J.W.'s "Eternal punishment is nowhere suggested in the Old Testament Scriptures, and only a few statements in the New Testament can be so misconstrued as to appear to teach it."<sup>5</sup>

#### 2. Bible

a. Matt. 10:28

b. Mark 9:43

c. Rev. 20:10

d. Rom. 6:23 Note: "death" is contrasted with "eternal life." Separation is far different than annihilation.

### B. The Doctrine of Christ

#### 1. J.W.'s

a. "Jesus, the Christ, a created individual, is the second greatest Personage of the universe."<sup>6</sup>

b. "Prior to coming to earth, this only-begotten Son of God did not think himself to be co-equal with Jehovah God..."<sup>7</sup>

#### 2. Bible

a. John 1:1

b. John 8:58

1) λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. (ἐγὼ εἰμι = Pres. Tense)

2) "I say to YOU, Before Abraham came into existence, I have been." NWT

c. Phil. 2:5, 6 "...did not consider being equal to God something to cling to..."

McCord's Translation

### C. Prophecy concerning A.D. 1914

1. "Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proof that the setting up of the kingdom of God has already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the battle of the great day of God Almighty of Rev. 16:14 which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership is already commenced."<sup>8</sup>

2. "We see no reason for changing the figures - nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe, God's dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the *beginning*, but for the *end* of the time of trouble."<sup>9</sup> Watchtower, July 15, 1894

3. Since Jesus did not actually come in 1914, when that time past they had a dilemma. "...but Russell was told by an Adventist preacher that the Greek word used in Scripture for 'coming' could also mean 'presence.' The use of this meaning would allow them to declare that Jesus actually did come as prophesied since they could explain that this 'presence' constituted the expected coming!"<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah's Witnesses, Walter R. Martin, Bethany House Publishers, ©1957, 1988 Printing, Quoting: *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. I, p. 128.

<sup>6</sup> Apostles Of Denial, Edmond Charles Gruss, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., ©1970, p. 86, Quoting: *Make Sure of All Things*, p. 86.

<sup>7</sup> op. cit., Quoting: *Let God Be True*, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah's Witnesses- Watch Out for the Watchtower!, Gordon E. Duggar, Baker Book House, 1989, p. 37, Quoting: *Time Is at Hand*, Russell, p. 101.

<sup>9</sup> op. cit., Quoting: *Watchtower*, July 15, 1894.

<sup>10</sup> Duggar, p. 38.

### III. A Word About The New World Translation

#### A. Supplied words

1. The following appears in the Forward: “[ ] Brackets enclose words inserted to complete the sense in the English text...”
2. However, note this quote from John 1:1: “In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.”
3. They do put brackets around [the] but not around their addition of “a” ; which is not in the original. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

#### B. Hebrews 1:8

1. New World Translation: “But with reference to the Son: ‘God is your throne forever...’”
2. James Moffatt’s translation has: “God is thy throne...” But the Son is called God in the KJV, ASV, Charles B. Williams, Olaf M. Norlie, N.T. in Basic English, Emphasized N.T. J.B. Rotherham, Hugo McCord’s, Joseph L. Lilly, New English Bible, J.B. Phillips, NIV, King James II by Jay P. Green, Today’s English Version, RSV, NASV, New KJV, Modern Reader’s Bible - Moulton, Young’s Literal Translation, Living Oracles. (19 translations)
3. Rendering “God” in the vocative seems also to fit the context. Also this is a quotation of Psalm 45:6. Ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος

#### Conclusion:

1. That the members of this group are very zealous cannot be denied.
2. However, Jesus’ stern words to the Pharisees, seem quite applicable to these people, Matt. 23:15.

## PROVE ALL THINGS

Text: 1 Thess. 5:21

Lenny Santee

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. This is a forgotten command.
- B. Many feel insulted if you ask them to prove anything about their religion.
- C. Yet we have the obligation to prove our religion-1 Pet. 3:15.
- D. This command denies the commonly accepted teaching that it does not matter what a person believes. Why prove anything if it does not matter what a person believes?

### BODY:

#### I. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN PROVING?

- A. Wrong ways of proving.
  - 1. You cannot prove by assuming. Many assume things in religion and then expect you to take their word for it. People assume that because there are good people in all churches that all churches are good in God's sight.
  - 2. You c/n prove by supposition.
    - a. Some on Pentecost supposed that the Apostles were drunk. Peter said no - Acts 2:13-15.
    - b. Some supposed that Jesus said John would not die till He returned-Jn. 21:20-23.
  - 3. You c/n prove by accusation.
    - a. Accused Paul- Acts 24:5-6.
    - b. Could not prove it-Acts 24:13.
  - 4. You c/n prove by misrepresentation. Jews set up false witness against Christ, Paul and Stephen.
- B. RIGHT WAY OF PROVING.
  - 1. "To demonstrate by reasoning or evidence causing to be accepted as genuine." Webster.
  - 2. To test-Lk. 14:19.
  - 3. To test:
    - a. 1 Jn. 4:1-3
    - b. Rev. 2:2.

#### II. PROVE ALL THINGS.

- A. Must prove ALL things, not SOME things. The fact that proof is needed for some things is also proof that it is needed for all things.
- B. All religious groups do some things right.
- C. When one proves some things right, he is still short of this obligation to prove all things.

#### III. WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF PROOF?

- A. The Wrong Source Of Proof.
  - 1. Feeling is the wrong source-Prov. 28:26. "He who trust in his own heart is a fool..."
    - a. The publican felt he was all right was He? Lk. 18:9-14.
    - b. Suppose you feel you are alright and I feel you are not. Whose

feelings are right?

2. Parents are the wrong source-Acts 7:51.
  3. Popularity is the wrong source.
    - a. Ex. 23:2 "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil..."
    - b. Popularity would have required God to drown Noah and save the world.
    - c. Popularity would have made Christ in the wrong.
    - d. If numbers determine right, then a man would have to change religions when he moved. A Baptist in Ala. who moved to Utah would have to become a Mormon. A Christian in the USA moves to Italy becomes a Catholic, then he moves to Africa and becomes a heathen.
  4. Conscience is the wrong source.
    - a. Titus 1:15.
    - b. 1 Tim. 4:1-2.
  5. A law abolished is the wrong source.
    - a. The baptism of John was abolished and Apollos could not prove it-Acts 18:24-26.
    - b. Law of Moses abolished.
      1. Col. 2:14.
      2. 2 Cor. 3:11.
  6. The exception to the rule is the wrong source.
    - a. Apostles and Cornelius baptized with the Holy Spirit.
    - b. Enoch did not die, c/n prove we will not die from this.
- B. THE RIGHT SOURCE OF PROOF.
1. The Bible is the basis of proof.
  2. 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
  3. 1 Pet. 4:11a.

IV. HOLD FAST. 1 Thess. 5:21B

- A. This indicates that you should not hold to what you c/n prove.
- B. It also shows that you should not give up what you can prove.

V. WHERE IS THE PROOF FOR?

- A. Faith only?
- B. Baptism because you have been saved?
- C. Sprinkling or pouring for baptism?
- D. Joining the church of your choice.
- E. Etc.

VI. THERE IS PROOF FOR:

- A. Faith- Heb. 11:6. But w/o faith it is...
- B. Repentance- Lk. 13:3.
- C. Confession- Matt. 10:32-33.
- D. Baptism-Mark 16:16. 1 Pet. 3:21.
- E. Preaching, praying, singing, giving, Lord's supper.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We will be judged by God's word- Jn. 12:48.
- B. Now is the time to examine our lives and practices in light of the proof. 2 Cor. 13:5.



## HE PREACHED CHRIST THE BEARER OF OUR SIN

Acts 8:26-40; Isaiah 53:1-12

Paul Vaughn

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. In our text an Ethiopian of great authority had come to Jerusalem to worship.
  - 1. He was very zealous in going a long distance to Jerusalem to worship.
  - 2. He was a eunuch, and most likely a proselyte, which meant that he could not worship like most Jews (Deuteronomy 23:1).
- B. The Ethiopian was a good example for one who wants to please God.
  - 1. His job was secondary, to the worship of God.
  - 2. As he traveled he read in his Bible.
  - 3. He is an example of a fertile heart.
  - 4. He was anxious to hear the truth.
- C. Philip saw an opportunity to convert a soul.
- D. Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian from the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 53).
- E. What does it mean to preach Jesus?

