

Sermons

That Need To
Be Preached



Vol. 1



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Cover Sketch By
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Dedication

This book is dedicated with affection and appreciation to the teachers, past and present, of the Memphis School of Preaching. These teachers have given many hours to this work because of their commitment to the Christ, His Word, and His church. They are a constant source of encouragement to all who have been their students. They have been and continue to be careful and diligent students of God's Word and lovers of the souls of men. These men are eager encouragers of all that is good and true and equally set against every form of error and compromise.

These men have and continue to fulfill Paul's admonition to Timothy:

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (II Tim. 2:2)

It was Peter who said,

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praised and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (I Peter 4:11)

Let it then be said, that "*men of the book*" will produce "*men of the book*," and GOD will receive the glory.

In producing this book, we, the alumni, give honour to whom honour is due (Rom. 13:7). May GOD give these men many more years of service in this capacity.

Bobby D. Gayton
Class of 1975

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Who Is Jesus?

Introduction:

1. In Matthew 16:13-19, there is recorded a conversation between Jesus and his followers:
 - a. Jesus' question to them was, "Whom do men say that I the son of man am?"
 - b. There was much controversy in Jesus' day over this question.
 - c. There remains much controversy over this question today.
2. Jesus stated that the Father had revealed his Son through Peter.
 - a. GOD reveals his son today through the written word, the Bible.
 - b. Therefore, by examining Holy Writ we can answer the question, "Who is Jesus?"

I. THE PROPHECIES OF HIS LIFE TELL US "WHO IS JESUS."

- A. He was to be born of woman.
 1. Genesis 3:15
 2. Galatians 4:4
- B. He was to be born of a virgin.
 1. Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:3
 2. Matthew 1:23
- C. His birthplace was named.
 1. Micah 5:2
 2. Matthew 2:1-6
- D. He was to be betrayed by a friend.
 1. Psalm 41:9
 2. Matthew 26:15

- E. He was to be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.
 1. Zechariah 11:12,13
 2. Matthew 26:15

- F. The background of his trial and crucifixion is given:
 1. He would be silent against accusation (Isaiah 53:7; Psalm 38:13; Matthew 26:63).
 2. His suffering would be vicarious (Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 4:25).
 3. He would suffer and die with malefactors (Isaiah 53:9-12; Matthew 27:38).
 4. In his suffering his hands and feet would be pierced (Psalm 22:16; John 20:7).
 5. Not a bone would be broken in his death (Psalm 34:40; 19:36).

II. THE PRACTICE OF HIS MINISTRY TELLS US "WHO IS JESUS."

- A. He preached repentance (Matthew 4:17).
- B. He pointed out how to please GOD (Matthew 4-7).
- C. He prophesied the building of his church (Matthew 16:18).
- D. He purchased sin from the sinner's life (Luke 19:10).
- E. He proclaimed himself to be the Christ by the purpose of his miracles (John 20:30-31).

III. THE PURPOSE OF HIS DEATH TELLS US "WHO IS JESUS."

- A. His death and burial is a historical and biblical fact:
 1. Matthew 26-27
 2. Romans 5:6-9

- B. His resurrection is fact as well (Matthew 28:1-7; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; Acts 2:22-29).

- C. What is the real purpose of His Death, Burial, and Resurrection?
 - 1. The Gospel should be preached (I Cor. 15:1-4).
 - 2. The Sinner should be saved (Romans 6:1-4).

Conclusion:

- A. The thoughts we have covered in this lesson set forth Jesus as:
 - 1. The Son of God (Matthew 3:17).
 - 2. The Savior of the world (Acts 4:12).
 - 3. The Solution to sin (Hebrews 5:8-9).

- B. Are you willing to obey the only Savior? He is Jesus!

<p>Alton Hayes Class of 1975</p>

The Purity Of The Gospel

Psalm 12:6

Introduction:

The gospel is the word of GOD and it must be kept pure at all times. To be pure is to be free from anything that weakens or pollutes. It also means to contain nothing that does not properly belong.

Remembering that the gospel is the good news concerning what Christ has done for man, one can readily see why it must be kept free from defilement. Christ died for our sins and that is the good news (I Cor. 15:57; Acts 2:41; 8:8, 39; 16:34).

We must keep in mind that the gospel is not good news for all. The gospel is not good news to the man whose religious error it exposes. Neither is it good news for the rebel who intends to follow his course to its ultimate end. It is not good news to those who are bored by its presentation.

We now present the good news, the gospel of Christ in its purity to all who love and are glad when it is presented. It is the pure gospel that keeps us clean and sets us free (John 15:3; 8:32).

I. HOW DO WE KEEP THE GOSPEL PURE?

- A. We cannot make any additions or subtractions.
 - 1. Within the Old Testament GOD warned against such (Deut. 4:2).
 - 2. GOD gave the same charge to all in the New Testament (Rev. 22:18-19).
- B. We must not pervert the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).
- C. Let us not go beyond the gospel (I John 9-11).
- D. All must accept the all sufficiency of the gospel (II Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 1. It contains all that pertains to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3).

2. GOD calls it the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25).
3. The gospel has been delivered one time for all (Jude 3).
4. Obedience to the gospel sanctifies one (John 17:17).
5. Freedom can only be had by the pure gospel (John 8:31-32).
6. GOD'S power to save is the gospel (Rom. 1:16).

II. THE POWER IS IN THE PURE GOSPEL.

- A. Christ gave the great commission before He ascended.
 1. We are to go teach, baptize and teach (Matt. 28:18-20).
 2. We are to go preach the gospel to every person (Mark 16:16).
 3. We are to preach repentance and remission of sins (Luke 24:46-49).
- B. The pure gospel is that which saves (Rom. 1:16-17; I Cor. 15:1-4).

III. THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IS TEACHING AN IMPURE GOSPEL

- A. "Faith only" is not the pure gospel (James 2:24).
- B. "One church as good as another" is not pure gospel (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4; Matt. 16:18).
- C. "Baptism is unnecessary" is not pure gospel (Acts 10:48; I Peter 3:21).
- D. "Mechanical instruments in worship" is an impurity (Eph. 5:19).
- E. "The Lord's Supper on special days" is an impurity (Acts 20:7).
- F. To say that "repentance is before faith" is not a pure gospel.

1. Faith comes before repentance (Rom. 10:17; Acts 2:37).
 2. Repentance comes after one believes the message (Acts 17:30; 2:38).
- G. The list of impurities could go on but these are sufficient to show that many have left the preaching of the pure gospel.

IV. LET US CONSIDER SOME THINGS THAT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN PURE IF THE PURE GOSPEL IS ALWAYS PREACHED IN EVERY PLACE.

- A. Religion will always be kept pure (James 1:27).
- B. Christians will remain as an example of purity (I Tim. 4:12; 5:22).
- C. Marriage will remain pure (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-6).
- D. Pure homes are a must.
 1. Christ will be the center of it (John 14:15).
 2. Love will be the force that binds it (Eph. 5:25).
- E. The church will remain pure (Eph. 5:25-27).
- F. Christ's doctrine will always be pure (Psm. 19:8; 119:40).
- G. Hearts will remain pure (Matt. 5:8; Prov. 4:23).
- H. The Christian's speech remains pure (I Peter. 3:10).
- I. Pure deeds will be performed (II Cor. 7:1).
- J. Pure love will be practiced (I John 4:20; John 13:34-35).

V. ALL MUST DO THEIR PART IN MAINTAINING A PURE GOSPEL

- A. Let us not be ashamed of it (Rom. 1:16).
- B. Obey it (I Peter 4:17; II Thess. 4:7-8).
- C. Preach it (Mark 16:15).
- D. Guard it (I Tim. 6:20).
- E. Defend it (Phil. 1:17).
- F. Hold it fast (II Tim. 1:13).
- G. Live worthily of it (Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27).

Conclusion:

- 1. Let all be encouraged to strive to keep the purity of the gospel.
- 2. May each one be encouraged to abide in the pure gospel.
- 3. Have you obeyed the pure gospel in order to be saved?
- 4. Have you lived a pure life in accordance with the pure gospel?
- 5. Do you need to make any changes in your life?

Donald Turmire
Class of 1975

The One Gospel

Romans 1:16

Introduction:

We are living in an age of compromise and there are those who are trying to compromise this **one gospel**. There are many things that I can be wrong about and still go to heaven, but I can't be wrong about the **one gospel** and do so. This shows the importance of our subject.

The oneness of the gospel in a world of compromise is very unique (I Cor. 1:10-13). It produces (one faith, one church, etc.).

I. THE GOSPEL IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- A. It comes from GOD (I Cor. 2:9-13; Gal. 1:6-12).
- B. It's GOD'S power to save (Rom. 1:16; James 1:18,21; I Peter 1:23).
- C. Because it is the truth (John 8:32; 17:17; I John 2:21).
- D. Because it keeps the church pure (I Tim. 3:15; Titus 2:11-12).
- E. It produces faith (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6).
- F. Because it's the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11).
- G. It abides forever (I Peter 1:22-23).
- H. It will judge us (John 12:48).
- I. We need to be set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:17; I Peter 3:15; I Thess. 5:21).
- J. This is the way we know GOD (I John 2:3-4).

II. IF THE GOSPEL IS SO IMPORTANT, THEN WHY DON'T MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH LIVE, PREACH, AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS THE WAY THEY SHOULD?

- A. Look at the I am's of Romans 1:14-16.
 - 1. I am debtor (v. 14).
 - 2. I am ready (v. 15).
 - 3. I am not ashamed (v. 16).

- B. When we develop the attitude Paul had, the gospel will be used correctly.

III. WAYS WE CAN COMPROMISE THE ONE GOSPEL:

- A. By not preaching the whole counsel of GOD.
 - 1. Acts 20:27
 - 2. Some will no longer preach on:
 - a. Marriage, divorce and remarriage
 - b. Instrumental music in worship
 - c. The Plan of salvation
 - d. Baptism
 - e. The Church
 - f. Moral issues

- B. The only hope that this compromising world has, and those in the church, is the **one gospel**.

- C. By changing truth:
 - 1. Romans 1:22 --- changed GOD
 - 2. Romans 1:25 --- changed truth
 - 3. Romans 1:26 --- changed natural use

- D. By preaching all positive sermons:
 - 1. If you want to know how to preach the one gospel, listen to Paul (II Tim. 4:1-2).
 - 2. Look at how the prophets preached.

- E. By not handling correctly the Word of Truth (II Tim. 2:15).
 - 1. The three dispensations

2. Old and New Covenants
3. Thief on the cross

F. By now knowing that we are in a battle
(Eph. 6:10-17).

IV. TRUTH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN:

A. Attitude

1. Jonah: wanted Nineva to be lost.
2. Even if the speaker's attitude is wrong,
we should obey the gospel.

B. Motive

1. Philippians 1:15
2. Paul was grateful that Christ was being
preached even though the motive was wrong

C. Life (Rev. 2:10).

D. Possession (Matt. 16:26).

E. Sincerity

1. Young and old prophet (I Kings 13).

F. Conscience

1. Acts 23:1

G. What one thinks

1. II Kings 5:11
2. Acts 26:9

H. Unity in diversity

1. I Cor. 1:10; I John 1:7; Amos 3:3
2. Christian Church, Baptist Church, etc.

I. Proverbs 23:23

V. THERE ARE NO OPTIONAL COMMANDS IN THIS ONE GOSPEL

A. Baptism

B. Instrumental music

Conclusion:

There are many other things that could be said, but this is sufficient to show the importance of the gospel. I want to close with three verses of Scripture which point out clearly the importance of the **One Gospel**:

1. II John 9
2. I Timothy 4:16
3. Acts 20:32

Eddy Craft Class of 1972

They Wouldn't Bend, They Wouldn't Bow, They Wouldn't Burn!

Daniel 3:20-25

Introduction:

1. Youth is a wonderful thing, and how wonderful it is to see young people dedicate and devote their lives to GOD (II Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 3:15-17).
 - a. Paul speaks to Timothy concerning the Old Testament scriptures.
 - b. Note that they could make Timothy wise unto salvation, but could not save him.
2. GOD'S will is made known through the Holy Writ, and His attitude is revealed to all who would heed or reject His infallible will (Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; John 12:48).
 - a. The Old Testament scriptures are just as important today as they were in Paul's day (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3).
 - b. Our lesson is taken from Daniel, the prophet of old, and is just as practical today as it was in Daniel's day.
3. Daniel and his three friends, all Hebrew youth of about eighteen years of age were taken into Babylonian captivity about the year 606 B.C.
 - a. Jerusalem had been overcome by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian hordes because of Judah's infidelity to GOD (Dan. 1:1-2).
 - b. Four young men taken captive:
 - (1) Daniel — *"GOD is my judge."*
 - (2) Hananiah — *"GOD is gracious."*
 - (3) Mishael — *"Who is what GOD is."*
 - (4) Azariah — *"GOD has helped."*

- c. Names that glorified the GOD of heaven could not, and would not be tolerated by a heathen government, and so, their names were changed.
 - (1) Daniel: Belteshazzar —
“*Bel’s prince*” (Supreme god)
 - (2) Hananiah: Shadrach —
“*Commandment of Aku.*”
 - (3) Mishael: Meshach —
“*Who is like Ahu.*”
 - (4) Azariah: Abed-nego —
“*Servant of Nego.*”
 - d. These four Hebrew youths were to undergo a three year period of purification so that they could serve the Babylonian monarch.
 - (1) They were to have the best that the Babylonian king could offer, but they refused (Dan. 1:8, meats from unclean animals offered to idols).
 - (2) In obeying GOD rather than man, GOD made them ten times more wise and knowledgeable than all the kings magicians.
4. Nebuchadnezzar called all the wise men of Babylon to reveal and interpret his dream — if not, they were to die (Dan. 2:1-9).
- a. Daniel is called, and GOD gives him the dream and its interpretation (Dan. 2:19-45).
 - b. As a result, Daniel and his three friends are elevated to positions of honor (Dan. 2:48, 49).
5. But as is the practice of all earthly monarchs, Nebuchadnezzar placed his trust in something made with hands rather than the everlasting GOD (Dan. 3:1). (90' X 9')
- a. He then tried to impose his will on all by demanding that all bow down and worship when they heard the music of the cornet, flute, sackbut, harp, psaltry, and dulcimer.
 - b. Those refusing to bow down to his image of infidelity were to be cast into a fiery furnace.