### DISCUSSION:

- I. IT MEANS PREACHING THE DEATH OF JESUS AND MAN'S SIN.
  - A. Jesus died for our sin!
    - 1. "He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa.53:5)
    - 2. "He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isa. 53:5).
    - 3. "By His stripes we are healed" (Isa.53:5).
    - 4. "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa.53:6).
  - B. It was sin that put Jesus on the cross!
    - 1. It was sin that platted the crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29).
    - 2. It was sin that "mocked Him" (Matthew 27:29).
    - 3. It was sin that cried out "crucify Him" (John 19:15).
    - 4. It sin that cried out, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15).
    - 5. It was sin that ejected the spittle (Matt. 27:30).
    - 6. It was sin that drove the spikes (John 19:17,18).
  - C. What do you think about the cross?
    - 1. Is it an ornament of decoration to you?
    - 2. Is it an amulet to ward off evil?
    - 3. Is it a charm to bring good luck?
    - 4. In the first century is was a cruel form of execution
    - 5. A poem by Mary Colridge:  
*I saw a cross of burning gold,  
And jewels glorious to behold.  
Over it a golden crown,*

*All the people falling down,  
I saw cross of ugly wood,  
On it there were stains of blood.  
Over it a crown of thorns,  
Platted for the people's scorn.  
Cross of gold, no fruit was thine,  
Nothing but the empty shine.  
Cross of wood, thou living tree,  
The true vine clung fast to thee.*

D. Do you see in the cross His death for our sin?

## II. IT MEANS PREACHING THAT HIS DEATH WAS ESSENTIAL.

- A. Sin separates man from God (Isaiah 59:w,2).
1. How does man view sin?
    - a. Man looks at sin as a blunder.
    - b. Man looks at sin as trifle.
  2. God views sin as it is:
    - a. An abomination.
    - b. As blindness.
    - c. As lawlessness.
    - d. As a tragedy.
- B. The death of Jesus made it possible for man to be free from sin.
1. He healed us "by His stripes" (Isaiah 53:5).
    - a. He bore our punishment.
    - b. Through Him we are restored to God.
  2. He justified (Isaiah 53:11).
    - a. To justified is to absolve from guilt.
    - b. He justified us by bearing our sin.
  3. He intercedes for us (Isaiah 53:12).
    - a. Romans 8:34.
    - b. Hebrews 9:24.
  4. He was stricken, smitten and afflicted for sin (Isaiah 53:4).

## III. PREACHING JESUS MEANS PREACHING THE CHURCH.

- A. He built the church by the way of the cross.
1. Jesus died for the church (Ephesians 5:25)
  2. All who obey are added to the church (Acts 2:47).
- B. The church is "the pillar and the ground of truth" (1 Timothy 3:14).

## IV. PREACHING JESUS MEANS PREACHING OBEDIENCE.

- A. Philip preached obedience (Acts 8:36).
1. He preached belief (John 8:24).
  2. He preached repentance (Luke 13:3).
  3. He preached confession (Acts 8:37).

4. He preached baptism (Acts 8:36,38).
- B. Have you been obedient to Jesus?
1. Have you seen the suffering?
  2. Have you seen the pain?
  3. Have you seen the cross?
  4. Do you realize that it was for you?

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. The Ethiopian was anxious to hear and obey the gospel.
- B. **ARE YOU ANXIOUS TO OBEY THE LORD?**

## FORMULA FOR A CROWN

(2 Timothy 4:6-8)

Robbie Eversole

### Introduction

- A. The challenge of faithfulness is ever before us (Josh. 24:15; Rev. 2:10; Deut. 30:19-20).
  - 1. Our personal choices are involved in faithfulness.
  - 2. God promises a reward for those who remain faithful.
- B. The world is very magnetic and constantly tries to draw us back (2 Tim. 4:10).
  - 1. The saints of God must ever be watchful (1 Pet. 5:8; Mt. 25:13).
  - 2. We must remember the destiny of the world (Heb. 1:12; Rev. 18:17; 1 Jn. 2:15-17).
- C. Paul was faithful to God and he received a crown (2 Tim. 4:8).
  - 1. Paul serves as an example for us (1 Cor. 11:1).
  - 2. Those who become unfaithful will not enter into the promised land (Heb. 3:19)
- D. In our text, Paul gives us the formula for a crown.

### I. FAITHFUL TO THE FIGHT

- A. The Christian life is a life of war (Mt. 10:34; 2 Tim. 2:3-4).
  - 1. This war was waged in the garden and it continues today (Gen. 3:15; 1 Tim. 6:12).
  - 2. Jesus is the commander-in-chief of the army -- the church (Eph. 1:21-22; Acts 20:28).
    - a. Every member of the church is a soldier (Eph. 6:10-20).
    - b. This warfare entails (1 Tim. 6:12; 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Cor. 10:3-4; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Jude 3).
  - 3. To be a good soldier of Christ, one must:
    - a. Be in the right army.
    - b. Honor and obey the commander.
    - c. Wear the right uniform (Gal. 3:26-27).
    - d. Fight with the right weapon (Eph. 6:17; Rev. 12:11).
    - e. Fight against the enemy forces (1 Pet. 5:8; Phil. 3:18; Gal. 1:6-9, 23).
- B. We must stay in the fight and endure the heat of the battle (Mt. 10:22; 20:12).
- C. We must be faithful to the fight and wield the sword of the spirit and not a butter paddle.

### II. FAITHFUL TO THE FAITH

- A. The faith is the system of faith -- the Gospel (Jude 3; Gal. 1:23).
  - 1. Being faithful to "the faith" not only entails defending it, but also living it.
  - 2. Are we faithful to "the faith" when it comes to:
    - a. Worship (Jn. 4:24; Mt. 4:10). Do we allow trivial things to keep

- us back? Do we make excuses?
  - b. Service (Mt. 20:28; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 9:6; Rev. 2:19). Can we do less?
  - c. Preaching (Hab. 2:2). To muddy the message is sin! (Jonah 3:2; Mt. 28:19; Acts 14:7; Jer. 22:29).  
Illustration -- Missionary in China -- saw wagon with light fixtures -- made in Connet. -- send light for houses -- not for souls. One-fifth of the world's population is in China (World Book Ency.).
  - d. Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).
  - e. Benevolence (Gal. 6:10; 1 Thess. 3:12; Mic. 6:8; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 6:17-18; 1 Thess. 5:15; Heb. 13:16; 3 Jn. 11).
- B. Are we living epistles (2 Cor. 3:2)?

### III. FAITHFUL TO THE FINISH

- A. We must never give up if we are to receive the crown of life (Mt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10; 14:13; Jn. 8:31; Gal. 6:9; 1 Cor. 1:8; Rom. 6:22; Heb. 3:6, 14).
  - 1. Quitters never win, and winners never quit.
  - 2. One must finish his course if he is to have the crown of life (1 Cor. 9:24-27).
  - 3. Only by keeping our eyes on Jesus can we have the endurance to run and win (Heb. 12:1-3).
    - a. Apostasy and quitting first take place in the mind.
    - b. Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:13
- B. It is better to have never started the race, as to start it and not finish (2 Pet. 2:20-22; Heb. 10:31; Lk. 12:47).

### Conclusion

- A. Every Christian is a steward (1 Cor. 4:2).
- B. Are you faithful right now (2 Cor. 13:5)?
  - 1. Faithful to the fight.
  - 2. Faithful to the faith.
  - 3. Faithful to the finish.
- C. It matters not how we were born, but it does matter how we die (Mt. 25:30; Rev. 14:13).

## THE UNCHANGING CHRIST

Charles Huff

TEXT: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

### Introduction

- A. We live in a changing world.
    - 1. Think of the changes in your lifetime.
    - 2. Some changes are good, some bad.
  - B. People often change.
    - 1. Some people change from bad to good, others from good to bad.
    - 2. Sometimes we become very disappointed in people.
    - 3. Relationships change.
  - C. The book of Hebrews is a study in CONTRASTS.
    - 1. Of the Old and New Testaments/ Worship/ Priesthood/ Laws/ Promises, etc.
    - 2. Contrasts things that are passing and things that are remaining.
  - D. Let us now review some things that are changing and notice that Christ Never Changes.
- I. THE HEAVENS AND EARTH WILL CHANGE (Heb. 1:10-12).
- A. Heavens and earth will perish at Jesus' Coming (2 Pet. 3:10-13).
  - B. New Heavens and a New Earth are promised (Rev. 21:1-4).
  - C. "Heaven and earth will pass away..." (Matt. 24:35).
  - D. "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come" (Heb. 13:14).
- II. THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD CHANGED, BUT THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST NEVER CHANGES (Heb. 4:14-16).  
CHRIST, OUR HIGH PRIEST:
- A. Appointed by God, not men (Heb. 5:1-6).
  - B. Concentrated by an oath (Heb. 7:20-21).
  - C. Jesus is sinless (Heb. 7:26-27).
  - D. Jesus' priesthood is unchangeable (Heb. 7:23-24).
  - E. His intercession all prevailing (Heb. 7:25).
  - F. He is a perfect Mediator -- God and Man in the flesh (Heb. 2:14-18; 3:1-2; 1 Tim. 2:5).
  - G. Jesus' offering is perfect and final (Heb. 9:24-28).
  - H. His priesthood is eternal in the heavens (Heb. 8:1-2).
- III. THE LAW OF MOSES CHANGED, BUT THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST NEVER CHANGES (Heb. 7:12).
- A. Jesus is the Mediator of a better covenant (Heb. 8:6-13).
  - B. His covenant (law) not dedicated with blood of animals (Heb. 9:11-17; 10:4-10).
  - C. The glory of the New exceeds that of the Old (2 Cor. 3:7-16).