6. The three Hebrew youth: Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego refused to bow down to the idol (Exod. 20:3-6).
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar became very angry, but gave the young men another chance, but they still refused (Dan. 3:16-18).
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar had the furnace heated seven times greater than usual — those who bound the youths and carried them to the furnace entrance were consumed (Dan. 3:19-22).
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace and saw not three men, but four, walking in the midst of the fire (Dan. 3:24,25).
 - (1) When they emerged from the furnace, their clothes were not singed or burned, their hair was not singed, and there was not even the smell of smoke on them (Dan. 3:28-30).

I. THEY WOULDN'T BEND, THEY WOULDN'T BOW, THEY WOULDN'T BURN.

- A. They recognized the authority of GOD (Exod. 20:3-6).
 1. GOD is to come before civil authorities (Matt. 22:21).
 2. GOD is to come before religious authorities (Acts 4:19-20).
 3. By standing up for GOD, they glorified Him, and this took great courage (II Peter 1:5).
 - a. Diligence — Labor, work.
 - b. Faith — foundation principles; conversion.
 - c. Virtue — courage — moral courage is often the hardest to have. (Cf. battle).
 4. They could have said, *"Everybody else is doing it."*
 - a. This does not make it right.

- b. GOD did not condone Judah's idolatry on this false concept, so why should He condone ungodly living.
- c. Christians should have courage enough to stand for truth and right, regardless of what the world believes.
- d. If anyone has true grit, it should be us (I John 2:15-17).
 - (1) Worldly things — things evil and wrong in and of themselves. (Liquor, tobacco, drugs, lusts, etc.)

B. They refused to violate their conscience.

- 1. They risked all for conscience sake, knowing that a conscience should not be violated (I Tim. 1:19).
- 2. The conscience can be a safe and reliable guide if it is properly educated, or standardized (Cf. a watch).
 - a. If our conscience is educated or standardized by GOD'S infallible Word, it is a reliable guide.
 - b. We may be mocked, taunted, or ridiculed, but we will be victorious if we trust in GOD and stand firm and confident in His promises (II Tim. 1:12).

C. They refused to compromise in any way, refusing to do what they knew to be wrong.

(re: Nebuchadnezzar's second chance)

- 1. To these young men life was unimportant if they had to renounce God.
- 2. They would die rather than give in to the pressures of ungodliness — even if they died they would trust GOD!
- 3. They had faith that GOD would deliver them, but even if He did not, they would still trust in Him ... *"we would rather*

serve GOD."

4. They stood for what they knew to be right, and what they were sure of (Dan. 2:28):
"There is a GOD in heaven."
 - a. John the baptist faced the cruel King Herod — losing a life, but gaining heaven (Phil. 1:23).
- D. The results of faith (Heb. 11:33, 34).
 1. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were delivered from certain death in a fiery furnace.
 2. They were promoted to places of high esteem and honor in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom.
 3. The GOD of heaven received praise, glory and honor from a heathen king because of their great faith and courage.
 4. Likewise, when we endure (Eccl. 12:13).
 - a. We will benefit in the end.
 - b. GOD will be glorified and praised.
 - c. The kingdom will be advanced.

Conclusion:

1. Statements of truth:
 - a. John Calhoun: *"I'd rather be right, than President."*
 - b. Davy Crockett: *"Be sure you're right, then go ahead."*
2. Conviction is admired by all, even those who disagree, but cowardice and compromise are always detested.
 - a. These three men were right and moved ahead.
 - b. We should do the same.
2. We need to trust GOD more —
"bend your will, bow your heart, and you will not burn!"

Gary Shaver
Class of 1976

A Castway For Christ

I Corinthians 9:16-27

Introduction:

1. Saul was converted from his zealous past (Acts 22:1-16).
2. The servant of the Savior was a humble apostle (Eph. 3:8).
3. The life of Paul was a fight of faith (II Cor. 11:24-28; Gal. 2:20).
4. Paul fought until the end (II Tim. 4:16-18).
5. A castaway is one who counts himself as rejected until the race is won (Heb. 12:1-2; II Tim. 4:7).
6. A crown of righteousness goes to the victor (II Tim. 4:8; I Pet. 5:4).
7. An unscriptural castaway is consumed forever in the fire which is called the second death (Rev. 21:8).

I. GOSPEL (Vs. 16-18).

- A. Necessity (v.16).
 1. Glory (Matt. 1:23; Gal. 2:20; 6:14).
 2. Great need (II Tim. 4:2; Prov. 11:30).
 3. Glean the gospels (II Tim. 2:15).
- B. No novelty (v. 17).
 1. Favor (Prov. 31:30; II Tim. 4:5).
 2. Fatal error (James 5:19-20; Matt. 25:35-40,45).
 3. Fulfill (Col. 1:25; Phil. 1:7).
- C. Nobility (v. 18).
 1. Choice (Acts 18:3; I Thess. 2:9; II Thess. 3:8).
 2. Unconditional (II Cor. 4:5; I Cor. 1: 10-22).
 3. Christ (Rom. 1:16; Mark 8:38; I Pet. 2:13-15).

II. GAIN (Vs. 19-23).

- A. Walking voluntarily (v.19).
 - 1. His sins forgiven (Acts 9:4-6; Acts 22:16).
 - 2. Free man (Phil. 3:8; Rom. 11:1-2; II Cor. 11:22).
 - 3. Fulfillment (Gal., 5:13-14; Rom. 13:8-9; Matt. 18:15).

- B. Walking by the same rule (vs. 20-22).
 - 1. Circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3; I Cor. 10:23; Rom.14).
 - 2. Noncircumcision of Titus (Gal. 2:3-5; Rom. 3:1; I Cor 7:19; Gal. 2:7; Col. 2:11).
 - 3. Christ is obedience (Phil 3:3; II Cor. 10:3-6).

- C. Winning the weak (v. 23).
 - 1. Publicly (Acts 20:20,27; Col. 1:23; Acts 17:6).
 - 2. Purposely (Luke 19:10; Matt. 10:6f).
 - 3. Perpetually (II Tim. 4:1-5; Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47).

III. GROAN (Vs. 24-27).

- A. Certify (v. 24).
 - 1. Run lawfully (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16; Matt 7:22).
 - 2. Righteous way (John 10:7; 10-11; 14:6; Eph. 4:4; Col. 1:18; Eph 1: 21-23).
 - 3. Race of reason (Heb. 12:1-2; Phil. 2:14-16).

- B. Challenge (vs. 25-26).
 - 1. Lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 8:7; II Cor. 10:3-5).
 - 2. Longing for the Lord (Phil. 3:13-14).
 - 3. Looking for the Lord (II Tim. 4:16-18).

- C. Claim (v. 27).
 - 1. Confrontation (II Cor. 11:24-28); I Cor. 4:9-15).
 - 2. Culmination (II Tim. 4:7-9).
 - 3. Coronation (I Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 3:11; 4:4).

CONCLUSION:

1. We must learn from the lessons taught by the apostle Paul (I Cor. 11:1).
2. Christians are tempted by evil. Here is a great lesson to help us to "keep on keeping on" - fighting the fight of faith.
3. May GOD grant us the strength to teach others as did Paul (Matt. 20:26-28; II Tim. 2:2; I Cor. 11:1).

Harold Blevins
Class of 1984

The Courage of Ananias

Acts 9:10-22

Introduction:

1. Courage has always been an essential characteristic of God's people.
2. Courage: "Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear or difficulty". (Webster's)
3. Before his death Moses challenged the children of Israel to have courage (Deut. 31:6).
4. Likewise Joshua, reminded the children of Israel of the words of Moses (Joshua 1:6,7).
5. We want to notice a somewhat quiet man and his courage (Ananias).
6. Set the background of Acts9.

I. HIS COURAGE CAUSED HIM TO BE READY (V. 10).

- A. His answer when the Lord called was, "Behold, I am here, Lord".
- B. This sounds like those of old:
 1. Samuel (I Samuel 3:10).
 2. Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8).
 3. Abraham (Hebrews 11:8).
- C. As GOD'S people today our courage must cause us to be ready to serve GOD.
 1. We need to be ready to preach the Gospel as Paul was ready (Rom. 1:15).
 2. We need to be ready to answer any man (I Peter 3:15).
 3. We need to be ready to do good unto all men (Galatians 6:10).

II. COURAGE CAUSED HIM TO BE REALISTIC (V. 13,14).

- A. Ananias was **Not** trying to forsake his work, he was just making sure he was following the right course.
 - 1. Paul was the man persecuting and killing the Christians.
 - 2. Naturally Ananias feared for his life and wanted to be certain of the situation.

- B. There was a time when men of GOD fled.
 - 1. I Kings 19:3—Elijah fled for his life after killing the prophets of Baal.
 - 2. Ever. Jesus himself fled on occasions:
 - a. John 8:59—(hid himself)
 - b. Luke 4:30—(passed thru the midst of them).

- C. We need to be realistic with our courage today.
 - 1. We need to study the situation.
 - 2. We need to make righteous judgments
 - 3. We need to be willing to do whatever is needed, but make sure that we are following the right course (Bible).

III. CAUSED TO BE RECEPTIVE TO GOD'S WORD (V. 15-17)

- A. He was ready to do what was needed, but he was realistic to the situation. When he realized, (through the word of the Lord), that GOD meant what he said, he was receptive to what GOD said.

- B. The Lord often has a higher purpose than our finite minds can grasp (Read-Isaiah 55:8-11).

- C. We must study the word so that when opportunities arise we will be grounded and settled to the point of making righteous judgments, and then be ready to do what GOD said.

- D. Verse 17. Think of the courage it took to go to Saul like GOD commanded.

IV. COURAGE HELPED CAUSE GREAT RESULTS (V. 18-22)

- A. What if Ananias had been afraid to say what Paul needed to hear?
 - 1. What if he had only spoken of the existence of GOD?
 - 2. What if he had preached “unity-in-diversity”?
 - 3. What if he had told Paul he had the right to agree to disagree?

- B. We never know whom the person **WE** convert will convert.

- C. All we can do is obey Matt. 13 and sow the seed of the kingdom.

Conclusion:

- 1. By studying the life of this great man, we can see the kind of courage that pleases GOD.
- 2. We need patience and tact, but we also need courage in this day and age.
- 3. Elders need the courage to take stands and contend for the truth.
- 4. Preachers need courage to open their mouths and preach the Gospel.
- 5. Members need courage to support elders and preachers in the proclamation of the truth.
- 6. It takes courage to break away from whatever it is that is keeping us from Christ.

David Jones Class of 1976

From Stress To Success

Phillipians 3-4

Introduction:

Phil 1:13 states that Paul was in bonds. In chapter 4, verse 22, Paul says those of Caesar's household saluted them, which means Paul was in prison at the time he wrote this letter. This put a lot of stress on Paul, yet he writes to encourage others.

As we see from the beginning of the church in Philippi (Acts 16), Paul knows what this congregation needs, for he was with them in their very beginning. They had begun with persecution which produced stress, so Paul is writing from experience.

Paul has had stress from three areas: (1) A former life of persecuting the church, (2) the persecutors which followed him from place to place as he preached the gospel, (3) and from preaching the gospel (I Cor. 9:16).

We want to see how to go from stress to success by the life of Paul, putting those same lessons to use in helping ourselves go from stress to success.

I. PAUL SAYS TO FORGET.

- A. Phil. 3:4-15

- B. Forget the past.

II. SET US A GOAL.

- A. Phil. 3:13

- B. Paul had heaven as his goal.
 - 1. Col. 3:1-2
 - 2. II Tim. 4:8

III. PAUL SAYS TO REJOICE.

- A. Phil. 4:4,10

- B. What do we have to rejoice about? Salvation, heaven.

IV. PAUL SAYS TO PRAY.

- A. Phil. 4:5-6
- B. Pray about everything
- C. We need to pray in the right manner.
 1. John 14:13-14; 15:7,16; 16:22-23
 2. James 1:2-8; 4:2-3

V. PAUL SAYS TO HAVE THE PEACE OF GOD.

- A. Phil. 4:7
- B. We gain this peace by trusting GOD (I John 4:18).

VI. PAUL SAYS TO THINK.

- A. Phil. 4:8
- B. Meditate on these things, contemplate them.

VII. PAUL SAYS TO DO.

- A. Phil. 4:9
- B. Religion is an activity (James 2:19-20).

VIII. PAUL SAYS TO BE SATISFIED.

- A. Phil. 4:11-12
- B. We need to learn to be satisfied where we are.

IX. THE SUCCESS IS IN CHRIST.

- A. Phil. 4:13
- B. Outside of Christ there are no spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).

Keith Dixon Class of 1980

Prayer in Paul's Thought

Introduction:

1. As Christians we are privileged to have many benefits and opportunities.
2. However, as with many blest people, we often take them for granted in our lives and do not exercise them to the fullest potential.
3. One of the greatest blessings that we have as Christians is the right to pray to GOD.
4. Too often our prayers become rote memorization of the same phrases over and over.
5. Let us look today at the part prayer played in the life of Paul and see the depth and richness that prayer has. We can also have such a relationship with GOD through prayer.

I. HOW WE OUGHT TO PRAY

- A. Rom. 12:12. We ought to be able to pray anytime, without formality.
- B. Rom. 8:26-27. Prayer, even when we are unsure how to express ourselves, is effective.
- C. Eph. 6:18. Prayer needs to be persistent and frequent.
- D. I Thess. 1:2. Thanks for the blessings of GOD are always in order, especially for the faithfulness of someone.
- E. II Thess. 1:11-12. Prayer ought to include the glorification of GOD, not just the blessing of us.

II. THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE OBJECTS FOR PRAYER, WHICH WE OFTEN LEAVE OUT OF OUR PRAYERS, BEING OURSELVES THE POORER FOR IT.

- A. Rom. 15:30-32.
 - 1. It is proper to pray for things though we don't understand how GOD will accomplish the request.
 - 2. How does GOD influence the behavior of unbelievers, for instance.

- B. II Thess. 3:1-2. Pray that GOD may influence the conduct of unbelievers.

- C. Rom. 10:1. Prayer for the salvation of others is effectual and acceptable.

- D. II Cor. 13:7. Prayer for the behavior and devotion of fellow saints is welcome.

- E. Eph. 1:15-18. Prayer for the understanding, wisdom, and enlightenment of others is acceptable, and effectual.

- F. Col. 1:9-11. Note every aspect of the Christian life.
 - 1. Wisdom and enlightenment.
 - 2. Worthy (not guilty of sin).
 - 3. Fruitful (in not just refraining from sin, but in contributing positively to the work of GOD).
 - 4. For sanctification (strength, patience, longsuffering, joy).

- G. Rom. 1:9-11. It is right to pray for our own projects, but the reason for the project must be right.

Conclusion:

1. Philemon 22 Paul was supremely confident in the power of prayer.

David Nance
Class of 1980

The Sinful Woman

John 7:53 — 8:11

Introduction:

Our conscience has been placed in us by the hand of GOD to keep us on the straight and narrow. When we violate our conscience we are hardening our hearts and it may lead to our eternal damnation. But when our conscience is tendered by conforming to GOD'S will, it is pleasant and joyous.

I am persuaded that the reason so many are unhappy with their lives, and religion, is because they are living in violation of their consciences.

John 8 is a classic picture of what I am talking about.

I. THE ACCUSATION.

- A. The accusation was adultery (Exod. 20:14; Lev. 20:10).
- B. Often glamorized in our society, media, talk shows, jokes, movies, sensationalism — tantilizing, tempting.
- C. GOD feels otherwise (I Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4; Rev. 21:8).
- D. The sin of infidelity is destroying the homes of America; it results in hundreds of murders and maimings each year — children.
- E. The **only** ground for a scriptural divorce (Matt. 19:9).
- F. No question to her guilt — the very act. She violated GOD'S law.
- G. The case was iron-clad and fool-proof, no defense offered, and the accusation was not denied.

II. THE ACCUSERS.

- A. Scribes, Pharisees, Lawyers who knew the law, copied the law, the strictest in enforcing it — no light weights, but skilled and scholarly, but self-righteous hypocrites. Jesus, their greatest threat. In guardians of the law — self appointed! (Matt. 23).
- B. Jesus was not a judge.
- C. They were tempting Him.
- D. They were self-righteous.
- E. Clearly warned (Matt. 7:1-5).
- F. If concerned about the law, the truth or justice — where was the man?

III. THE ATTITUDE.

- A. Why bring her to Jesus? What was their motive?
- B. They had a double standard — so do many today! Elders, preachers — only one law!
- C. The sin involved did **not** matter to them for they forgot it when confronted by their own conscience.
- D. They wanted Jesus to condemn or condone, usurp the authority the Jewish court or condone her in her adultery — caught and condemned if you do and if you don't.
- E. Adultery and self-righteousness — Jesus dealt with both.

IV. THE ACTION.

- A. Jesus wrote on the ground. He exposed their self-righteousness. They were brutal, unfeeling and sadistic!

- B. He brought them before the bar of their own conscience! They left from the eldest to youngest (Rom. 14:23).
- C. He shifted the responsibility from Himself to the accusers — caught in their own trap — embarrassed, stunned — shamed! Sin does this.
- D. Forgiveness (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20). Forgive and be forgiven.

V. THE ACCLAMATION.

- A. *"Neither do I condemn you."*
- B. *"Go and sin no more."* Since you have repented, bring forth the fruit (Matt. 3:8).
- C. Hallelujah, the sinner was saved.
- D. Not condoning the womans sin, but saving the woman from sin!

Conclusion:

Romans 3:23. Let the angels rejoice!

<p>Andrew M. Connally Honorary Alumni - 1986</p>
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What Jesus Did For Me

Introduction:

1. A true understanding of GOD'S plan of salvation causes one to marvel at both its profoundness and simplicity.
 - a. Profound in the sense that no man could or would originate it (I Tim. 3:16).
 - b. Simple, in that one can understand what is necessary to receive forgiveness, and live a life that pleases GOD and leads to eternal life (Isa. 35:8; Eph. 3:9; John 8:32).
2. Central to this great, yet simple plan of GOD, is the part played by Jesus Christ.
 - a. Take away the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection of Christ, and Christianity becomes an empty shell; a religion without substance or salvation.
 - b. But to accept the truth of what Jesus has done for me is to enable me to lay hold on eternal life.
3. What did Jesus do for me?
 - a. Until I recognize what Jesus did for me, I will not truly appreciate the necessity of my individual responsibility to Him.
 - (1) The inspired Paul recognized what Jesus did for all men (Rom. 5:8).
 - (2) He recognized what Jesus did for him (I Tim. 1:12-14).
 - b. What Jesus did, he did for (Name some individuals in the assembly).
 - c. Can we say with Paul: II Tim. 1:12?
4. What did Jesus do for me?

I. JESUS LEFT HEAVEN FOR ME.

- A. Heaven — the home of Deity: GOD the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus left His home for me.
2. John 6:51.

B. What did He leave?

1. The place whose builder and maker is GOD (Heb. 11:10).
2. A place of glory and honor (John 17:5). Place of equality (Phil. 2:6-7).
3. A place with no death, sorrow, crying, or pain (Rev. 21:4).
4. A *"far better place"* (Phil. 1:23).
5. A place of security, joy, peace, where no darkness exists: a place void of sin and sinners.

C. He left for me, and yet, what have I left for Him?

1. What have I sacrificed? He gave up His home for me! He came to earth where He had not even a place to lay His head. Yet, what have I given up for Him?
2. Is it too much for Him to ask me to give up the sin to which so many cling?
 - a. To give up that which hurts me physically and spiritually?
 - b. To give up that which is empty, worthless, and spiritually destructive?
 - c. After all, look what He left for me!
3. Yet, we cling to sin as if He had never left heaven for us.
 - a. No thought or consideration for the fact that He *"pleased not himself."*
 - b. Reject His invitation to salvation and scorn His tears of compassion; despise His sacrifice.

D. When I recognize what Jesus left when He left heaven for me, there is not anything that He requires me to leave in my own life that can even begin to compare. He left heaven for me, as worthless, sinful, and undeserving as I am.

II. JESUS BECAME A MAN FOR ME.

- A. Left heaven and took upon Himself flesh and blood.
 - 1. Isaiah 53:3-8. Jesus knew what He would suffer before He became man.
 - a. Knew He would face sorrow (John 11:35).
 - b. Knew He would face rejection (John 1:11).
 - c. Knew He would be hated, ridiculed, suffer pain, persecution and temptation.
 - 2. He knew all of these things beforehand, but He became man for me.

- B. He became a man.
 - 1. To deliver me from sin (Heb. 2:15).
 - 2. To be my merciful and faithful high priest (Heb. 2:17).
 - 3. To help me overcome temptation (Heb. 2:18).
 - 4. To give me an example (John 13:15; I Peter 2:21).

- C. Should I just ignore this fact? Should I pass it off as unimportant and go ahead living for myself?
 - 1. How can I? Jesus did it for me!
 - 2. I Peter 4:1
 - 3. When I recognize that Jesus Christ became flesh and blood for me, there is no way that I can do other than Peter declares.

III. JESUS SUFFERED AND DIED FOR ME.

- A. He suffered:
 - 1. Betrayal by one supposedly a friend.
 - 2. Humiliation (Phil. 2:8).
 - 3. Though guiltless, treated as a common criminal (John 19:1). Describe scourging. (See International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).
 - 4. Mockery — clothing gambled away. Crown of thorns, robe of royalty (not for honor, but for ridicule.) King of kings had become a joke.

5. Carried own instrument of death until He fell exhausted.
6. Heard roar of crowd, "*Crucify him, crucify him!*"

B. He suffered:

1. Nails driven through hands and feet — flesh torn, sweat pouring into open wounds, taste of blood in mouth, etc.
2. Thirst quenched with bitter vinegar.
3. Ridicule of soldiers, "*If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.*"

C. Yes, He suffered as the muscles of His body could no longer hold Him, breathing impaired, nausea.

1. Finally, with the darkening of the sun and renting of the veil of the temple, blessed, longed for death, came to the Divine Son of God.
2. Yes, He suffered for ME!

D. Knowing that He so suffered for me, how can I so despise His Word as to reject His offer of pardon?

1. How can I turn my back on Him?
2. How can I reject His loving invitation (Matt. 11:28) knowing that He suffered and died for me?
3. How can I be indifferent toward the work and worship of the church? Fail to set example before children, etc.?

E. He suffered and died for me!

IV. HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE AND ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN FOR ME.

- A. To prove He is the only begotten Son of God (Rom. 1:4).
- B. To sit on the right hand of the Father as Mediator (Rom. 8:34; I John 1:7).

- C. To give me hope and assure me of my own resurrection (I Peter 1:3; Phil. 3:10-11).
- D. Yes, He arose from the grave and ascended to heaven for me!

Conclusion:

- 1. When I realize all that Jesus did for me (Repeat main points) how can I remain in my sin? How can I reject His sweet and gracious invitation?
 - a. He offers me fellowship; freedom from bondage of sin; hope of eternal life; plan of salvation plainly revealed, easily understood, and simple to obey.
- 2. Each one needs to realize that what Jesus did, He did for me.
- 3. He invites, will you respond? Give steps.

Johnnie Hutchison
Class of 1976

The Wicked Husbandmen

Matthew 21:33ff

Introduction:

A parable may be defined as a real life story used to illustrate a spiritual truth (It was a means of hiding a spiritual truth). The parable of The Wicked Husbandman is recorded in three of the four Gospel accounts which attributes to its importance. Matthew's account is selected for this study.

Our goal in the study of the parable will be to understand its meaning and to make a present day application.

I. THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED

HUSBANDMAN (Read: Matt. 21:33-42,43).

A. Studying The Parts For An Understanding Of The Parable.

1. The householder is GOD, the creator and sustainer of the universe and life.
2. The vineyard is Israel (Psm. 89:8-11).
 - a. 1950 B.C. GOD calls Abraham (Gen.12).
 - b. 1492 B.C. Israel receives GOD'S law at Sinai (Exod. 20).
 - c. 1452 B.C. Israel crosses the Jordan River into the promised land (Josh. 3).
 - d. 1095 B.C. Israel seeks a king; 975 B.C. the kingdom is divided; 721 B.C. Ten tribes (Israel) are lost to Assyrian captivity; 606-587 B.C. Judah is taken to Babylon and Jerusalem and the temple is destroyed; 536 B.C. Zerubbabel returns with 42,000 to re-establish worship; 534 B.C. the foundation of the temple is laid; 516 B.C. the temple is finished; 444 B.C. Nehemiah rebuilds the walls; Malachi reveals the deplorable conditions that prevail in moral and

spiritual decline.

- e. A.D. 29 John the Baptist calls Israel to repentance in view of the Messiah's coming reign.
 - f. A.D. 30 Jesus begins His ministry.
3. Husbandmen represents the priests and Levites (Scribes and Pharisees - the religious leaders and teachers of Israel).
 - a. They were responsible to cultivate the people in love and respect of GOD.
 - b. They were stewards of GOD'S possession.
 4. Time of fruit (like sharecropping): glory and honor due GOD as the people are taught to reverence GOD.
 5. Servants of GOD, the prophets, were ill-treated one by one (Matt. 23:37).
 - a. Israel lapsed more and more into sin.
 6. Son's presence would be reason to reflect upon their conduct and to blush with shame.
 7. The conspiracy of the husbandmen against the Son represents a rejection of His authority and teaching (allowed them to continue in their false peace while gratifying their sinful flesh).
 8. The rending of the vineyard from the husbandmen is the fall of the Jewish nation in A.D. 70 at the hand of Titus the Roman general (1,100,000 were slaughtered; 600,000 were sold into slavery and the remainder died at Masada of their own poisoning).
 - a. Matt. 24 is Jesus' prophecy of the fate of Jerusalem and the people.
 - b. Josephus gives an eyewitness account of the seige and fall of Jerusalem and the Jewish Nation.

B. Other Husbandmen Is The Church Of Our Lord (Matt. 21:41-43).

1. There is a new vineyard, the church (Rom. 9,10,11).

- a. Christ is the Head (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - b. Its organization is clear (I Tim. 3; Titus 1; II Tim 2:2, 4:2).
 - c. Plan of salvation: hear, believe, repent, confession of Christ, and baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 22:16; I Pet. 3:21).
 - d. Worship: Sing, Eph. 5:19; Pray, I Tim. 2:1; Give, II Cor 9:7; Communion, Acts 20:7; Teaching, James 3:1; II Tim. 4:2.
 - e. Work of the church to save souls by evangelizing, edifying, and benevolence.
2. The history of the church shows changes as authority is usurped by religious leaders.
- a. Roman Catholic (A.D. 608) and Greek Orthodox (A.D. 1054).
 - b. Protestant Denominations (1530-1989) number above 300.
 - c. Earthly heads, headquarters, names, creeds, means of salvation and varying worships.

Conclusion:

1. The parallel of the husbandmen of Israel stealing the vineyard of GOD and the husbandmen of the church stealing the vineyard of GOD is self-evident.
 - a. The vineyard has been stolen and Christ's authority cast aside.
 - b. Christ is presented as being enthroned, yet has been dethroned in the hearts of many.
 - c. The religious leaders are merchandising the people of GOD.
2. The plea of the church of Christ - restoration.

<p>Joe W. Nichols Class of 1969</p>

“That They May Be Without Excuse”

Romans 1:20

Introduction:

1. We are prone to make excuses.
 - a. Children do.
 - b. Adam and Eve were the first.
2. We sometimes ask for excuses.
3. Why was the word written?

I. THE EXCUSE OF “NOT KNOWING GOD.”

- A. Is there an excuse for being ignorant of GOD?
 1. Nature reveals Him (Psm. 19:1-6).
 2. His Word reveals Him (Gen. 1:1ff).
- B. Why were they without excuse? (Rom. 1:20).
- C. Does the wrath of GOD reveal anything about GOD?
 1. His punishment to disobedient Israel.
 2. His punishment against the heathen who had reviled Him.

II. DID NOT GLORIFY HIM AS GOD.

- A. No one has the right to glorification, except GOD.
- B. Bible examples:
 1. Acts 10:25-26.
 2. Angels not to be worshipped in the place of GOD (Rev. 22:8-9).
- C. Be careful not to allow:
 1. Men thinking of us as god (Acts 14:11; Gen. 50:19).
 2. Ourselves such thoughts (Acts 12:21-23).

III. UNGRATEFUL.

- A. Ingratitude a grave sin of our day.
- B. Thanksgiving ought to one of the outstanding characteristics of a Christian.
 - 1. His opportunity for salvation.
 - 2. His privilege to serve Christ.
 - 3. His love for Christ.
 - 4. His love for brethren.
 - 5. His love for the lost.
 - 6. His love for the church.
- C. Note Philippians 4:6.