Conclusion: Jesus Christ Is --

- A. God's Prophet to Reveal (Heb. 1:1-2).
- B. God's Priest to Redeem (Heb. 1:3a).
- C. God's King to Rule (Heb. 1:3b).

# WHAT WE NEED WHEN WE SIN

John 8:1-11

Tim Forlines

## INTRODUCTION

- A. A plain fact of the Gospel is that Jesus has come to be a friend to sinners (cf. Mk. 2:14-17).
- B. This was never illustrated more vividly than when a real-life sinner was brought before Jesus to be judged by Him.
- C. Text: John 8:1-11
- D. A brief look at the text:
  - 1. The scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman "caught in adultery" (v. 3), insisting that He judge one way or another concerning her guilt (v. 5).
  - 2. We are told that they simply wished to trap Him in a dilemma (v. 6).
    - a. If He said to stone her, as the law provided (Deut. 22:23-24), He would be accused of trying to subvert the Roman government, which had taken from the Jews the power to administer capital punishment.
    - b. If He said to not stone her, he would be accused of violating the law of Moses (v. 5).
  - 3. He, knowing of their hypocrisy and insincerity, chose to put the dilemma back in their hands (v. 7). He was neither an eyewitness of her sin, nor was He presuming to act in place of the civil authorities. Also, He was acting in accordance with His purpose for coming into the world (John 3:17).
- E. This text has rich lessons about the compassion and forgiveness of Christ, as well as the hypocrisy of some men. However, let us at this time look at it from the standpoint of the woman, the "sinner" in the narrative.

## DISCUSSION: THE TEXT SHOWS SOME THINGS WE NEED WHEN WE SIN.

### I. Confrontation With Our Sin

- A. Verse 3 - *"Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery..."*
  - 1. Here the inspired narrator tells us she was indeed guilty.
- B. Despite the Pharisees' insincerity with regard to her sin, she still needed to be confronted with it.
- C. The first step in dealing with sin is in facing the fact of it (cf. Mt. 5:3-4)
- D. We might wonder if this woman would have continued in disobedience without a thought of her guilt had she not been confronted with her sin.

### II. Application of a Standard

- A. Verse 5 - *"Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"*
- B. Clearly, the Pharisees and scribes were not concerned with upholding the law in its intent (v. 6).
- C. They were correct, however, in their *statement of what the law said* (cf. Lev. 20:10).
- D. Certainly, one who sins needs to know that it is wrong, why it is wrong and the consequences thereof (cf. 1 John 3:4 KJV; Isaiah 59:2; Romans 6:23).
- E. Sadly, the ones who here pretended to be concerned with the law's penalties were woefully ignorant of the cure for sin which had come into the world (Luke 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15).

### III. A Righteous Judge

- A. Verse 7 - *So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."*
- B. Christ was perfectly qualified to judge this sinner according to the law (Matt. 5:17).
  - 1. He embodied the very principles of the law.
- C. Their judgment was hypocritical and *self-righteous*. Jesus showed that when he called



upon them to act upon their accusation.

1. Certainly, sinlessness was not required for the carrying out of God's command to stone the guilty. This would have made the law meaningless.
  2. But in their hypocrisy, they were not fit administrators of God's law.
- D. Paul noted that the same one who had saved him would be his righteous Judge, and give him a crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8).
- E. The One who will judge us in the last day is the One who today pleads for us before the Father (1 John 2:1-2)
1. That passage also shows us that Christ is the One who has worked to cover our sins.

#### **IV. Compassion**

- A. Verse 10 - *When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"*
- B. Christ's compassion for this woman as a sinner in need is evident.
- C. Do we effectively model His example of compassion to those in sin?
1. How would we react to this woman if she were a member of this congregation?
- D. Matthew 9:36; John 10:14-15

#### **V. Forgiveness**

- A. Verse 11a - *She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you..."*
- B. The Pharisees were omitting one very important aspect of God's dealing with men--the grace which forgives (John 1:17; cf. Matthew 23:23).
- C. Every sinner needs this forgiveness, because "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).
- D. This forgiveness is found IN CHRIST (2 Cor. 5:17)
- E. We get into Christ by complying with His plan of salvation (Rom. 6:3; cf. Mark 16:16)
1. Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, but we must abide by His revealed will (Luke 5:24; Heb. 9:23).

#### **VI. Repentance**

- A. Verse 11b - *Go and sin no more.*
- B. Once forgiven of past sins, every sinner needs to be instructed in repentance and faithful living. Clearly, Jesus did not believe "once saved, always saved!"
- C. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 -- The scriptures provide instruction in righteous for the equipping of those forgiven to continue in the right way.

#### **CONCLUSION**

- A. This might, in God's providence, have been the best thing that ever happened to her, depending on what she did from this point on.
- B. We each have the opportunity to have Jesus deal with our sins according to His grace (2 Pet. 3:9)
- C. Have you found what you need for your sin?

## **"A FEW GOOD MEN"**

**Matthew 23:43**

Dean M. Roach

### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. The USMC advertises, "they are looking for a few good men."
- B. Some women say "a good man is hard to find."
- C. What is a good man?

### **I. A FEW GOOD MEN**

- A. Joseph, Matthew 1:19
  - 1. Just--upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God (Thayer, p. 148)
  - 2. "Not willing to make her a public example", i.e., point fingers. Seemingly, she was an adulteress (Lev. 20:10)
  - 3. "Was minded to put her away privily" (Prov. 11:13).
  - 4. He was chosen of God to "father" Jesus (Matt. 1:24-25).
- B. Zacharias and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-6)
  - 1. A Levitical priest, course of Abia (1 Chron. 3:10)
  - 2. Character
    - a. "righteous before God" -- doing right.
    - b. "walking in all the commandments" -- obedient
    - c. "blameless" -- free from fault
  - 3. This compliment is from God, these are good people!
- C. Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2)
  - 1. Centurion, military leader of 100, Roman officer.
  - 2. Religious -- Gentile.
    - a. Devout -- pious attitude toward God, i.e., godliness.
    - b. Feared God -- reverence.
    - c. Alms -- mercy, pity, giving alms.
    - d. "Prayed to God alway" (1 Thess. 5:17).
- D. Rachabites (Jeremiah 35).
  - 1. Tested of God (35:1-5)
  - 2. Remain obedient (35:6-8)
  - 3. Commended of God (35:18-19)
- E. Everyone enjoys "good people"
  - 1. Willing to die for (Romans 5:7)
  - 2. Elders to love (Titus 1:8)
  - 3. Desirable (Prov. 2:20)

### **II. GOOD, BUT HUMAN**

- A. When confronted by Bible, many will say:
  - 1. "I'm a good person" -- no doubt (Is. 64:6).
  - 2. "I'm as good as so-and-so." Compare yourself to Jesus!
- B. Many are good, but still have faults (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

- C. Jesus (Luke 15:3-7).
  - 1. Heaven is not for "good people", but forgiven people.
  - 2. The church is not for good people, but saved people.
  - 3. Jesus did not die for good people, but lost people.

### **CONCLUSION**

- A. There are many good people in every walk of life, but their "goodness" will not save them.
- B. Salvation is only in the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7).

# UNITY

Alan Cole

## Introduction

- A. The psalmist said in Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant <it is> for brethren to dwell together in unity!"
  - 1. Someone once said: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success."
    - As one Flock, we are gathered together.
    - As one Family, we dwell together.
    - As one Body, we are joined together.
    - As one Temple, we are framed together.
    - As one household, we are built together.
    - As one Kingdom, we are to strive together.
    - As one Church, we worship together.
  - 2. This is a beautiful picture of unity in God's family.
- B. Unity is an important New Testament doctrine, and it is everyone's responsibility.
- C. Unity in the Lord's church affect all of us.
  - 1. It affects us spiritually (Prov 6:16-19).
  - 2. It affects us mentally.
  - 3. It affects us physically.
- D. The Lord's church must be united and must maintain unity.
- E. This morning we will look at 4 very important aspects of unity.
  - 1. The IMPORTANCE of UNITY.
  - 2. The BASIS for UNITY.
  - 3. The REASONS for UNITY.
  - 4. The HINDRANCES to UNITY.

## Body

- I. THE IMPORTANCE OF UNITY.
  - A. The unity of the N.T. church was important because:
    - 1. Jesus prayed for it (Jn 17:20-22).
    - 2. The Apostle Paul pleaded for it (1 Cor 1:10; 3:3-5; Phil 1:27; Phil 2:1-2).
    - 3. Thw church practiced it (Acts 4:32).
  - B. The unity of the N.T. church was not:
    - 1. A union of conflicting forces.
    - 2. A federation of denominations.
    - 3. An alliance of religions.
  - C. The unity of the N.T. church was:
    - 1. Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, males and females becoming one in Christ (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:26-28).
  - D. The unity of the N.T. church was oneness in Christ.
    - 1. They believed the same gospel (Mk 16:15-16; Rom 1:16; Gal 1:6-9).
    - 2. They had obeyed the same gospel.
      - a. Heard (Rom 10:17); Believed (Jn 8:24); Repented (Nk 13:3); Co~fessed (Mt 10:32); Baptized (Acts 2:38).
    - 3. They had been added to the same church (Acts 2:47).

4. They kept the same ordinances (1 Cor 11:2).
5. They continued in the same doctrine (Acts 2:42).
6. They wore the same name (Acts 11:26).
7. They were of the same mind (Phil 1:27).
8. They spoke the same things.
9. They walked by the same rule (Phil 3:16).
10. They had the same love one for another (Phil 2:2).

## II. THE BASIS FOR UNITY.

- A. The Bible gives us the pillars of unity (Eph 4:1-6).
  1. One body - unity of organization (Eph 1:22-23; Eph 2:16).
  2. One Spirit - unity of revelation (Jn 16:13).
  3. One hope - unity of aim (1 Pet 1:3-4).
  4. One Lord - unity of authority (1 Cor 8:6; Phil 2:9-11).
  5. One faith - unity of doctrine (Jude 3; Eph 4:13).
  6. One baptism - unity of practice (Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet 3:21).
  7. One God and Father - unity of deity (Deu 6:4; Isa 43:10).
- B. The Bible gives us patterns of unity.
  1. Our unity should be like that which exists between God and Christ (Jn 17:20).
  2. Our unity should be like the members of the physical body (Rom 12:4-5).
  3. Our unity should be like that of a husband and a wife (Eph 5:30-32).
  4. Our unity should be like a finely knitted sweater (Col 2:2).

## III. THE REASONS FOR UNITY.

- A. There are a number of reasons why we need to be united.
  1. Jesus prayed for it (Jn 17:20-22).
  2. That the world might believe.
  3. That the church might be glorious (John 17:22).
  4. There is encouragement in unity.
  5. There is joy in unity (Psa 133:1).
  6. There is progress in unity (Acts 2:46-47).
  7. There is strength in unity (Mat 12:25).

## IV. THE HINDRANCES TO UNITY.

- A. The preaching and teaching of opinions (1 Pet 4:11).
- B. Selfishness is a hindrance to unity (Phil 2:4).
- C. Loyalty to a man or a group hinders unity (1 Cor 4:6).

## Conclusion

- A. In conclusion:
  1. We have seen the IMPORTANCE of UNITY.
  2. We have seen the BASIS for UNITY.
  3. We have seen the REASONS for UNITY.
  4. We have seen the HINDRANCES to UNITY.
- B. Unity is what we have here at the \_\_\_\_\_.

  1. Unity is what we must endeavor to keep.
  2. Unity is everyone's responsibility.

- C. Do you want to be added to the Lord's united church this morning?

**HOW TO LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS**  
(1 Pet. 3:10-12)

Jerry W. Carmichael

**Introduction**

- A. Every person on earth would like to love life and see good days.
- B. "Have a good day!"
- C. Happiness - a state of well-being and contentment.
- D. Paul said, "...I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11).
- E. Psalms 34:12-16; 1 Pet. 3:10-12: We have God's formula for happiness, loving life and seeing good days.
- F. We will love life and see good days when we:

**I. KEEP EVIL FAR FROM OUR TONGUE (v. 10)**

- A. James 1:26 -- The tongue can render one's religion useless or empty.
- B. James 3:1-12
  - 1. We will answer for what we teach (1)
  - 2. As a bit controls the horse and a rudder controls the ship, the tongue can control us if we let it. As a spark can burn a forest, a tongue can ruin a life.
  - 3. It will never be tamed, but it can be caged!!
  - 4. It is hypocritical to speak blessing and cursing from the same tongue.

**II. SPEAK THE TRUTH NOT DECEIT**

- A. Col. 4:6 -- Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt.
- B. 2 Tim. 4:1-5 -- False teachers will always have a job!
- C. 2 Pet. 2:1-3 -- False teachers and their final end (v. 9).
- D. Rev. 21:8 -- All liars will have their place in the fiery lake.
- E. John 8:44 -- Devil is the father of lies.

**III. TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD (v. 11)**

- A. Matt. 12:43-45 -- Empty house but must fill it up.
- B. Phil. 4:8 -- true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, praiseworthy.
- C. Saul of Tarsus.
- D. Repentance -- Acts 3:19 -- Repent and be converted.
- E. James 1:22 -- Be doers of the word!
- F. Rev. 1:3 -- Blessed is he who reads, those who hear and keep the things written.

**IV. SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT (v. 11)**

- A. Seek peace (zeteo -- "to covet or earnestly strive after")
- B. Pursue it (dioko -- "to fly after, or rapidly chase," as an eagle or hawk).

- C. Romans 12:9-21: With other Christians
  - 1. 13:1-7 -- With government (1 Tim. 2:1-2)
  - 2. 13:8-10 -- With neighbors
  - 3. Lk. 10:25-37

V. WHY BOTHER? (v. 12)

- A. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous.
  - 1. God cares for the obedient and righteous.
  - 2. God watches out for us.
- B. His ears are open to their prayers.
  - 1. He is listening to us and answering our prayers.
  - 2. He cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7).
  - 3. Takes away our anxieties and replaces them with peace (Phil. 4:6-7).
  - 4. Friend whom you call when you are down, and makes you feel better.
- C. The face of the Lord is against those who do evil.
  - 1. Isa. 59:1-2
  - 2. The Lord hates evil.
  - 3. He is standing with out-stretched arms, waiting for us to come back.

Conclusion

- A. The solution to loving life and seeing good days is simple.
- B. Implementing the solution is a little more difficult, but still possible.
- C. Do you want to love life and see good days?
- D. There is only one sure way to do it!

## INVESTIGATING THE NEW BIRTH

John 3:1-8

Jim Day

### INTRODUCTION

- A. I can remember when I was not in the kingdom. Yes, I went to church services. My parents always took us children to worship. I was not in the kingdom because I had not been born again.
- B. All of us Christians can remember the time when we were like Nicodemus; we were not in the kingdom. It may be that you are here and not in the kingdom. You have not been born again. You have attended here since you were born.
- C. May in this audience I have assisted in being born again. Those were very happy times for both the persons and families.
- D. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Many come to Jesus at different times.
- E. Let us, like Nicodemus, investigate the new birth.

### DISCUSSION

#### I. THE DISCUSSION BEGINS WITH THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. vv. 1-2, Read
  - 1. From the answer Jesus gave Nicodemus, it is evident that Nicodemus wanted to see the kingdom of God.
  - 2. Quote or read v. 3.
- B. A Look at the nature of the kingdom.
  - 1. The Jews expected a Messiah to come and deliver them from the Roman government and restore the kingdom as they knew it in David and Solomon's day. An earthly kingdom.
  - 2. But Jesus' kingdom was not of this earth. It was the church (Matt. 16:18-19).
  - 3. When Jesus used "kingdom of heaven," He was talking about the church.
- C. Christ's kingdom started on the Day of Pentecost.
  - 1. Acts 2:47
  - 2. Colossians 1:13
  - 3. Revelation 1:9
  - 4. We don't look for a kingdom. It is here now. Christians are in it.

#### II. THE NEW BIRTH IS THE WAY TO SEE THE KINGDOM

- A. vv. 3-4
  - 1. Nicodemus was confused about the new birth.
  - 2. Nicodemus thought Jesus was talking about a physical birth. This, in the mind of Nicodemus, was impossible.
- B. Jesus explains the nature of the new birth.



1. "Born again" means to be brought forth anew or from above.
  2. When a physical birth takes place, the child changes from one world to a new world.
  3. Spiritual birth is a change from one world to another. It is a bringing forth. From sinful world to the righteous (cf. Col. 1:13).
  4. One is brought forth or born again or anew by two things.
    - a. Born of water -- brought forth by baptism. Picture a baptismal service where one is brought forth from the water.
    - b. Born of the Spirit. Brought forth by the Spirit. Not a direct operation of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-23). Purified by obeying the truth by the Spirit. Born again of incorruptible seed by the word. The Spirit leads by the word to bring one forth in the new birth (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).
- C. What takes place at this new birth:
1. Become a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17)
  2. Now in Christ (Rom. 6:3)
  3. Put on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27)
  4. Baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13)
  5. Go on your way rejoicing like the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37ff).