IV. VAIN REASONING.

- A. GOD gave man the ability to reason.
 - 1. Concerning the "*tree of knowledge of good and evil*" (Gen. 2).
 - 2. His word.
 - a. Isaiah 1:18.
 - b. Acts 17:2-3.
- B. Paul's reasoning (Acts 22).
- C. What makes our reasoning vain?

V. PROFESSING WISDOM.

- A. Define wisdom:
 - 1. "*Accumulated philosophic or scientific learning: knowledge.*"
 - 2. "*A wise attitude or course of action.*"
- B. Distinguish between wisdom and knowledge.
- C. Foolish wisdom (I Cor. 1:20-21).
- D. Note the unwise (Rom. 1:22-23; Compare Exod. 20:1-5).
- E. Would you be wise? Do what is right while the opportunity avails.

Conclusion: What Excuses Will We Make?

1. Some (Matt. 7:22).
2. Vain to think GOD will accept man's reasoning.
3. Offer obedience instead of excuses.

Jim Bryant
Class of 1973

Directions And Destiny

Acts 8

Introduction:

1. Takes more than good luck to reach any destination.
2. Too often many shun divine directions, racing through life into eternity.
3. Time and effort must now be spent if we expect to reach that city Abraham sought (Heb. 11:10).
4. *"This earth is not our home"* (Heb., 13:14).
5. Traveling from worship the Eunuch saw the need to double check to make sure he knew where he was going (Acts 8:27-28).

I. DIRECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT

- A. Men must have direction or be lost (Prov. 14:12).
- B. Many miss the clear signs everywhere (Acts 8:4).
- C. The Masters roadmap is provided completely (II Pet. 1:3).
- D. Mistakes of men are not therein (II Tim. 3:16-17).
- E. Many maps exist, **ONLY ONE** leads to eternal life:
 1. Christ is the only way (John 14:6).
 2. Cannot listen to any other (Matt.17:5).
 3. Complete authority in Him (Acts 4:12).

II. DIRECTORS ARE IMPORTANT

- A. Phillip provided an important link in getting the right directions to a lost man (Acts 8:26).

- B. Preaching is a good work (I Cor. 1:21; Rom. 1:16).
- C. Phillip was told to “go”, SO ARE WE (Mark 16:15,16).
- D. People great and small need guidance (Acts 8:30,31). He knew he was lost and needed help.
- E. Preparation for this sober work must not be neglected (II Tim. 2:15; I Tim. 4:12-16).
- F. Proving false prophets is possible (I John 4:1).
 - 1. Check map: Acts 17:11; Blind lead the blind, Matt. 15:14.
 - 2. Gal. 1:6-9.

III. DETAILS ARE IMPORTANT.

- A. Scriptures are known and read by thousands daily, but they miss the details (Acts 8:32-34). Jews overlooked Jesus, John 5:39.
- B. Simple directions can be confused if one is not truly listening (Luke 8:11, 18; Matt. 5:6).
- C. Some are distracted and deceived by the words of Satan (II Cor. 11:3; II Pet. 3:16).
- D. Some say Christ, not His doctrine, is needful for salvation, NOT TRUE (II John 9). Form of doctrine is important, Rom. 6:17, 18.
- E. Details we know Phillip taught the Eunuch: (Every map would be useless without details.)
 - 1. Start with the scriptures (Acts 8:35; Rom. 10:17).
 - 2. Safety and salvation is;
 - “preached...Jesus”
 - a. By Jesus (John 3:16; Acts 8:37; I Cor. 15:1,2).
 - b. In Christ (John 14:6; Eph. 1:3, 7, 21-23).

3. State dependence upon Son of GOD to bring us to salvation (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10).
4. Stop or "*stand still*" (Acts 8:38).
 - a. No further progress until baptized (Acts 8:36).
 - b. None can bypass this door (Gal. 3:27; John 10:1,9).
 - c. No time to delay (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16).
 - d. No problem for an honest heart (Acts 8:39).

IV. DEPARTURE IS IMPORTANT. (James 1:22, "*be ye doers*")

- A. First must be willing to begin, Abraham was (Heb. 11:8,9), "*...obeyed; and he went...*".
- B. Former things left behind (Phil. 3:7, 8; James 4:8).
- C. Follow fully (Matt. 6:33; Matt. 16:24,25).
- D. Forward march (Col. 3:1,2; Luke 9:62).
- E. Finish our course (II Tim. 4:7,8; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10).

Conclusion:

1. We will all go before the judgement seat (Eccl. 12:7; Good and bad, John 5:28,29; Heb. 9:27).
2. What about the faithful (I Pet. 1:9)?
3. What about the lost (Phil. 3:19; II Thess. 1:8)?
4. What shall be your END (I Pet. 4:17)?
5. The choice is yours (Matt. 7:13-14).

<p>Glen Alexander Class of 1981</p>

Security Of A Believer

Introduction:

1. In every important endeavor, either consciously or subconsciously, people ask, "How can I be sure?" This is true in marriage, the stock market, surgery, etc.
2. This is also true among many religious folks.
 - a. Some worry about their security now.
 - b. Often people worry at death.
3. Can we know if we shall go to heaven? The answer is YES; if. It is conditional.

I. SOME MISCONCEPTIONS:

- A. "To be baptized means one is going to heaven."
 1. At a funeral, it is often heard, "The deceased was baptized."
 2. Baptism brings forgiveness for past sins.
 - a. Acts 22:16
 - b. I Pet. 3:21
 3. We were separated by sin.
 - a. Ezekiel 18:20
 - b. Isaiah 59:1f
 4. In our conversion, we rise, then walk.
 - a. Rom. 6:4
 - b. I John 1:7
 5. But one may fall away.
 - a. Gal. 5:4
 - b. Heb. 6:4-6
 - c. II Tim. 4:10
 6. Rev. 2:10
- B. "I am not of the elect."
 1. Discuss election in a summary way.
 - a. The elect are those who obey GOD (Heb. 5:9; I Pet. 1:2). The elect love

GOD (See John 14:15).

- b. The non-elect are those who disobey (II Thess. 1:7-9)

- C. "We are scarcely saved according to I Pet. 4:16-18."
 - 1. This context is not heaven. It is some "fiery trial" (see verse 12).
 - 2. Those to be saved in heaven are found in II Pet. 1:5-11, where it is called an "abundant entrance."

- D. "I don't feel saved."
 - 1. Once, a lady in Bible class expressed this. She was a fine Christian woman simply feeling her unworthiness. Perhaps at one time or another we have all had similar feelings.
 - 2. We cannot trust our feelings:
 - a. Our feelings change from time to time.
 - b. Some sectarians feel that none of us are saved.
 - c. Salvation takes place in the mind of GOD.

II. ARE WE SAVED NOW? YES, IF:

- A. If we have obeyed the gospel.

- B. "*Baptism doth also now save us.*"

- C. We are saved from our past sins.

III. BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR SECURITY? ARE WE GOING TO HEAVEN? CAN WE BE SURE?

- A. Yes, if:

- B. Matt. 7:21, 24; Heb. 5:9.

- C. John 14:1ff. A Christian heart should not be troubled.
- D. We must trust GOD'S promises and be faithfully obedient (I Thess. 5:21-24).

Rod Cicchetto
Class of 1977

Alive In The Image Of God

Introduction:

To hear some one say of a new born baby, “He (she) is the very image of their father (mother)” is something that makes a parent glow with joy and delight.

When GOD created (Bara) man in His own image He was delighted, and said of His creation, “It is very good...(Gen. 1:31). In this lesson we want to observe four (4) prominent men in the Bible that the image of GOD is connected to. Observe:

- I. Adam the first man-created in GOD’S image.
- II. The image lost in the old man of sin.
- III. GOD’S image manifested in the second man - Christ.
- IV. GOD’S image restored in the new man - the Christian.

I. ADAM, THE FIRST MAN CREATED IN GOD’S IMAGE (Gen. 1:26).

A. Gen. 1:26-27.

1. The Hebrew word (Bara) is used here for create (To make out of existing material).
2. This was not a physical creation!
 - a. Both man and woman were created in GOD’S image (Gen. 1:27).
 - b. GOD is a “Spirit” (John 4:24). Man could not have been created in the physical sense, after GOD’s “image”. The GODHEAD is not physical, but Spiritual in their nature.
 - c. This man, created in GOD’S image, was the spiritual man. In what way was he created in GOD’S image?

B. In being a spirit.

1. His life was separate from that of the mere animals, Adam was the image of GOD!

2. GOD created the beasts, but did not put his Spirit in them, they were not made in the “image of GOD”!
- C. In being immortal.
1. His life was a separate thing from mere animal life (Man is more than just animal).
 2. Adam was a partaker of the Divine Spirit.
 3. Recall the words of Jesus (Luke 20:38).
- D. In being holy.
1. Lev. 19:2: Called as GOD’S chosen people, Israel, to be holy.
 2. I Pet. 1:15: Peter calls for all who have been called by GOD, to be holy.

II. IMAGE OF GOD LOST IN THE OLD MAN - MAN OF SIN!

- A. This man is corrupt, defiled, there is no hope for him. What would GOD have us do with him?
1. Crucify him, crucify him!
 2. The only place fit for him is the cross.
- B. Eph. 4:22
- C. Compare the first man with this corrupt man, what a difference.
1. Where is the holiness?
 2. The happiness? (Lost in the sinful man!)
- D. The apostle Paul tells us where to put this vile, corrupt man (Rom. 6:6).
1. Paul said he had crucified the old man of sin.
 2. Gal. 2:20

III. THE IMAGE OF GOD MANIFESTED IN THE SECOND MAN - CHRIST.

- A. How was man to ever regain the spiritual relationship with GOD that he had in the beginning?
1. I Cor. 15:47

2. No truer, brighter image of GOD was ever manifested than was in the person of Jesus Christ.
3. Recall Jesus' words, (John 14:9).
4. Christ, the second man, was "...The express image..." of the person of GOD (Heb. 1:3).

IV. THE IMAGE OF GOD RESTORED IN THE NEW MAN.

- A. After Paul had "crucified the old man of sin", what did Paul take upon him?
 1. Col. 3:10
 2. Only in Christ are we made new creatures (Rom. 13:14).
 3. We become new creatures only in baptism (Gal. 3:27).

- B. Only then are we new creatures (II Cor. 5:17).

Conclusion:

1. GOD created Adam in His image (Gen. 1:26-27).
2. Because of sin, man lost this image of GOD.
3. The cross was the place for this sinful person (Eph. 4:22; Rom. 6:6).
 - a. Paul says he was "crucified" with Christ (Gal. 2:20).
 - b. We're to put on the "new man" in baptism (Co. 3:10; Gal. 3:27).
4. This implies putting on Christ (Rom. 13:10).
5. Only in Christ is one a NEW CREATURE (II Cor. 5:17).
6. II Cor. 3:18
7. Only in Christ can one regain the "image" of GOD, and become a new creature, created by GOD unto good works (Eph. 2:10).

<p>David Armstrong Class of 1983</p>
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Christian Responsibility

Matthew 25:14-30

The text for consideration is one of three illustrations given by Jesus to motivate the Christian to watchfulness. The judgment of the Jewish nation became a symbol of the final judgment (Matt. 23:32-24:44); and in light of that final judgment, it is necessary for the Christian to be “faithful and wise” (Matt. 24:45). Jesus then gave three illustrations to emphasize this point (Matt. 25).

Chapter twenty-five begins with the word “then”. This word is to call our attention to the fact that the time of judgment is come, and this judgment has to do with the “kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 25:1). If we are unprepared “then” woe is us.

The illustration of the talents should motivate us to fulfill our Christian duty, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of GOD...” (I Pet. 4:17). Let us consider:

I. THERE WAS A TACTFUL DISTRIBUTION

(V. 14,15).

- A. The distribution was based on an **association**.
 - 1. The master called “his own servants.”
 - 2. He did not call farmer Brown’s servants.

- B. The distribution was according to **abilities**.
 - 1. The master knew his servants and what each could do.
 - 2. He did not expect the same of all.

- C. Having distributed his goods, the master took his **absence**.
 - 1. These servants were left to use or abuse their master’s good.
 - 2. Would they be “faithful and wise” becomes the question?

II. NOTICE THE TYPES OF DEEDS (V. 16-18).

- A. There was an **application**.
 - 1. The five and two talent servants applied and multiplied their talents.
 - 2. The five talent servant had to overcome the temptation to do less.
 - 3. The two talent servant had to overcome the temptation of being jealous of the five talent servant.

- B. There was also **apprehension**.
 - 1. The one talent servant was afraid (v 25).
 - 2. Why didn't he express his apprehensions in the beginning?
 - 3. Why did he hide the talent? "Out of sight, out of mind."

III. "THEN" -- THE TIME OF DECISION (V. 19-25).

- A. They were **accountable**.
 - 1. The master came "and reckoneth with them" (v 19).
 - 2. Their accountability grew out of their association.

- B. Notice their **answers**.
 - 1. The five and two talent servants used 16 words in answering their master
 - 2. The one talent servant used nearly 50 words to give answer
 - 3. People will always look for excuses for not doing what they should have done.

- C. There was **approval**.
 - 1. The five and two talent servants received the master's blessings for their actions.
 - 2. Their faithful actions over small matters became the determining factor.

IV. THERE WAS A TERRIBLE DENUNCIATION (V. 26-30).

- A. The one talent servant was **admonished**.
 - 1. He is called “wicked and slothful.”
 - 2. He had not murdered anyone or committed some hideous crime, but he had failed to do what he should have done.
 - 3. Remember, this is an illustration of kingdom judgment (25:1).

- B. The one talent servant was **appointed**.
 - 1. “Cast ye the unprofitable servant...”
 - 2. Thus, the danger of not fulfilling our Christian responsibilities.

Conclusion:

- 1. We either use it or lose it.
- 2. If we apply it, we will multiply it.
- 3. Now, “Who is a faithful and wise servant..?”

Marc Lee Class of 1982

God Is On My Side

Romans 8:31-39

Introduction:

Do you believe in the power of GOD in your life? Are you convinced that you are able to make a difference in this world? Perhaps more importantly, are your children sure that they can stand up against the world? Can we stand up for Christ in this age of doubt and unbelief?

Christians are to be confident and sure in their ability to both properly represent Christ and to defend His teaching. However, many Christians suffer in heart and feel they cannot stand up and be counted when their faith or conviction is on the line. Many shrink back in the face of opposition. Many are like the unstable Israelites who backed down from the charges of the Philistine giant Goliath until the young man David provided a victory for them (I Sam. 17).