### III. NEW CREATURE IN A NEW WORLD

- A. New Creature (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:4)
  1. New creature.
  2. New life.
  3. New person.
  4. Freed from sin.
- B. New world
  1. Heb. 12:18-24, 28
  2. Describe the new world.
- C. Since we are in the new birth and new world, serve the Lord (read v. 28).

### CONCLUSION

- A. Nicodemus saw the kingdom. He was born again. Read John 19:38-40.
- B. Summary:
  1. You can be part of the kingdom like Nicodemus.
  2. You must be born again. Of the water and the Spirit.
  3. You will be a new person in a new world.

## DEATH

Mark Aites

TEXT: HEB. 9:27 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. The subject of death is often misunderstood.
  - 1. Some believe that one is "dead all over like Rover"; that there is no consciousness after death.
  - 2. Others, that when one dies they go directly to heaven.
- B. It is the latter of these that we want to look consider.
  - 1. People believe the majority go to heaven upon death.
  - 2. Illustrate: in the old western movies, the bad guy gets shot, & goes to the "big round up in the sky."
  - 3. It is contrary to what Jesus said in Matt 7:13-14.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. THE DEFINITION.

- A. The word death lit. means, "a separation."
- B. We are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), & as such we are unique, in that we have a body & a spirit.
  - 1. The Lord "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1).
  - 2. James 2:26
- C. With death, there is a separation that takes place, as the spirit departs from the body.
  - 1. Eccl. 12:7
  - 2. Just as the Lord formed the spirit of man within him, upon death, it returns to God's care.
- D. The inevitable question is, where does the spirit go upon death?

#### II. THE DESTINATION.

- A. In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus tells a story of two men, the rich man & Lazarus.
  - 1. In life, one was a beggar; he desired to eat crumbs from the rich man's table; the dogs even licking his sores.
  - 2. The other fared sumptuously or luxuriously. He wore purple (the color of royalty); as he had the best in life.
- B. Upon death, their spirits separated from their bodies.
  - 1. Luke 16:22-23
  - 2. Notice their destinations: one, Abraham's bosom, the other, torment.
- C. It should be noted, that the word "hell" is an incorrect translation.
  - 1. The correct translation is Hades --which is the place of departed spirits; also known, as the unseen realm of the dead.
  - 2. The word "hell" or "gehenna," (from the Greek), is not used in this text.
- D. Neither Lazarus, nor the rich man, found themselves in heaven.
  - 1. The rich man was conscious of his new environment, & found it very unsuitable (Luke 16:24).
  - 2. He also was able to see & converse with Abraham, who had long since been dead.
  - 3. What is described, is two compartments: one of comfort, & one of torment; but one cannot travel from one to the other (Luke 16:26).
- E. Hades, the place of departed spirits, is described here as having two compartments or places.

The first of which is known as "paradise."

1. This word does not appear here, but we know it is the same place from other texts. Here it is called, Abraham's bosom.
  2. In Luke 23:43, Jesus told the thief, "...Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
  3. The word paradise, from a Persian word which meant, "a place of pleasure, or pleasure garden."
  4. We know that it does not refer to heaven because of Peter's statements in Acts 2 concerning Jesus.
    - 1) David's prophecy of Christ (Acts 2:31).
    - 2) Christ's soul was not left in the Hadean realm; he wasn't even there long enough for the flesh of his body to decay from his death on the cross.
  5. When Jesus died on the cross, his departed Spirit, along with that of the thieves, as per His promise, went to Hades, or "Paradise."
- F. In contrast, when the rich man became conscious of his new environment, it was torment ("tartarus").
1. It is a word which appears in 2 Pet. 2:4, and Jude 6.
  2. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet 2:4; cf. Jude 6).
  3. Note that even the angels that sinned are kept in this place of torment until the Judgment.

### III. THE DESIGNATION.

- A. Since Hades is a present reality, then we must recognize that heaven & hell are designated as future realities.
1. Often in funerals, people are preached into heaven, & they have not yet gone through the Judgment! (2 Cor. 5:10).
  2. Remember our text: Heb. 9:27.
  3. You cannot have departed souls in heaven or hell prior to the Judgment!
- B. Notice Jesus' statement in Matt. 25:41.
1. Jesus was speaking about the Judgment; & even at the Judgment, He speaks of hell as being prepared for (future tense) the devil & his angels.
  2. Heaven & hell then are future realities, but Hades is that which applies to the present.

### CONCLUSION:

- A. I once heard the point made; "you will know where you are destined for eternity 5 minutes after you die."
- B. Are you ready?

## THE CHURCH -- THE WIFE OF CHRIST

Norris DeBerry

### Introduction

- A. Opening words of greeting and welcome.
  - B. Open your Bibles to Acts 2.
    - 1. Jerusalem
    - 2. The first Pentecost after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
    - 3. The birth of the church of Jesus Christ (explain).
  - C. Let's read about this new community of believers (Acts 2:41-47).
    - 1. Exciting to read!
    - 2. Question -- *What's the ministry of the church?*
    - 3. These passages contain **four major objectives for ministry** for any local church (regardless of time, size, or culture).
    - 4. To keep everything simple and easy to remember, let me use the acronym, **W-I-F-E. "THE CHURCH -- THE WIFE OF CHRIST."**
- I. "W" Stands for Worship (The first objective of ministry)
- A. One author wrote, "Like an irresistible perfume, worship's holy fragrance wafted from this fledgling community."
  - B. As these early saints assembled together, their meetings beamed with intense devotion. Their worship was not half-hearted!
  - C. And the immediate result of their worship -- "everyone kept feeling a sense of awe."
    - 1. Their worship was far more than a ritualistic "punching of the clock."
    - 2. There was an awareness of the presence of God! In worship they encountered God!
    - 3. They were "awe" smitten because of His holiness, power, might and majesty!
  - D. God still seeks and desires our worship and praise!
- II. "I" Stands for Instruction (The second objective of ministry)
- A. The early Christians not only worshipped God, they learned His Word!
    - 1. Acts 2:42
    - 2. Acts 2:44 - They were known as "all those who had believed." This suggests objective truth embraced by all.
  - B. The ministry of the Word is no less important today! (explain further).
- \*Note: The two objectives, **worship** and **instruction**, are primarily vertical, between us and God.
- III. "F" Stands For Fellowship (The third objective of ministry)
- A. The church was never meant to be a building where you come, sit, worship, listen and leave. *The church is community!*

- B. *Acts 2:42* - "fellowship"
  - 1. "koinonia" - Greek word.
  - 2. "Koinonia" signifies a close relationship. (explain)
- C. The early church was a close and sharing group of believers!
  - 1. *Acts 2:44-46*
  - 2. They were **together**, they **shared**, they **cared**, they **were involved** in each other's **daily lives**!
- D. One of the crucial objectives of ministry is fellowship!

IV. "E" Stands for Expression (The fourth objective of ministry)

- A. "**Expression**" - This young church reached out!
- B. *Acts 2:47b* - "And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."
- C. As believers *expressed* the reality of Christ (through worship, instruction, and fellowship) to a watching world, the ranks of the converted swelled!
- D. "**E**" - "**Expression**" - Expression leads to evangelism!
- E. A bride who is *awed by worship, deepened by the Word of God, and uplifted by fellowship* cannot help being *expressive* and *inviting* others to the wedding.

Conclusion

- A. **Four major objectives for ministry:**
  - 1. **Worship**
  - 2. **Instruction**
  - 3. **Fellowship**
  - 4. **Expression**

\*Note: The first two are vertical; the next two are horizontal.
- B. With the acronym **W-I-F-E** in mind, think of the church's ministry in two dimensions - **Depth** and **Breadth**.
  - 1. The **Depth** of ministry is determined by its quality of worship and instruction. Without depth, the church will be shallow.
  - 2. The **Breadth** of a church depends on its commitment to fellowship and expression. Without breadth, no growth!
- C. We, the bride of Christ, His wife, have been asked to represent Him to the world and to bring Him all the glory and honor -- how are we doing?
- D. Extend invitation.