We need to believe in ourselves. We need to be able to “stand fast in the faith...be strong” (I Cor. 16:13). The Christian can and must be a powerful influence in this world; particularly among his peers.

The power and confidence lies not just in ourselves, but in the fact that GOD is with us. When we, and in particular when I, start believing that GOD is on my side then and only then can I stand against those who oppose the truth. The fact that GOD is on my side is found in Romans 8:31-39, and many proofs that He is with me are stated for us. Verse 31 states, “What shall we then say to these things? If GOD be for us, who can be against us?” The fact that GOD is on my side as a Christian and will assure victory is pronounced plainly for all to see. Following this verse is a list of the proof that GOD is on my side. Let’s consider the evidence of the support GOD has for us.

I. GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE HE SPARED NOT HIS SON FOR ME (8:32).

- A. When the time was right GOD sent His Son to help. His son came for my benefit.
- B. GOD cared enough to redeem me when I was a sinner (Rom. 5:8).

II. GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE HE FREELY GIVES ME ALL THINGS (8:32).

- A. Those “in Christ” have been given what they need (Eph. 1:3).

- B. Everything we need to help us, GOD has supplied.
 - 1. Prayer.
 - 2. Fellowship
 - 3. Strength.
 - 4. Worship together
 - 5. His Word.
 - 6. Hope.
 - 7. Faith.
 - 8. Courage.

III. GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE NO ONE CAN CONDEMN ME (8:33-34).

- A. How do we react when people make fun of us? What about those who jeer and say mean things?
 - 1. These do not charge you before GOD.
 - 2. See Luke 6:26.
 - 3. Matt. 5:11.

- B. When you are ridiculed because you are a Christian, that’s when you can be strong.
 - 1. Say to yourself “GOD is on my side”.
 - 2. “I can make a difference.”

IV. GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE I AM GOD’S ELECT (8:33).

- A. We can take strength in the fact that we are special to GOD.
 - 1. We are called a chosen generation.
 - 2. We are the “called out”; His church.

- B. Thus, I do not fear others.

V. GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE NO ONE CAN SEPARATE ME FROM GOD (8:35-36,38-39).

- A. Eph. 6:10

1. People can hurt us, say things, and even take away our friends, but they cannot take us away from GOD.
 2. Only we can make that separation take place.
- B. Often kids in school allow their peers to take control of their lives and lead them away from GOD.
1. We must remember that GOD pulls for us.
 2. Others may pull against me.
 3. But, not until I say yes to others and no to GOD will I lose contact with Him.

VI. FINALLY, GOD IS ON MY SIDE BECAUSE HE HAS MADE ME A CONQUERER (8:37).

- A. Christians are conquerors "in Christ".
1. When Christ is with us we are able to gain victory.
 2. We can take what others dish out, be strong.
 3. I Cor. 15:57
- B. As conquerors we should be an influence upon others rather than being influenced for evil.
1. Knowing GOD is with me I should win souls.
 2. Knowing GOD is on my side I can show others a better way of living.
 3. I can conquer souls for Him, by Him, and through His help.

Conclusion:

These are proofs that GOD is on my side. These should help us to gain strength and confidence as we face difficult circumstances in life and as people seek to tear down our faith in GOD. Knowing that GOD is there and that He is going to be my helper, I then trust in His strength to overcome the world and not be overcome.

<p>William Harrison Class of 1983</p>

What Kind Of Music Does God Want?

Introduction:

1. We have a desire to worship.
2. Man will worship something.
 - a. Money
 - b. Jobs, etc.
3. All of us should worship GOD (John 4:24).
 - a. John 17:17
 - b. John 8:32

I. GOD HAS ALWAYS GIVEN COMMANDMENTS.

- A. Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-16).
- B. Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1-8).
- C. Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2).
- D. Moses and Water from Rock (Num. 20:7-13).
- E. Noah to build ark (Gen. 6).

II. WE DO NOT HAVE THE SAME COMMANDMENTS TODAY.

- A. We can eat any fruit we want.
- B. We do not have to offer animal sacrifices.
- C. We do not have to light an altar.
- D. We do not have to speak to a rock to get water.
- E. We do not have to build an ark to be saved.
- F. We do have commands to obey.

- a. Rom. 15:9
- b. Eph. 5:19
- c. Col. 3:16
- d. Heb. 2:12; 13:15,16
- e. James 5:13

III. REASONS WHY PEOPLE USE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

- A. "I like it".
 - 1. Notice, they didn't say "Because it pleases GOD".
 - 2. What if I like pool, ping-pong, golf, etc.?
 - 3. Can we use peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on the Lord's Table just because "I like it?"
 - 4. Rom. 15:3

- B. "They had instrumental music in the Old Testament."
 - 1. We are not under the Old Testament law (Col. 2:14-16; Gal. 5:4).
 - 2. They had many wives under the Old Testament law. Can we have many today?
 - 3. They offered animal sacrifices. Are we to do that today?
 - 4. They went to Jerusalem three times a year to worship. Are we to do that today?
 - 5. Why say they had it under the Old Testament law? Because they know they cannot find it taught in the New Testament.

- C. They have instrumental music in heaven.
 - 1. Notice again they didn't say, "in the worship services of the church", but in "heaven".
 - 2. Passages prove too much.
 - a. Infants in heaven.
 - b. No marriage in heaven.
 - c. What is the Issue?

RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO BELIEVED INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TO BE WRONG

Various religious leaders have written and spoken with great unanimity of thought on the music question. We not introduce some for your consideration:

1. **John Calvin**, outstanding as one of the founders of the Presbyterian church: "*Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of GOD would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews.*" — John Calvin's Commentary, thirty-third Psalm.

2. **Adam Clarke**, the greatest commentator of all time among the Methodists: "*Music as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of GOD I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music, and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the author of christianity.*" — Clarke's commentary, Vol. IV., p. 686.

3. **John Wesley**, the reputed founder of the Methodist church, is quoted by Adam Clarke to have said: "*I have no objection to instruments of music, in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.*" — Clarke's Commentary, Vol. IV., p. 686.

4. **Martin Luther**. A distinguished reformer, "*Called the organ an ensign of Baal*" — McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia, Music, Vol. VI., p. 762.

5. **John Knox**, Scottish reformer, "*Called the organ a 'kist' (Chest) of whistles.*" — McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia, Music, Vol. VI., p. 762.

6. **Charles H. Spurgeon**, recognized as the greatest Baptist Preacher that ever lived, preached for twenty years to thousands of people weekly in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle, London, England, did not have musical instruments in the worship. — M. C. Kurfree, Instrumental Music in the Worship, p. 196.

7. **Conybeare and Howson**, famous scholars of the church of England, in commentary on Eph. 5:19, say, "*Make melody with music of your hearts, to the Lord....let your songs be, not the drinking songs of the heathen feasts, but Psalms and Hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart.*" — Life and Epistles of St. Paul, Vol. II, p. 408.

The above religious leaders, not one of whom was a member of the Church of Christ, have been quoted not for the purpose of proving instrumental music in the worship wrong — the fact that Christ left it out proves that — but to show that they have been rejected by many religious leaders of the world. If no

one taught instrumental music in the worship is wrong, it would not change the New Testament teaching; but it is evident that others have occupied the same position and that we do not stand here alone by any means. Historians, encyclopedists and religious leaders are agreed that the music characteristic of the New Testament is the music characteristic of the Churches of Christ.

Wesley Simons
Class of 1972

The Gospel Plan of Salvation

Romans 1:16-17

Introduction:

1. GOD'S remedy for the Sin Problem of the world.
 - a. Sin entered the world, Genesis 3.
 - b. Man's spiritual condition in sin - (Isaiah 59:1,2; Romans 5:12; 6:23; James 1:13-15).
 - c. GOD, out of His love for man, devised a plan whereby man could be saved (Genesis 3:15; John 3:16).
2. There is a system, plan or way of salvation.
 - a. Acts 16:16,17 - ("...way of salvation").
 - b. Hebrews 10:19,20 - (" new and living way...")
 - c. Christ is the very center of this "new and living way".
 - (1) The central theme of the Bible is the glorious "plan of salvation" for lost souls. And the central personality of the Bible is Christ the Son of the Living GOD (Matthew 16:16; John 14:6; Hebrews 5:8,9; 12:1,2).
 - (2) Christ is the center of the Plan of Salvation which is revealed to us in the Gospel.
 - d. Everyone saved this side of the cross will be saved by that One Plan.

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION:

- A. The Gospel Plan of Salvation developed over a period of many centuries until it culminated in the coming of Christ, His life, death, burial,

resurrection, ascension, and the establishment of His Church (Gal. 4:4; I Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 1,2).

B. Stages in the Developing of the Plan:

1. **In Purpose:** GOD purposed the plan of salvation for man from the “foundation of the world”.
 - a. GOD purposed and planned four things from the foundation of the world; all of which are a part of GOD'S Plan of Salvation for man.
 - (1) Salvation of man IN CHRIST (Eph 1:4).
 - (2) Death of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-20).
 - (3) The Church (Eph. 3:8-11).
 - (4) Church to make known the manifold wisdom of GOD (Eph. 3).
 - b. GOD purposed to save man IN CHRIST. (Eph. 1:4). But to be IN CHRIST is to be in HIS BODY which is the CHURCH, (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18); thus, GOD purposed the CHURCH, (Eph. 3:8-11); but, before man could be saved, Christ had to die, therefore GOD purposed the DEATH OF CHRIST (I Pet.1:19-20). And, He purposed that the CHURCH would make known GOD'S PLAN (Eph. 3).
2. **In Promise:** (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3; Gal. 3:8).
3. **In Prophecy:** (I Pet. 1:10). All the prophecies concerning Christ and the Church, referred to the Gospel Plan of Salvation.
4. **In Preparation:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John records the personal ministries of both John and Jesus which involved the final preparation for the Gospel Plan of Salvation which was purposed, promised, and prophesied (Mark 1:1f)
 - a. After the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and just before His ascension, Jesus announced the Gospel Plan of Salvation (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 15:15-16; Luke 24:46-47).

- b. After the death of Christ, the plan was complete, "...it is finished" (John 19:30)
- 5. **In Perfection:**
 - a. 10 days after the ascension of Christ the Gospel Plan of Salvation that had been developed over the centuries from the foundation of the world, was executed for the first time.
 - b. Acts 2:1-13: Coming of Holy Spirit (Cf. Mark 9:1; Acts 1:1-8).
 - c. Acts 2:14-47: Peter preached the **facts**, **commands**, and related the **promises** of the Gospel.

II. THE SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION:

- A. There has been so much error taught with reference to how we are saved, that the majority of people in the religious world are confused and their minds have been blinded to the simplicity of GOD'S Plan of Salvation for man (II Cor. 11:3).
- B. The Gospel Plan of Salvation is a simple plan.
 - 1. It contains **FACTS** that must be believed: the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4).
 - 2. It contains **COMMANDS** that must be obeyed.
 - a. **BELIEVE** (Heb. 11:6; John 20:30-31; Rom. 10:17).
 - b. **REPENT** (Luke 13:3; Acts. 17:30-31).
 - c. **CONFESS CHRIST** (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10).
 - d. **BE BAPTIZED** (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
 - (1) GOD purposed to save man **IN CHRIST** (Eph. 1:4).
 - (2) **BAPTISM** is the only way to get **INTO CHRIST**. (Rom. 6:1-5; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26-27).

- e. **FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH** (Rev. 2:10).
3. Upon **BELIEVING THE FACTS** and **OBEYING THE COMMANDS** of the **GOSPEL**, one **RECEIVES THE PROMISES** of the **GOSPEL**.

C. The reason many misunderstand the simple plan of salvation is that they fail to study the **sum of the Scriptures**.

1. When salvation is promised or affirmed on certain conditions, though it may depend upon more conditions than those named, it can never depend upon less!
2. Therefore, when salvation is offered on any one condition, then that condition is implied in every other place where salvation is offered, whether it is specifically named or not.

D. **THE TWO SIDES TO SALVATION:** The simplicity of the Gospel Plan of salvation is appreciated more when we understand the two sides to salvation—**THE DIVINE** and **THE HUMAN**. There are two principles of operation--**GRACE** and **FAITH**. (Eph. 2:8-10).

1. **ON THE DIVINE SIDE, GRACE** performed the necessary conditions to make salvation available to **EVERY MAN**.(Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 2:9).
2. **ON THE HUMAN SIDE, FAITH** must **perform the specified conditions to enable** us to appropriate the salvation provided by the grace of **GOD**.
3. Therefore, we are saved by **grace through faith which worketh by love**. (Eph. 2:8-10; Gal. 5:6).

III. NEW TESTAMENT ILLUSTRATIONS OF SALVATION SHOWING BOTH THE DIVINE AND HUMAN SIDES TO SALVATION:

A. JUSTIFICATION An illustration drawn from the Law Courts.

1. Picture the sinner before GOD his judge, as a guilty, condemned lawbreaker. He can only look forward to Hell.
2. But when all hope is gone, Christ the innocent One, steps forward to pay the penalty of death for the sinner—GRACE (Rom. 5:6-9).
3. The condemned sinner is **“justified by faith”** in his Savior (Rom. 5:1). A faith that works by love (Gal. 5:6).
4. He is a sinner but GOD now treats him as though he were innocent.

B. RECONCILIATION - An illustration drawn from the social realm, having to do with FRIENDSHIP.

1. Man is pictured as an enemy of GOD (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21).
2. GOD through Christ makes reconciliation to Him possible (Col. 1:19-22).
3. But the sinner must go to the right place, the **“ONE BODY”** (Eph. 1:4, 22-23; 2:16).

C. REMISSION - An illustration from the business world.

1. The sinner is pictured as standing before GOD with an impossible debt to pay - SIN! (Matt. 18:23-27).
2. Christ with His blood paid the debt in full. GOD calls it remission of sins (Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:22; 10:4).
3. But an obedient faith is necessary to the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

D. REDEMPTION - An illustration of bondage or slavery.

1. Sinner is pictured as a slave who needs to be set free (Rom. 6:16; John 8:34). The only way for us to be freed is for someone to buy us and set us free.

2. GOD through Christ redeemed us (I Cor. 6:20; I Pet. 1:18-20).
3. But redemption is IN CHRIST (Eph. 1:3,7). Therefore, one must get INTO CHRIST to be redeemed (Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:26,27; Acts 20:28).
4. Thus, only those who are properly baptized into Christ are redeemed from the bondage of sin by His precious blood.