# THE FIRST OF ALL THE COMMANDMENTS

Mark 12:28-30

Mike Justice

## Introduction

- A. Have you ever been lost? I don't mean inconvenienced or temporarily disoriented -- I mean lost. Turned around, completely confused, scared to death and about to cry kind of lost? There are few things that frighten us quite like not knowing where we are. No familiar places, no familiar faces. Nothing to give us a reference point; nothing to help us orient ourselves and find out what direction we should be going.
- There is another kind of lostness though, that frightens me even more -- spiritual lostness. It's not that you don't know where you are. With this kind of lostness, you don't have any idea where you are going.
- B. The great desire of Jesus Christ is to save those that are lost.
1. Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).
  2. The Apostle Paul said that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).
- C. The conclusion of Jesus to this scribe in v. 34 of Mark 12 is "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."
1. But what we may fail to realize is that not being far from the kingdom is not be to in the kingdom.
  2. If you are not in the kingdom, you might as well be miles away.
- D. The question that the scribe asked in verse 28 is a question that kindled a fire in the eyes of Jesus. This question would afford Him the opportunity to teach and to cut through the hedge of laws and commandments that Israel had surrounded itself with in protection of the laws of God.
- E. The question that the scribe asked -- "Which is the first commandment of all?"
1. The word "first" comes from the thought of "being fundamental, basic, the foundation of all other commandments." "First in rank and importance."
  2. I believe it to be a question of sincerity and major importance. The scribe seems to be asking, "just what is the will of God?"
- F. Therefore, I think that it would do us well to study the answer of Jesus to this all-important question.

Transition: *If we are to be a part of the Kingdom of God. . .*

- I. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF IDOLATRY (v. 29)
- A. The real thrust of the O.T. is directed toward idolatry.
1. Here is v. 29, Jesus quotes the Shema from Deut. 6, which was recited twice a day by devout Jews.
  2. It was a declaration of the oneness and the uniqueness of God.
- B. Most people today do not have a problem with what we would commonly think of as idol worship (that is, forming golden calves, statues with our hands and then worshipping such).
1. But as a brotherhood and as good down-to-earth common people in need of the grace of God, we do have a problem with idolatry.
  2. Idolatry is more than just making something with your hands and then worshipping that object.

- a. Idolatry is anything that comes between you and God.
  - b. Idolatry is essentially a spiritual sin, representing a rejection of the true God.
3. Paul listed this sin as one that will separate you from the kingdom of God in Gal. 5:20-21. "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
  4. So, in this fast-paced materialistic world where many things are placed ahead of God, there is the problem of idolatry.
    - a. There is the problem of putting other things ahead of God.
    - b. Yet, Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. . ." (Matt. 6:33)
  5. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one." That statement is in contrast to the idea that there is a multiplicity of gods.
    - a. What comes between you and your maker? What do you put before God?
    - b. What keeps you from obeying and serving God to your fullest potential?
    - c. God said in Ex. 20:3, "You shall have no other gods before Me." And whatever God says must be accepted and applied to life.
      - i. We cannot have divided loyalty!
      - ii. "The Lord our God is one Lord," reminds us of the unity of God and the fact that we must give Him our total undivided loyalty.
    - d. This is exactly what God demands and expects; nothing else is acceptable. . .
- C. Jesus even warns us in Matt. 6:24 about idolatry and divided loyalty. "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
1. Many people try to serve two masters, but they fail.
  2. God never accepts divided loyalty!!!
  3. We must not let the many things of this world compete with God.
    - a. It really matters not that you worship upon the first day of the week if you have a divided heart.
    - b. It really matters not that you sing without an instrument of music if you have a divided heart.
    - c. It really matters not that you partake of the communion every Lord's day if you have a divided heart.
    - d. Jesus told the Scribe in Mark 12:33 that worship is not a substitute for a divided heart.
  4. The first and greatest commandment is "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."
- D. Let's beware of idolatry! Let's beware of things that come between us and God.

## II. IF WE ARE GOING TO BE A PART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WE MUST LOVE THE LORD WITH ALL OF OUR HEART (v. 30).

1. Notice that word "all" in verse 30. It is used 4 times.
2. The word "all" excludes the thought of being divided.
3. If it is "all" it is not divided.

- A. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." The heart of man is his very person.
1. The heart of man is his conscious, which makes each of us a person.
  2. The heart of man is his spiritual dimension of responsiveness or unresponsiveness to God.
    - a. In saying what He does here, Jesus is quoting from Deut. 6, and in verse 6, God says that the words which He commands "shall be in your heart." How can we know that we have the commands of God in our hearts? Notice the next verse.
    - b. Deut. 6:7 gives us a description of one who has the commands of God in his heart. "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."
      - i. Matt. 12:34
      - ii. When the commands of God are in our heart, that's what we think about, that's what we talk about, that's what we are concerned about.
      - iii. We are going to teach them to our children, we are going to talk about them in our house and away from the house.
  3. Jesus said in Matt. 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
    - a. Therefore, the thing that we treasure will be the focus of our life and personality.
    - b. Is it God? Is it the materials of this world? What is the focus of your life?
  4. Psa. 139:23-24
  5. 1 Sam. 16:7
- B. The first commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
1. The word for "soul" here also means breath, but by implication it is translated "soul."
    - a. Therefore, the thought then would be that we should love the Lord with every breath that we take.
    - b. We should love the Lord down to the very depths of our souls.
  2. Also we are to love God with all our mind.
    - a. The ability of man to think, to reason, and to know is one of man's most unique characteristics.
    - b. You see, we have the ability to love God with our mind.
      - i. Here is where idolatry has a deeper meaning than just forming an image with one's hands.
      - ii. We need to be aware of Intellectual idolatry.
        - (a) We need to be aware of images and thoughts that are formed in our mind about God which are far from being scriptural. For example:
          - (1) When we form some type of evolutionary process in our mind as to how the world was formed, that is idolatry.



- (2) When we think that God will save people other than through and by obedience to His will, and somehow, at least in our minds, slip around calvary and the blood of Jesus--that is idolatry.
  - (3) When we don't see God for who He really is but make up in our minds how God ought to be -- that is idolatry.
  - (4) When you worship the god of your mind and not the God of the Bible -- that is idolatry.
  - (5) When we, in our mind, love self and put self ahead of God -- that is idolatry.
  - (6) When we justify in our minds that God does not condemn sinful actions, but excuses "alternative lifestyles" -- that is idolatry.
- (b) In Isaiah 6, when Isaiah saw God as He is and saw himself as he was, he said in verse 5, "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips."
    - (1) It would do us well to see God as He really is and ourselves as we really are.
    - (2) It would do us well to be aware of intellectual idolatry.
  - (c) Because when we have a blind devotion to anything that is not biblical, even though it's just our way of thinking -- it is just as much idolatry as if we had formed it with our own hands.
- c. Love God with your mind!!
- 3. Also a part of the first commandment, as Jesus expressed it, is to love God with all of your strength.
    - a. This is descriptive of the total commitment and obligation that is demanded by God.
    - b. With every ounce of your being, ability, might, power and strength -- love the Lord.

### III. IF WE ARE GOING TO BE A PART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, OUR OBEDIENCE MUST BE MOTIVATED BY LOVE (v. 30)

- A. Our obedience to God is not motivated out of a sense of duty, or a sense of obligation.
  - 1. Jesus certainly taught that relationship to God is the primary duty of man.
  - 2. There can be no doubt that Jesus aimed much of His teaching at correcting people's relationship to God.
    - a. He taught His disciple to pray and stressed the necessity of being "born again" (John 3).
    - b. He taught them the importance of obedience to the will of God and used Himself as the prime example of obedience.

Hours before His death, in Matt. 26:39, Jesus prayed, "Let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will but as You will."

- c. He underscored the priority of faith and the fact that He Himself was the only way to the Father (John 14:6).
  3. Jesus was also very concerned to cultivate and nurture His relationship with God, which had love as its foundation.
- B. Obedience is motivated by a love for God.
1. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).
  2. We don't have a baptism problem in the brotherhood today; we have a problem with people not loving the Lord enough to be fully obedient to His commands.
  3. We don't have a "backsliding" problem; we have a problem with people not loving the Lord enough to be "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10).

#### Conclusion

- A. God says that you need to "make Me supreme in your heart, with every breath, down to the depths of your soul; make Me supreme in your mind, and with your strength. Make Me supreme in your lives."
- B. Mark 12:29-30 -- "The first of all commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment."
- C. Then remember this: **TO BE NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD, IS NOT TO BE IN IT. YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE MILES FROM IT.**
- D. Then let your love be an undivided love free from idolatry.
- E. Let your love be a love that is committed with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength.

# Life or Death

Dan Murphey

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. Life or death statements... "stay off the train tracks", "buckle your seat belt", "don't drink and drive"
- B. Life or death statement of Moses - Deuteronomy 30:15-29. They could have life or death.

## I. GOD WANTS YOU TO HAVE LIFE.

- A. He gave physical life (Gen.2:7,22).
- B. He gave a nation life (Ezek.16:3-14; 37:1-14).
- C. He gave Christ to provide for our spiritual life: (Jno.3:16; 10:10; 14:6). God wants you to have life!

## II. IF YOU WANT LIFE.

- A. Listen to parents
  - 1. They give many life statements "Look before you cross the street" don't talk to stranger" "Don't drive too fast"
  - 2. Bible examples Prov.4:1-4; 10-13; 6:20-23; Eph.6:1-3.
- B. Listen to God
  - 1. Life giving statements: "Life does not consist in the abundance of things" (Lk.12:15), "Wages of sin is death" (Rom.6:23; Phil. 1:21; Rom.8:6)
  - 2. Questions: Why are we here at worship? What is the value of Bible class? Why study and pray? Why be involved in the Lord's work? Answer is we want life. God will provide it - II Peter 1:3.

## III. IT IS YOUR CHOICE:

Moses said, "Choose life that both you and your descendants may have life."

- A. You don't have to obey:
  - The government- pay taxes; your parents - "drive too fast"
  - God - what is right and wrong, but there will be consequences.
- B. You can choose. You are responsible: Moses said "choose" to live. Christ said "choose" that narrow way that leads to life" Matt.7:14. Jesus said: "you are not willing to come to me that you may have life" (Jno.5:40).

## CONCLUSION:

- A. Illustration: "Your leg or your life" - a doctor must remove it or you will die.
- B. What if you had to choose between giving up some habit, ambition, relationship, or your spiritual life in Jesus Christ?
- C. Will you choose life or death?

## WHY IT IS SO HARD TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Clarence Campbell

### Introduction

- A. When He was upon this earth, our Lord compared life to a journey along a road (Mt. 7:13-14). This is a hard teaching to accept because it very clearly states that more souls will be lost eternally than will be saved.
  - B. Now, we take this scripture, and others, to paint a picture of the Christian life as one accompanied by spiritual perils, troubled waters, dangerous curves, and unscalable mountains. We even sing: "*Trials dark on every hand, and we cannot understand...*"
  - C. Do we often feel that because we sin daily, unless we die in mid-prayer our souls are in danger of being eternally lost? Is this the "Abundant Life" that God has given us? Why is it so hard to be a Christian?
  - D. Upon hearing this question, one could probably respond:
    - 1. "It's not really hard to be a Christian at all," or
    - 2. "Indeed it is true; living the Christian life is the most difficult and often frustrating task that one could ever under-take." If you find yourself in the first position you should thank God for the maturity and measure of faith that He has given to you. But, if you are like many of the rest of us, you are leaning toward the second point of view, this sermon is for you.
  - E. Just why is it so hard to be a Christian?
- I. A Lack of Being Confident of Salvation
- A. "If you were to die today, would you go to heaven?" Be honest! Many would respond, "I sure hope so..." or "I think so...", etc. And yet, most of us know the plan of salvation!
  - B. Listen to our prayers that are led during worship.
    - 1. Each prayer implores God to forgive us of our sins -- and rightly so!
    - 2. How many sins can you commit between the opening and closing prayers?
    - 3. Do we ask forgiveness because:
      - a. We are afraid God did not answer the first prayer?
      - b. Our sins are so grievous that one prayer won't do?
      - c. We're such sinful creatures that we start accumulating sins as soon as the "Amen" is said?
      - d. We aren't paying attention to what we're praying for?
  - C. Read Proverbs 3:36 and 1 John 2:28
  - D. Why is it so hard to be a Christian? Because of our lack of confidence of or in our salvation. The first and most important goal of all is for us to know (*have full confidence*) of our salvation (see 1 John 5:13). [Note: *It is a mistake to believe that merely becoming a Christian (or telling God) solves every problem. Becoming a Christian gives us direct and immediate access to the One who can solve all problems. Also, when we do take our trials to God, He isn't always going to make them go away. He may give them to us for a*

*reason, perhaps a reason that we will never fully understand.]*

## II. A Lack of Feeling Good About Being a Christian

- A. I'm reminded of the words to a song, "It's a great DAY to be a Christian."
- B. What a tremendous victory Satan has won when he succeeds in making us feel ashamed or apologetic of what we are!
- C. Turn with me to: Matthew 12:30; Mark 8:38; Psalm 71:1 and Romans 1:16.
- D. Living a good and virtuous life is nothing to be ashamed of or timid about despite what society might say.
- E. **What other endeavor do you know of that makes the winners seem so embarrassed to confess their victory?!**
- F. Perhaps when we stop feeling ashamed of being Christians, we'll realize that we can't be part of the LSS (Lord's Secret Service). We must be visibly active soldiers in His triumphant army!

## III. Our Lack of Growth in Maturity

- A. When will we stop making excuses for our lack of spiritual and physical growth (maturity)?
  - 1. We blame the preacher of the lack thereof.
  - 2. We blame the Bible classes or the lack thereof.
  - 3. We blame Satan!
  - 4. We place the blame everywhere except where it ought to be -- WITH US!
- B. I would hope that we can grow in maturity so that our life is one:
  - 1. That is filled with rejoicing.
  - 2. That our prayers are filled with sincere thanksgiving.
  - 3. That our hearts are filled with an inner peace that does not crumble when there is turmoil all about us (cf. Phil. 4:4-7).
- C. As one has noted: "Our religion should never make us feel bad."

## Conclusion

- A. Why is it so hard to be a Christian?
  - 1. A lack of being confident of our salvation.
  - 2. A lack of feeling good about being a Christian.
  - 3. Our lack of growth and maturity.
- B. The plain truth is that there are times when the Christian life is not easy, when it's not convenient, and when it's not fun. But, if our religion makes us feel bad, if we aren't filled with rejoicing and thanksgiving, then something is wrong. Either our Spirit-trained conscience is warning us that we are in open rebellion to God or we still don't understand the GOOD NEWS of Jesus Christ!
- C. I leave you with this thought: How do you expect the world, your friends and family to accept the Bread of Life, when it looks like it is giving you indigestion?
- D. The Lord's invitation.

THE BIBLE AND WORLD EVANGELISM  
2 Timothy 3:16-17

Kevin Moore

Introduction:

- A. The commitment of individuals & congregations to world evangelism is dependent on the degree of conviction about the authority of the Bible.
  - 1. When Christians lose confidence in the Bible, they also lose their zeal for sharing the word.
  - 2. In contrast, when one is convinced about the Bible, evangelism is an automatic response.
- B. The Bible gives us at least 4 things to evangelize the world:

Discussion:

I. THE MANDATE FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

- A. It's not just the "Great Commission" that reveals this mandate, but the entire Biblical revelation.
  - 1. God is always sending, & sometimes even going Himself, to ensure the redemption of lost humanity.
    - a. When Adam & Eve sinned, God went looking for them, & then promised to send a Savior into the world (Gen.3:9,15).
    - b. God commanded Abram: "Leave your country, your family, & your father's house, to a land that I will show you," & promised in him "shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen.12:1-3); "By faith Abraham obeyed..." (Heb.11:8-9)
    - c. God sent Joseph to Egypt to be a "cross-cultural missionary" & to play a significant role in His overall plan (Gen.45:5-8).
    - d. God sent Moses to lead His people out of bondage into the promised land (Ex.3:12).
    - e. God sent Jonah to Nineveh (Jonah 1:1-2).
  - 2. God is always reaching out to bring His rebellious people back to Himself (Isa.65:2).
- B. "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son..." (Gal.4:4).
  - 1. Jesus said to His disciples: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21).
  - 2. Where did He send them & what did He send them to do? (Matt.28:18-20)
- C. The early disciples took this mandate seriously: Acts 5:42; 8:4; 13:49; et al.

II. THE MESSAGE FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

- A. "Go into all the world & preach the GOSPEL..." (Mk.16:15).
  - 1. The bad news is that the world is lost in sin. (Isaiah 59:2; Rom.3:23; 2 Thess. 1:8-9)
  - 2. The good news is that God still loves the world & has offered salvation through Christ. (1 Tim. 2:3-4; Jn. 3:16; Ro. 5:6-8)
  - 3. Only by responding in obedient faith to Christ & His gospel is salvation possible. (Ro. 6:16-18; Acts 2:38,41,47)
- B. This message must be preached to the world! (Gal.1:8-9)

### III. THE MODEL FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

- A. The greatest expression of God's desire to communicate His love to us is Jesus.
  - 1. Jesus came to reveal God to man. (John 1:14,18)
  - 2. He went to extreme lengths in order to save us. (Phil.2:5-8)
  - 3. He is the supreme example of missionary identification. (Heb.2:11,14,17; 4:15)
- B. Jesus, who emptied & humbled Himself, is our model for evangelism.
  - 1. Our purpose is not to "Americanize" the world, but evangelize.
  - 2. We must be willing to sacrifice time, cultural preferences, convenience, & comfort to more effectively communicate this message.
  - 3. I must be ready to "become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Co.9:19-23).