Conclusion:

1. GOD, Christ, and the Holy Spirit have performed every condition necessary on the **DIVINE SIDE** for the salvation of ALL. GOD'S plan is simple and sufficient (Rom. 1:16; James 1:21; Acts 20:32).
2. If you are lost, it is because you have not exercised an **obedient faith**, that you might be **Justified, Reconciled, Redeemed** through the remission of your sins by the **blood of Christ**.
 1. You must first recognize you are lost and desire to be saved.
 2. You must **BELIEVE THE FACTS (Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ)** of the GOSPEL. (I Cor. 15:1-4).
 3. You must **OBEY THE COMMANDS** of the GOSPEL, (**Believe, Repent, Confess Christ, Be Baptized**).
 4. You must do it while you have opportunity (II Cor. 6:2).
 5. Then, remain faithful through death (Rev. 2:10).

Jimmy Bates
Class of 1975

The Old Paths

Jeremiah 6:16

Introduction:

GOD exhorted His people through the prophet Jeremiah. They had ceased to walk in the good way, which was in the old paths. GOD had given them. Failing to return to the old paths, Jeremiah warned, would lead to their meeting the same fate as the northern kingdom, captivity.

The principle embodied in Jeremiah's exhortation applies to our lives today (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11).

I. THUS SAITH THE LORD.

A. It Was The Lord Speaking.

1. When the Lord speaks we must listen. Jeremiah spoke to descendents of those GOD spoke to through Moses.
2. Must listen as Jews agreed to do at Mt. Sinai (Exod. 19:3-8).
3. Just before Moses' death, GOD said: Joshua 1:7,8.
4. Joshua spoke these words to the people and they answered: Joshua 1:16.
5. We must listen as they did, but we must also teach the next generation (Judges 2:10).
6. Psm. 66:16.
7. Eccl. 2:13.
8. Will we listen? Will we agree? Will we teach the next generation? We must do a better job than Joshua's generation or we will see them going astray, maybe even leaving the old paths as did the generation of Jeremiah.

B. The Lord Speaks Again.

1. But again GOD spoke to His people through Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34).
2. The principles of the old ways would be embodied in the new covenant. The examples of those who failed to walk in the old paths of the old covenant are warnings to us to walk in the old paths of the new covenant.

II. THE WAYS COMMANDED BY GOD.

A. Stand In The Ways.

1. For Israel, ways commanded through Moses.
2. For us today, ways commanded by Christ (Deut. 18:18-19; Heb. 1:1,2a).
3. Jesus is The Way (John 14:6).
4. The way of Jesus is the way of GOD (John 17:6-8).
5. His is the strait way, the narrow way (Matt. 7:13).
6. A new and living way (Heb. 10:19,20).
7. As the Jews must stand in the ways of God as exhorted by Jeremiah, we must stand in the way of Christ.

B. See And Ask.

1. In the old paths we must see and ask (Jer. 6:16).
2. Solomon asked for wisdom (I Kings 3:9; James 1:5).
3. Cornelius asked for the way of GOD (Acts 10).
4. Are you asking for the way of GOD to salvation as did Cornelius?
5. Christian are you asking for GOD'S way as did Solomon - in your attitude toward the word, worship, lost souls? In your love for one another? Concerning your influence, your zeal? Are you a disciple indeed (John 8:31)?

C. Ask For The Old Paths.

1. The good way is in the old paths (Jer. 6:16).
2. Old paths today lead us back to Pentecost (Acts 2:28a).
3. New way of life begun thru belief, repentance and immersion (Acts 2:38). Reconciliation to GOD (Rom 5:10), and addition to family of GOD (Acts 2:47).

D. And Walk Therein.

1. Rom. 6:4b.
2. Acts 2:42.
3. A walk of faith (2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17).
4. A walk according to the spirit, not flesh (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:1).
5. A walk worthy of the calling (Eph. 4:1).

Conclusion:

1. Blessings Of The Old Paths.
 1. Rest for the Soul (Matt. 11:28).
 2. Happiness (Acts 2:46).
 3. Hope of heaven (I Peter 1:3,4).
2. Consequences Of Not Walking In Old Paths.
 1. Jews said, we will not walk therein (Jer. 6:16).
 2. Lost blessing of Canaan, taken captive to Babylon.
 3. Today, can lose rest for soul, happiness, home in heaven.
3. Listen as GOD Speaks. Ask for His ways, the old paths. Obey His ways and walk in His paths.

Ed Allard, Jr.
Class of 1972

Jonah - The Unwilling Missionary

2 Kings 14:23-27

Introduction:

1. The reign of Jeroboam II in the eighth century B.C. was the "Golden Age" of Israel.
 - a. Jeroboam extended the borders of his kingdom and subdued his enemies.
 - b. The Israelites were proud, patriotic, and prosperous.

2. Assyria, the great world power of the day, threatened Israel's security.
 - a. Israel had to pay tribute to Assyria or perish.
 - b. Ninevah, Assyria's captial, was a great and wicked city.
 - (1) Ninevah was an ancient city (Gen. 10:8-11).
 - (2) She had a populaton of 600,000.
 - (3) Her walls were 100 feet high and 60 miles around.
 - c. Israel feared and hated the power of Assyria.

3. God sent Jonah to warn Ninevah of her imminent doom for her great wickedness.
 - a. Jonah was a prophet from Gathhepher (II Kings 14:25).
 - b. He recoiled at the thought of preaching to Israel's hated enemy.

I. JONAH RUNS AWAY FROM GOD. (Chapter 1)

- A. He took a boat to Tarshish.
 1. Tarshish was a Phoenician colony in Spain-2,000 miles away.
 2. It is utterly impossible to escape from GOD (Psm. 139:7-10).

- a. Some today think their sins are hidden from GOD.
 - b. All will be laid bare at the judgment. (Rom. 2:16).
- B. He went to sleep.
- 1. His conscience also was asleep.
 - 2. He slept soundly, not aware of danger.
- C. GOD sent a storm and the ship was nearly broken.
- 1. One usually runs into a storm when he tries to run away from GOD.
 - 2. The sailors all prayed to their gods.
 - 3. At that moment Jonah had no GOD.
 - 4. Jonah admits he is responsible for the storm and is cast overboard.
- D. He was swallowed up by a great fish prepared by Jehovah.
- 1. Many critics have ridiculed this "fish story," saying it is impossible.
 - 2. They forget the fish was "prepared by Jehovah."
 - 3. In the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. is a whale captured near Knight's Key, Florida in 1912.
 - a. It is 45 feet long.
 - b. It weighs 30,000 pounds.
 - c. Its mouth is 38 inches wide.
 - d. A 1,500 lb. blackfish was found in its stomach.
 - 4. In 1891 James Bartley was swallowed by a whale. Princeton Theo. Review.
 - 5. Jesus confirms this account, Matt. 12:40.

II. JONAH RUNS TO GOD. (Chapter 2)

- A. In the hour of trouble, Jonah turns to GOD.
 - 1. Sometimes it takes tragedy to bring us to our knees in prayer.
 - 2. Jonah repented (2:9).
- B. The whale vomitted Jonah out upon the land.

III. JONAH RUNS WITH GOD. (Chapter 3)

- A. GOD again charged Jonah to go preach to Ninevah.
 - 1. He told him, "Preach the preaching that I bid thee."
 - 2. Every preacher today must preach the preaching GOD bids us in His Word (II Tim. 4:2).

- B. Jonah was a powerful preacher.
 - 1. He proclaimed, "Yet 40 days and Ninevah will be overthrown." (3:4).
 - 2. GOD gave Ninevah time to repent (II Pet. 3:9).
 - 3. The whole city repented (cf. Luke 11:32).
 - 4. GOD will forgive if men truly turn to him in repentance. (3:10).

IV. JONAH RUNS AHEAD OF GOD. (Chapter 4)

- A. Jonah was angry when he saw that GOD did not destroy Ninevah.
 - 1. He is probably the only preacher in history who did not want a response.
 - 2. Jonah feared GOD'S mercy (4:2).
 - a. He knew GOD would spare Ninevah if she repented (Jer. 18:7-10).
 - b. He did not want Ninevah spared.

- B. GOD prepared a gourd to shade Jonah from the sun (4:6).
 - 1. Jonah was exceedingly thankful for the gourd.
 - 2. That night GOD prepared a worm which smote the gourd.
 - 3. Jonah was angry and wanted to die.

- C. GOD taught Jonah a lesson.
 - 1. Jonah was concerned about the gourd.
 - 2. GOD was concerned about the city.
 - a. 120,000 persons under the age of accountability lived there.
 - b. GOD was also concerned for the many cattle in Ninevah.

Conclusion:

1. The great lesson of Jonah is that GOD loves all men (John 3:16; I Timothy 2:4).
2. GOD desires all men to be saved.
 - a. It is our responsibility to go teach them (Mark 15:15; II Timothy 2:2).
 - b. Some Christians today are Jonahs.
 1. They do not want to teach the neighbor across the street.
 2. They are unconcerned about the souls in foreign lands.
3. GOD wants you and them to be saved. (Mark 16:16).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SERMON ON JONAH

In February 1891, the whaling ship, "Star of the East" was in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands and the lookout sighted a large sperm whale three miles away. Two boats were launched and in a short time one of the harpooners was able to spear the fish. The second boat attacked the whale but was upset by a lash of its tail and the men thrown into the sea, one man being drowned, and another, James Bartley, having disappeared, could not be found. The whale was killed and, in a few hours was lying by the ship's side, and the crew was busy with axes and spades removing the blubber. They worked all day and part of the night. Next morning they attached some tackle to the stomach which was hoisted to the deck. The sailors were startled by something in it which gave spasmodic signs of life, and inside was found the missing sailor, doubled and unconscious. He was laid on the deck and treated to a bath of sea water which soon revived him.... He remained two weeks a raving lunatic.... At the end of the third week, he had entirely recovered from the shock and resumed his duties.

NOW LET HIM COMMENT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF LIVING IN SUCH SURROUNDINGS

Bartley affirms that he would probably have lived inside his house of flesh until he starved, for he lost his sense through fright and not from the lack of air. He remembers the sensation

of being thrown out of the boat into the sea.... He was then encompassed by a great darkness and he felt he was slipping along a smooth passage of some sort that seemed to move and carry him forward. The sensation lasted for but a short time and then he realized he had more room. He felt about him and his hands came in contact with a yielding, slimy substance that seemed to shrink from his touch. It finally dawned upon him that he had been swallowed by a whale....he could easily breathe, but the heat was terrible. It was not of a scorching, stifling nature, but it seemed to open the pores of his skin and draw out his vitality.... His skin, where it was exposed to the action of the gastric juice...face, neck, and hands, was bleached to a deadly whiteness and took on the appearance of parchment...(and) never recovered its natural appearance... (though otherwise) his health did not seem affected by his terrible experience.

Rod Rutherford Class of 1974

The Whole Duty Of Man

Ecclesiastes 12:12-14

Introduction:

1. Happiness is a much sought after commodity!
2. Mankind flecks to what he thinks will make him happy.
3. Yet in such a search, true happiness is rarely found.
4. Why? Looking in the wrong places. Leaving GOD out!
5. Thus we turn to the book of Ecclesiastes. In it:
 - a. Solomon describes a philosophical search for the meaning of life by relating actual life experiences.
 - b. He shows the comparative valuelessness of:
 - (1) Worldly wisdom.
 - (2) Wealth.
 - (3) Pleasure.
 - (4) Power.
 - c. Thus, he shows, that life apart from GOD can have no real meaning!
6. His conclusion: Eccl. 12:13.
7. All else is vanity: (Used 37 times.)
 - a. Breath or vapor (James 4:14).
 - b. This echos the futility of man's method of satisfying himself!!! Jer. 10:23

I. HAPPINESS IS NOT DERIVED FROM/IN WORLDLY WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE!

- A. Man's knowledge is limited.
 1. Cannot continue forever on earth (v. 4).
 2. No control—limited and dependent on elements of nature, regardless of our wisdom (vs. 5-7).
 3. Man cannot create anything new—can only

be transformers of that which is already here (v.9).

- B. Yet, man seeks it, and finds grief (1:12-18).
 - 1. With all of man's earthly wisdom, wrongs cannot be made right and needs continue to grow (v. 15).
 - 2. As man's wisdom grows—so does his sorrow (v. 18), WHY?
 - a. The more knowledge and insight into life, the more dissatisfaction he has because of his imperfections.
 - b. "...Behold I thought..." (Naaman, II Kings 5:11).
- C. Indeed, those wise of the world will receive the same fate as the fools of the world (2:12-17).
- D. Therefore, to have a better fate, don't depend on worldly wisdom, but rather, "Fear GOD, and keep His commandments:".

II. HAPPINESS IS NOT DERIVED FROM/IN MATERIAL WEALTH (2:4-11)!

- A. Often, "all" of man is put into the struggle for "a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow".
 - 1. Yet, when he gets it, he is not satisfied (5:10).
 - 2. Instead of greater happiness, he has less than the common laborer (5:11-13).
- B. Why does one with wealth fail to sleep?
 - 1. He has placed his "happiness" upon things.
 - 2. He is afraid others may devour them (6:1-2; Luke 12:19-20).
 - 3. He is afraid of what will happen to them when he does leave them (2:18-19).
- C. Let us realize that happiness is not found in physical treasures, but rather in spiritual treasures (Matt. 6:19-20).

III. HAPPINESS IS NOT DERIVED FROM/IN REVELRY, PLEASURE!

- A. Often we hear the phrase “let’s party”, WHY?
 - 1. Seeking happiness!
 - 2. Not looking to GOD, they invent unto themselves situations of revelry (7:29; Prov. 6:16-18).
 - 3. Yet thousands have tarnished their lives forever and still happiness has alluded them (7:2-6).
 - 4. Many even encourage our young to “sow wild oats”—which is the same as saying, “go out and party” (11:9).

- B. Yet, after all of this, there are headaches, sorrow, broken lives and tarnished names!
 - 1. “A good name is better than precious ointment;...” (7:1a)
 - 2. After the name is tarnished, it will be hard to overcome the mistakes.

- C. Heed therefore the wisdom of Eccl. 11:10-12.

- D. If you want happiness, stay away from such “inventions” of revelry; “Fear GOD, and keep His commandments:...”, instead!

- E. All else is vanity—it will pass as a vapor—and leave no happiness!!!

IV. HAPPINESS DOES NOT COME FROM/IN MAN’S POWER!

- A. There is not a crime that mankind will not commit to gain power.
 - 1. Drugs, murder, theft, arson, etc.
 - 2. People have always been oppressed by “power seekers” (4:1; 5:8).

- B. Those who seek and obtain such power will not find happiness!

1. Solomon - on his throne for forty years; riches and power untold - yet he was not happy. He saw that all would soon vanish, and thus was vanity!
2. Even the powerful will one day be overcome by the unseen foe (8:8-10,12-13).

Conclusion:

1. Who then is it that will find true happiness?
2. 5:1-2,4-5, 6a,7b.
3. Eccl. 12:13-14.
4. Jesus invites us to do this very thing today!
 - a. Matt. 11:28-30
 - b. Rev. 3:20-21
5. Accept His invitation while there is still hope and opportunity!
 - a. Ecc. 9:4,10
 - b. Plan of salvation.
6. Don't put it off - you don't know when the opportunities will cease!!! (9:11-12).

Eugene Jenkins Class of 1980

What Is The Church Of Christ?

Matthew 16:18

Introduction:

1. Heaven's most precious and treasured jewel was given to purchase earth's greatest institution. Jesus is the jewel, and the church is the institution (II Cor. 8:9; Acts 20:28). By definition, the church is the "*ekklesia*" meaning "*the called out.*" The church consists of those who have been called out of the world by faith in and obedience to the gospel (Heb. 5:8-9; II Thess. 1:7-9). In the Bible, the church is called:
 - a. "*the church of GOD*" (I Cor. 1:2)
 - b. "*the body of Christ*" (Eph. 4:12)
 - c. "*the church of the living GOD*" (I Tim. 2:15)
 - d. "*the churches of Christ*" (Rom. 16:16)
 - e. "*the church of the firstborn*" (Heb. 12:23)
 - f. "*the church of the Lord*" (Acts 20:28)
2. The church for which Jesus died differs from:
 - a. The world (John 17:16)
 - b. Judaism (Heb. 9:1, 10)
 - c. Catholicism (II Thess. 2:3-4)
 - d. Protestantism (I Peter 4:11)
 - e. Christian church (Matt. 28:18 authority)
3. The church is the manifold wisdom of GOD made manifest (Eph. 3:10), and was the eternal purpose of GOD (Eph. 3:11). The Bible describes the church in different ways when dealing with its different aspects. Consider these five designations the Bible gives the Church of Christ.

I. THE CHURCH IS A KINGDOM FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ITS GOVERNMENT.

- A. There are four essential elements of a kingdom:
 1. A King — Jesus (Acts 2:32-34; I Tim. 6:14-15).

2. Law — Gospel (James 1:25).
3. Territory — World (Mark 16:15-16).
4. Subjects — Christians (Col. 1:13-14).

B. The church and the kingdom are the same.

1. Matt. 16:18-19 (cf. Acts 2 fulfilled).
2. Luke 22:29-30, The Lord's Supper was to be in the kingdom (cf. I Cor. 10:21).
3. Col. 1:12-14.
4. Rev. 1:6 KJV & ASV (cf. I Peter 2:5).
5. Rev. 5:9-10 (cf. Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-26).

C. Applications.

1. This is the basic misunderstanding of premillennialism.
2. As citizens of His kingdom, we must be faithful servants of His law (I Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; James 1:25; 2:8).

II. THE CHURCH IS A FAMILY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF FELLOWSHIP.

A. Heb. 3:6; I Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:19.

B. Terms of entrance into this family.

1. Born again (Gal. 3:26-27; John 3:1-5).
2. Adopted (Rom. 9:4; Eph. 1:5).

C. GOD is a loving Father over His house.

1. Matt. 7:9-11, Provides good gifts.
2. Heb. 12:7-8, Chastens us.

D. Jesus is our elder brother (Rom. 8:17; Heb. 2:10-13), and from Him we learn real love which we are to imitate (I John 3:16-17).

1. Edifying one another (Rom. 14:19).
2. Admonishing one another (Rom. 15:14).
3. Serving one another (Gal. 5:13).
4. Comforting one another (I Thess. 4:18).
5. Bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2).
6. Confessing sins and praying for one another (James 5:16).

7. Devoted to one another (Rom. 12:5).

E. As His children we become heirs of GOD (Rom. 8:16-17).

F. I John 3:1.

III. THE CHURCH IS A BODY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF UNITY.

A. There is only one body or church.

1. Eph. 4:4-5; 1:22-23; Col. 1:18
2. I Cor. 12:20
3. Psm. 127:1
4. John 10:16

B. Division is sinful (John 17:20-21).

IV. THE CHURCH IS A VINEYARD FROM THE STANDPOINT OF WORK.

A. Matthew 20:1

B. We must be actively engaged in the Lord's work (I Cor. 15:58).

V. THE CHURCH IS AN ARMY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF MILITANCY.

A. I Tim. 1:18; 6:12; II Tim. 2:1-4.

B. Similarities between soldiers of the state and soldiers of the Savior.

1. Entrance requirements (Five steps) (II Tim. 2:4).
2. Importance of discipline (Heb. 12:5-11).
3. Commander-in-chief (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 2:10).
4. The enemy (Eph. 6:11-12).
5. Equipment (Eph. 6:13-17).
6. Necessity of courage (Josh. 1:5; Eph. 6:10).

C. Song: "*Onward Christian Soldiers.*"

Conclusion:

1. What is the church of Christ?
2. Summary
3. Appeal: Don't you want to be a part of the magnificent church of Christ?

Allen Webster
Class of 1986

The Church of Christ

Introduction:

1. Today's world lends many and varied views with regard to the Church of our dear Lord!
 - a. Some view it as a kind of "take it or leave it" institution.
 - b. Some view it as being non-associated with man and his salvation whatsoever!
 - c. Many in the religious world see the church as a "mere after thought" in God's mind; a substitute for the kingdom when Christ was rejected by the Jews!
2. To maintain these and such like views is not of GOD; but is of the Devil Himself!

I. GOD PURPOSED THE CHURCH BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN

- A. Ephesians 3:10-11; Church was no "after-thought" or "mere substitute", rather was purposefully planned!
 1. Before Pentecost...all things spoken of it were "future"!
 2. After Pentecost (Acts 2)...all things spoken concerning the church indicated it in "reality"!
- B. Church as the world has reacted!
 1. Jesus promised to build His church (Matthew 16:18-19)!
 2. World (generally speaking) has scoffed at the Church and ridiculed it and often made havoc of it (case of Paul, Acts 8:3).
- C. Kingdom and church.
 1. These terms are sometimes used interchangeable in so much as they both refer

- to the same institution!
2. The Kingdom (Matthew 16:19), refers to the governing concept of the church:
 - a. Christ is “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” (I Tim. 6:15).
 - b. Yet, His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36).
 3. The church, or kingdom, we are speaking about constitutes a spiritual body (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23)!

II. WHEN AND WHERE ESTABLISHED

- A. Prophecy Relating To The Church
 1. Was to come to pass in the “last days” (Isaiah 2:2-3)!
 - a. Joel also mentions the “last days” in relationship to the Holy Spirit being poured out (Joel 2:28-29).
 - b. Peter, on Pentecost (Acts 2:16,17), quotes Joel 2 and applies it as the “last days.”
 2. Daniel Prophesied of this Kingdom (Dan 2).
 - a. Image—Head of Gold: Nebuchadnezzar/Babylon!
 - b. Image—Breast and Arms of Silver: Medes/Persian!
 - c. Image—Belly and Thighs of Brass: Kingdom of Alexander Great!
 - d. Image—Legs of Iron; feet part iron and clay: Rome ruled by the Ceaser’s
 - e. It was in this time frame that The kingdom was to be set up by God, and would last forever (Dan. 2:44)!
 3. Daniel and the prophecy concerning the “Ancient of Days” who was Jesus: he also mentions his kingdom (Dan. 7:13-14).
 4. Isaiah and Micah (Isaiah 2:1-3 and Micah 4:1-3).
 - a. Kingdom was to be established in the Mountain.

- b. Word of Lord was to Go forth from Jerusalem.
 - c. All nations would flow unto it.
 - d. We've already noticed that such was to be "in the last days."
- B. The Kingdom Said To Be At Hand:
- 1. John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2), "...for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 2. Jesus later preached it "at hand"; (Matthew 4:17).
 - 3. The limited commission; the disciples taught it "at hand" or "nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9).
- C. Disciples told to pray for it (Matthew 6:9ff).
- D. In 32 A.D., Jesus said the Kingdom would come in the lifetime of some who stood there and it would come with power (Mark9:1).
- E. Luke 22:18; 19:11 (A.D. 33, yet before Pentecost) the kindgom is spoken of as yet "future"!
- F. In A.D. 33, the disciples were told to wait for the kingdom (thus still future Mark 15:43; Acts 1:6)!

III. THE KINGDOM COMES

(Event of Pentecost, Acts 2)

- A. Acts 1:1 identifies it as "Pentecost"!
- B. The place was at Jerusalem (Acts 1:4; 2:5).
- C. The time was the "last days" (Acts 2:16,17).
- D. Such was in the days of the Roman Kings according to Daniel's prophesy (Dan. 2:44- Some 633 years before hand)!

- E. Christ was exalted as per Daniel's prophesy (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 2:36).
- F. Such was during the lifetime of some that stood and heard Jesus say the Kingdom was to come in their lifetime (Mark 9:1).
- G. This was when the power came; the Holy Spirit came; thus the Kingdom came (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4).

IV. KINGDOM SPOKEN OF AS IN EXISTENCE AFTER PENTECOST (Acts 2).

- A. A.D. 33, the church is in existence (Acts 5:11; 2:47).
- B. A.D. 40, the church is persecuted (Acts 8:1).
- C. A.D. 45, Luke says the church was actively involved in the work of Jesus Christ (Acts 13:1-3).
- D. A.D. 65, Paul in writing to Timothy shows the church is in existence.
- E. A.D., 96, John was in the Kingdom with fellow saints (Rev.1:9).
- F. Therefore, one sees the reality of the Kingdom and its being in existence at and after the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

V. Conclusion:

1. The Church of Christ is a precious institution (none on earth can compare).
2. It was in the eternal mind, plan and purpose of God (Eph. 3).
3. It is in this institution that you and I (all

men) are to bring Glory unto GOD by our lives (Eph...3:21).

4. If you would seek to gain GOD'S favor and approval for your life, then you must "enter into the kingdom!"
 - a. This is accomplished by the "new birth" (John 3:3-5).
 - b. Such involves your obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ (Heb. 5:8-9; Rom. 1:16; Gal. 3:26-27).
5. You can answer the Call of God and enter in, even now!

<p>Walley Kirby Class of 1978</p>

The Love Of God As Seen In The Church

Introduction:

1. The love of GOD is seen from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22.
2. The love of GOD is manifested in everything GOD does.
3. In this lesson we look at the love of GOD manifested in the church.
4. Several things in the church which show that love.

I. SALVATION IS IN THE CHURCH.

- A. In Christ equals being in the church.
 1. Church and body the same (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). Just one body (Eph. 4:4).
 2. Means of entrance (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4; I Cor. 12:13).
 3. Salvation is in Christ, thus in the church (Eph. 1:3, 4, 6-8, 10, 11).
- B. What greater love than for GOD to provide a meeting place.
 1. *"the presence of the Lord"* (Gen. 3:8; 4:16).
 2. Gen. 28:16-17. First time *"house of God"* is used.
 3. Exod. 40:34f. Designated place *"in the tabernacle."*
 4. Lev. 17:1-4. Sacrifices offered at the *"door of the tabernacle."*
 5. Jonah — *"from the presence of the Lord"* (1:3) not omnipresence, but meeting place. (2:4, 7 *"toward the temple"*)
 6. GOD'S love has provided a meeting place in the New Testament.

- a. *"In Christ"* in some form appears approximately thirty times in Ephesians alone.
- C. GOD'S love in spite of our sinfulness (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
- D. Question: *"Am I (you) in the place where GOD has designed for men to meet Him today?"* The church is the place to meet Him.

II. BENEVOLENCE IN THE CHURCH.

- A. GOD intends for His people to be benevolent (James 1:27; Gal. 6:10).
- B. Example: help for poor saints in Jerusalem.
 - 1. According to the above passages, not just toward saints alone!

III. EDIFICATION TO THE CHURCH.

- A. Rom. 15:2; II Cor. 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; I Cor. 14:3; 5, 12, 26
- B. Love edifieth (I Cor. 8:1).
- C. Purpose from the beginning of the church (Eph. 4:12, 16, 29).
- D. I Tim. 1:4.
- E. Act of building, promoting spiritual growth, strengthen (Rom. 15:1,2).
- F. Opposed to destroying (Gal. 5:15).

IV. EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH.

- A. Once I'm in the place of salvation, I must help others.
- B. Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; I Peter 3:15; II Tim. 2:2; I Tim. 3:15; Acts 5:28.

Conclusion:

1. GOD'S love has been extended to all (John 3:16).
2. His love is accepted when we meet the conditions He has set before us.
3. Have you accepted or rejected His love?

Sidney White
Class of 1970

Women In The Church

Proverbs 31:10-31

Introduction: The helpmate of man.

1. In creation, GOD saw that it was not good for man to be alone, so He made woman.
2. The woman was taken from the side of man to work with him hand in hand.
3. It has been said, and true *“that behind most successful men is the influence of good mothers and wives.”*
4. GOD knew the power of the woman He created.
5. Think of what the preacher said in Proverbs 31, *“Who can find a virtuous wife?”*

I. WOMEN NEEDED IN THE CHURCH TODAY:

- A. Sarah — A Godly Wife (I Peter 3:5-6).
 1. We see how Sarah respected the design of GOD in that she loved and followed her husband.
 2. What would you have done, when GOD commanded Abraham to leave and go to a land that GOD would show him?
(Remember the ages of Abraham (75), Sarah (65).
 3. In Hebrews 11:11, Sarah also had faith in GOD to fulfill that promise of a son, (even though at one point she tried to take things into her own hands).
 4. Is it any wonder that GOD chose this couple (Abraham and Sarah) through whom the world would be blessed?
- B. Priscilla — A Personal Worker, A Teacher For The Lord (Acts 18:24-26).
 1. Priscilla and her husband Aquila took Apollos aside to teach him more fully the Gospel of Christ.
 2. They were of the same trade as Paul,

tentmakers.

3. And yet they took time from that task in order that they might instruct one more fully in the things of GOD.
4. In Romans 16:3, Paul called her a "*Fellow Worker*" with him.
5. I Cor. 16:19, she had the church meeting in her house.
6. A busy woman? — yes, and yet she saw the need and fulfilled that need in helping others.