### IV. THE MEANS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

- A. This enormous task would not be possible if it solely depended on you and me.
  - 1. "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matt.19:26).
  - 2. By our own power we can convert no one. (1 Co.2:1-5)
- B. The power is in the word of God. (Ro. 1:16; Heb. 4:12)
  - 1. We are God's tools for bringing souls in contact with this word. (2 Co.4:1-7)
  - 2. The reason more people throughout the world haven't been won to Christ is not because the word lacks power, but because we have been negligent in "holding forth the word of life" (Phil.2:16).

### Conclusion:

- 1. To evangelize the world, the Bible gives us:
  - a. The Mandate -- it's not optional, but the God-given responsibility of us all.
  - b. The Message -- not the opinions, philosophies & doctrines of men, but the gospel message of a lost humanity, of a Savior who loves & died for the world, & of their need to trust & obey.
  - c. The Model -- emptying, denying, & humbling ourselves to more effectively reach those we claim to serve.
  - d. The Means -- not human wisdom & might, but the power of God's living word.
- 2. What are you doing to evangelize your community, your country, & your world?

# Consistency: The Religious World's Greatest Need

Acts 2:42-47; John 17:20, 21

Roger Shepherd

**"Oh, Consistency, Where Art Thou?"** -- A saying in debate class.

**Thesis:** Consistency is "stedfast adherence to the same principles, course, form, etc.:  
'There is consistency in his pattern of behavior.'" (Webster)

## Introduction

- A. Steadfastness is a command.
  - 1. God (Matt. 10:22; Acts 2:42).
  - 2. Example: Christ (1 Pet. 2:21-23) and Paul (Acts 20:24).
- B. We must be the same person.
  - 1. Same principles
  - 2. Same course.
  - 3. Same form.
- C. We must not be a chameleon.
  - 1. Any of numerous Old World or American lizards with ability to change colors of skin to adapt to surrounding.
  - 2. An inconstant person.

## I. CONSISTENCY IN MANNER OF LIFE

- A. We cannot limp between the sides (1 Kings 18:20)
- B. Work: say and do (Matt. 23:3-5, 13-14).
- C. Treat all with respect (Jas. 2:1-10).
- D. Discipline
  - 1. Doctrine (Rom. 16:17-18)
  - 2. Manner of life (2 Thess. 3:6)
- E. The religious world has one great need (John 17:20-21).
  - 1. Unity is the urgent need of the world (Eph. 4:4-6).
  - 2. Unity is the most pleasant thing in all the religious world! (Psa. 133:1)
  - 3. A summary of the things that will bring us to UNITY!

## II. THE WORLD NEEDS UNITY IN THE ONE GOSPEL: CONSISTENCY

- A. The apostle Paul plainly taught that there was but one gospel (Gal. 1:6-7).
  - 1. The one true gospel contains enough power to save every lost soul! (Rom. 1:16)
  - 2. Friends, cursed is anyone who presents another gospel (Gal. 1:8).
- B. The Bible furnishes us to every good work (2 Tim. 3:15-17).
  - 1. It must be accepted by every sincere believer instead of creed books before unity is possible (John 17:17).
  - 2. The Bible is the common authority that can bring us to UNITY! (Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 4:11; Mark 16:15-16)

## III. THE WORLD NEEDS UNITY IN THE ONE CHURCH: CONSISTENCY

- A. In all of God's world you read of only one church (Matt. 16:18-19).
  - 1. One body which is the church (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4).
  - 2. "Join the church of your choice" cannot be found in the Bible! (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).
- B. Denominationalism is a waste of energy and money.



1. Think of the competitive efforts in erecting great buildings that sap finances and the preaching of dogmas that usurp man's powers! (Matt. 15:9)
2. "A united church in a small community could serve the Lord far better than a number of factious religious bodies."
3. Yes, only one church with one building to heat, light, repair and furnish! (Matt. 15:13)

#### IV. THE WORLD NEEDS THE CHURCH WITHOUT DIVISIONS AND FACTIONS IN THE CHURCH: CONSISTENCY

- A. Divisions and factions are carnal devices of men (1 Cor. 3:3).
  1. God is not the author of the confusion that division has brought the world! (1 Cor. 14:33)
  2. Man is the one true source of division! (1 John 4:1)
- B. The world has looked upon a divided, factious condition and believed not (Matt. 24:23).
  1. The lost have turned deaf ears to any plea from people who can't even agree on what saves!

#### V. THE WORLD NEEDS UNITY IN THE ONE SAVIOR

- A. Jesus is not divided (1 Cor. 1:11-13).
  1. Following men's versions of Christ has presented a divided Christ!
  2. There is only one Savior! (Matt. 1:21)
- B. Religious leaders the world over must teach the one Christ.
  1. As the one Lamb of God (John 1:29).
  2. As the one Head and sustainer of the church! (Col. 1:18)
  3. The one Savior (Acts 4:12).
  4. The one Hope (1 Tim. 1:1).

Conclusion -- Summary: Eph. 4:4-6

- A. We must speak the same thing (1 Cor. 1:10).
  1. The same gospel.
  2. The same N.T. church without division.
  3. The same Jesus.
  4. The same Christian character/conduct.
- B. It is easier to take Christ to the world being united.
  1. United together in the one Savior! (John 17:20-21)
  2. United together in the same work! (2 Cor. 6:1)
- C. It is easier to save the lost teaching the same conditions of salvation.
  1. Hear (Rom. 10:17)
  2. Believe (Mark 1:15)
  3. Repent (Luke 13:5)
  4. Confess (Luke 12:8-9)
  5. Baptism (Acts 2:38)

Closing:

"Giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

# A WELL-BALANCED LIFE

## TAKE HEED

### THYSELF AND DOCTRINE

NOT THINK TOO  
HIGHLY ROM.12:3

NOT TO EXALT  
LK.18:10-14

DO NOT DECEIVE  
1JNO.1:8

SAVE THYSELF ACTS  
2:40; PHIL.2:12

DENY THYSELF  
MT.16:24

CONTROL THYSELF  
1COR.9:27

KEEP THYSELF PURE  
JAS.1:27; 1TIM.5:22

BEHAVE THYSELF  
1TIM.3:15

## 1TIM.4:16

### CONTINUE IN THEM

SAVE THYSELF &  
THEM THAT  
HEAR THEE

1PET.1:22

REV.2:10



KEEP IT  
PURE TIT.2:7-8

DO NOT ADD  
REV.22:17-18

OBEY IT  
ROM.6:17-18

WHY HEED IT?  
ROM.1:16

DO NOT TEACH  
FALSELY MK.7:7

ABIDE IN  
IT 2JNO.9

STUDY IT  
DEUT.6:6-9

TEACH IT 2TIM.2:2;  
DEUT.6:6F

<b>G</b>	Gift - Rom 5:15f    Grow - 2 Pet 3:18 Glorified - Rom 8:30    Grounded - Col 1:23
<b>R</b>	Responsibility - Tit 2:11f    Ready - Tit 3:1 Reasonable - Rom 12:1    Rejoice - Phill 4:4
<b>A</b>	Assurance - Acts 17:31    Atonement - Rom 5:11 Advocate - 1 Jn 2:1    Abolishment - 2 Tim 1:10
<b>C</b>	Confidence - Eph 3:12    Careful - Tit 3:8 Clean - 1 Jn 1:7f    Covenant - Heb 13:20
<b>E</b>	Escape - Heb 2:3    Established - Heb 13:9 Examine - 2 Cor 13:5    Exalted - 1 Pet 5:6

# TOGETHER

## In God's Great Family

Amos 3:3

### TOGETHER In Desire

Jn 17:11    Matt 18:20  
Jn 17:19f    Eph 4:13

### TOGETHER In Name

Is 62:2    Acts 11:26  
Acts 26:28    Eph 3:15  
Acts 4:12

### TOGETHER In Entrance

Rom 6:5    Eph 2:5f  
Col 2:13    Gal 3:27  
Acts 2:41,47    Jn 3:5

### TOGETHER In Body

Rom 12:5    1 Cor 12:13  
1 Cor 1:10    Col 2:2  
Col 2:19    Eph 2:21f  
Eph 4:13f    1 Cor 12:14f

### TOGETHER In Worship

Ps 34:3    Acts 19:32  
1 Cor 5:4    Col 3:17  
Acts 20:7    Col 3:16  
Acts 2:44f    Rom 15:30  
Acts 4:31    Heb 10:24f

### TOGETHER In Purpose

Rom 1:12    1 Cor 3:9  
2 Cor 6:1    Phil 1:27  
Phil 3:17    1 Thess 5:11  
1 Thess 5:14  
2 Thess 1:12

### TOGETHER    In Exhaltation

2 Cor 5:1    Rom 8:17f    1 Thess 4:17  
1 Thess 5:10    2 Tim 4:8