C. Eunice and Lois — two godly mothers (II Tim. 1:3-7).

1. Timothy was Paul's son in the gospel.
2. When he wrote to Timothy the second time he told Timothy to "*stir up the gift of God.*"
3. How did Paul say that Timothy had received this knowledge? through mother and grandmother.
4. They saw that their children knew GOD and His word (Deut. 6:6-9).
5. Can you understand why Timothy was so willing to spread the gospel?

D. Woman with an issue of blood for 12 years —
Example of faith for all (Luke 8:40-48).

1. She went to the right source when she heard of him.
2. She had faith that she could be healed if only she could touch the hem of His garment.
3. Jesus knew someone had touched Him.
4. Notice what Jesus said to her in verse 48.
5. If we all had faith like her, think of what we could do!

II. THE KIND OF WOMEN NOT NEEDED IN THE CHURCH TODAY:

- A. Lot's wife — Self-willed, not willing to give up the past (Gen. 19:12-29).
1. GOD was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.
 2. Told Lot and his wife and family to leave.

3. Told them not to look back —
4. But Lot's wife (not even name given), looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt (v. 26).
5. WHY — Not willing to give up and do what the Lord asked her to do. (Self willed).

B. Job's wife — The discourager, little faith in GOD and tried to discourage her husband (Job 2:9).

1. We know the account of Job and how GOD allowed Satan to touch him.
2. In chapter two and verse nine, Job's wife asked the question, "*Why not curse God and die?*"
3. Look at the answer Job gave in verse ten: "*You speak as one of the foolish women speak....*"
4. Even Job's three friends (?) had the same attitude.
5. Even though Job had lost all these material things, he did not charge GOD foolishly — he did not need these people to discourage him.
6. Job's wife (once again notice her name is not given), did not have enough faith to trust GOD and tried to destroy Job's.

C. Sapphira — Covetousness and a liar as well (Acts 5:7-10).

1. Sapphira and her husband sold a piece of land.
2. Decided between themselves that they would keep part of the money (which would not have been wrong).
3. But they lied — wanted their cake and eat it too.
4. This lie cost her her life.
5. Yes, even today covetousness will cost one his life.

D. Jezebel — evil personified, she even influenced others to do evil (I Kings 21-23).

1. Just look at some of the things she was

- guilty of.
2. What parent would name one of his children Jezebel?
 3. Just about everything that could be done, she did. Lie, murder, inflict physical and mental punishment.
 4. So great was the evil that she did, that it was felt in Israel for many years — even to the point that Jesus used her name in the book of Revelation.

Conclusion:

Look at how opposite these two groups are. There is no middle ground. If the church is filled with the right kind of people nothing can stop her growth.

WHAT KIND OF EXAMPLE ARE YOU?

Nick Deiger Class of 1971

The Existence of God

I Peter 3:15

Introduction:

Christians are expected to defend the Faith (Jude 3). Paul said that he was set for the defense of the gospel (Phil 1:16-17) and claimed *“woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel”* (I Corinthians 9:16). According to Peter all of us have the solemn task of *“being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you ...”* (I Peter 3:15). In spite of this, it seems that two problems are current. First, we hear the loud cry of agnosticism among us saying: *“You cannot ‘know’ that GOD exists.”* Second, we have the problem of selective evangelism. Hence, in the minds of some, those who do not accept the basic premises that GOD is, and the Bible is His word are not really worthy targets for evangelism. Although this thinking is not always intentional, the reason for it arises out of a fear that such propositions may not be provable. We have been told for so long *“the Bible does not prove the existence of GOD it only assumes it”* that many of us are believing it! But, the fact is we can prove the existence of GOD and we have a biblical mandate to teach the same to others. This lesson is designed to help us prepare a reasoned response to an increasingly atheistic and agnostic world regarding the existence of GOD.

I. The Case Against Agnosticism.

- A. Can one know anything? Is the agnostic correct when he claims that certainty is unobtainable? Absolutely not!
- B. This position is logically untenable.
 - 1. For the agnostic to say that one cannot know anything with certainty is for him to affirm a contradiction.
 - 2. Does he know that he cannot know? If so, then he has just proved his position false.
 - 3. If he does not know whether or not he can know anything, then he must admit that the thing that he admits that he does not know may be the very point that knowledge is obtainable!

- C. More importantly, this position is scripturally untenable.
1. John 8:32, quotes Jesus as saying: "*Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*"
 - a. If knowledge is unobtainable, then Jesus lied.
 - b. If knowledge is unobtainable, one can never be set free!
 2. I John 5:13 reveals John's purpose for writing his first epistle.
 - a. If knowledge is unobtainable, John wasted his time writing.
 - b. If as John says, one can know he is saved then knowledge is obtainable.
 3. I John 2:3, says "*And hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*"
 - a. Here it is affirmed that we can not only know something,
 - b. but that we can know that we know it!
- D. Since it has been demonstrated that knowledge is obtainable, we turn to consider the question at hand: Does GOD exist?

II. The Bible and the Existence of God

- A. We need to clarify a potentially destructive claim:
1. "*The Bible does not defend the existence of GOD, it simply assumes it.*"
 2. This claim has led some to think that no one can defend GOD'S existence; this is far from true.
- B. Yes, the Bible does occasionally assume GOD'S existence.
1. Genesis 1:1, simply starts with GOD.
 2. 2 Timothy 3:16, assumes GOD'S existence when it claims the Scriptures to be "*GOD-breathed.*"
 3. 2 Peter 1:3, assumes the existence of the GOD Who grants all things necessary for life and godliness.
 4. However, this is only a part of the issue!

- C. The Bible also suggests that there is evidence available that proves GOD'S existence.
1. Romans 1:19-21, indicates that there is enough information in the creation so as to make man *"without excuse."*
 2. Acts 14:14-17, affirms that GOD has left proof of His existence in the changing seasons.
 3. Psalm 19:1-2, tells us that the sky loudly declares the reality of GOD!
- D. Further, the Bible contains arguments that support the proposition.
1. Hebrews 3:4, says *"every house is built by some one; but He that built all things is GOD."*
 2. Job 12:7-9, argues along the same lines.
 3. The point of these verses and others like them is that just as the existence of a house points to a human cause, so the intricate universe in which we live speaks eloquently of the existence of GOD.
 4. We all operate according to the principle of causation (i.e., every effect has an adequate cause) in everyday life, and the Bible is here saying that the principle may be correctly employed to reason to the existence of GOD!
- E. Based upon this principle which we have seen employed by the inspired writers, we next turn to consider a sound argument from reason alone that leads to knowledge of the existence of GOD.

III. THE COSMOLOGICAL (CAUSE) ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. When we consider the reality of man we may ask the question:
1. From where did man come? or,
 2. What is the ultimate cause for the existence of human beings?

- B. Only one of two theories is possible:
1. Man is the product of divine Creation, or
 2. Man is the product of organic Evolution.
- C. We may phrase the argument as follows:
1. Man is the result of Creation or Evolution.
 - a. Creation implies that the first human being came into existence as the result of the creative act of a divine being. This implies the existence of such a being (i.e., GOD exists).
 - b. Evolution implies that the first human being came into existence either by being born from non-human parentage or by the transformation of a non-human being into a human being during the course of his lifetime.
 2. The first human being did not arise from non-human, parentage, for:
 - a. It is against the basic law of life that a non-human gave rise to a human being. The law of biogenesis says that "*Life arises only from preexisting life and reproduces only after its kind.*"
 - b. There are no exceptions to this law. Thus, the first human being could not have arisen from non-human parentage.
 3. The first human being did not arise as the result of the transformation of a non-human being into a human being, for:
 - a. Such is not now occurring.
 - b. It has never been documented to have ever occurred.
 4. Thus it can be said that the first human being neither arose by being born to non-human parentage nor as the result of the transformation of a non-human being into a human being in the course of his lifetime.
 5. Therefore man is not the result of evolution
 6. Consequently, man is the result of Creation.

7. Finally, because man is the result of creation and creation implies a Creator, we are forced to conclude that GOD exists.

D. This is the only conclusion that we can draw from the fact that man exists and must be therefore explained.

Conclusion:

Since knowledge is obtainable and since we can come to a knowledge of the existence of GOD, then it stands to reason that we ought to obey the biblical mandate to be ready to give an answer to every man (be he agnostic, atheistic or otherwise). Non-Christians need to be taught that they can know the GOD of the universe and Christians need the confidence that comes from knowing that they can know the truth.

<p>Brad T. Bromling Class of 1982</p>

Reasons To Keep On Running

Hebrews 12:1-17

Introduction:

1. Previous to the great text of Hebrews 11, the author exhorts Christians to steadfastness (Heb. 10:23). *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised.”* (v. 24). *“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.”* (v. 35-36). *“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. **for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.**”*
2. In my fourteen years as a Christian, I have talked to many who have fallen away. I have noted some of their reasons:
 - a. I'm tired of trying to be a Christian.
 - b. I just cannot make it any more.
 - c. It's not your fault, I just don't want to be a hypocrite.
 - d. There is no need for me to discuss this — you would never understand!
3. There are two passages that suggests that it is possible for Christians to run in vain:
 - a. In Gal. 2:2, the gospel Paul preached to the Jewish Christians allowed the Gentiles to be partakers also — yet it was a stumbling block to some.
 - b. In Phil. 2:16, by not holding forth the Word of Life, our labor and race is in vain — WE FAIL.
4. I believe the eleventh chapter of Hebrews was written to inspire us to faithfulness. Faithfulness to run with patience, without wavering. But it is in the twelfth chapter that we are given inspired reasons to keep on running. INCENTIVES.

I. THE WITNESSES (V. 1).

- A. They should be familiar to us, (Heb. 11), man, woman, youth, etc.
- B. They encourage us to remember their lives, it was not easy, yet they did not run in vain. They wavered some, but they never withdrew from the way.
- C. They were persuaded of the promise of God (Heb. 11:13). Recall Heb. 10:23, "...for he is faithful that promised..."
 - 1. These witnesses saw the promise of GOD as an incentive, shouldn't we?
- D. The witnesses encourage us to run a smart race by:
 - 1. By giving up the practice of sin and unnecessary burdens (v. 1).
 - 2. Garnering patience, recall Heb. 10:36.
 - 3. Not forgetting that the race is ever **before** us and is **never** behind (Phil. 3:13-14). We cannot even think about sounding retreat!

II. THE WINNER — JESUS (Vs. 2-3).

- A. Unlike the witnesses, the Christ can tell us about the race and the victory!
- B. Made winner through: Endurance, Patience/Joy, and ultimately, Death.
 - 1. This is why He is the perfecter of our faith. Only He knows both sides, man and GOD, the race and the victory (Heb. 10:20).
- C. He is at the right hand of GOD'S throne.
 - 1. This is our assurance that we can make it, if we too run a smart race.
 - 2. Acts 17:31; Rom. 1:4
- D. Question: Is Jesus your incentive or your excuse?

III. THE WARNING (Vs. 4-11).

- A. Our race remains ever before us, we haven't yet won (v. 4).

1. Yet, why is it that some quit, or give up?
And we are to do something about it!
2. Heb. 6:4-6.

B. GOD chastens for our good.

1. This chastisement comes through the word (Phil. 2:16).
2. When we practice or exercise ourselves in the Bible, we run a smart race.

IV. THE WAY, WHAT TO EXPECT (Vs. 12-17).

A. Fatigue (vs. 12-13).

1. It won't be a cake walk, it will require our best efforts.
2. We may be fatigued or weary: if we forget our purpose — doing good (Gal. 6:9).
 - a. II Thess. 3:13
3. Satan works to pull us away from our real purpose, consequently we grow weary.

B. We can expect to see GOD if we not only do good, but that we follow the path of peace with all men. Peace makers (v. 14).

1. This includes being at peace with others that are on the track.
2. Christians need not compete with one another in this race because all that finish are winners.
3. We cannot expect to see GOD if we do not follow holiness.

C. We can expect to take watch care not to fail (vs. 15-16).

1. By defilement (vs. 15-16).
2. By selling out that which gives us endurance (spiritual blessings) (vs. 16-17).
3. By suffering the rejection of GOD (v. 17).

Conclusion:

1. We can know something about the way.
2. These are incentives that can help us to be victorious in our race: Witnesses, Winner, Warning, Way.

3. The book of Revelation sums it up in three words, (Rev. 17:14), ***“We done won.”***
4. Invitation: Are you in the race?
 - a. Run with faith (Heb. 11:6).
 - b. Run with repentance (Luke 13:3).
 - c. Run with confession (Rom. 10:9-10).
 - d. Run with baptism (Mark 16:16).
 - e. Run with faithful living (Heb. 12:1-17).

<p>Glenn Hitchcock Class of 1982</p>
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Preaching Like John

Mark 6:14-29

Introduction:

1. Preaching is for the purpose of getting results.
 - a. I Cor. 1:21
 - b. Mark 16:16
2. John's preaching got results.
 - a. Emptied the cities.
 - b. Caused people to confess their sins (Matt. 3:5-6).
3. We need this kind of preaching (Cf. Rom. 1:16).

I. A SPECIMEN OF JOHN'S PREACHING (Matt. 3:7-12).

A. Pointed in his preaching!

1. Matt. 3:7 "*Generation of vipers*"
2. John had courage.
3. It takes courage to preach GOD'S Word (II Tim. 4:1-4).

B. Refused to recognize supremacy of nationality (Matt. 3:9, 12).

1. Being born a Hebrew did not avail (cf. Col. 2:14).
2. GOD only accepts the obedient of any nationality (Acts 17:30).

C. John preached more than emotions (3:11).

1. Did not exalt self. "*One Creator...*", He preached about Christ (Acts 8:35).
2. Preached baptism for remission of sins (Mark 1:4-5).

D. Therefore John's preaching aroused people — and caused them to make enquiry!

II. JOHN'S PREACHING WAS RELEVANT (Mark 6:14-29).

- A. Attacked current sins! (Preaching that does not attack current sins is not relevant.)
 - 1. Rebuked adultery (Mark 6:18).
 - 2. Reproved fraud (Luke 3:13).
 - 3. Forbade violence, false witness, rioting (Luke 3:14).

- B. Refused to be swayed by public opinion.
 - 1. The public accepted Herod's adultery!
 - 2. Tolerated violence, false witness, rioting of the day.
 - 3. Overlooked fraud.
 - 4. John stood and condemned all this as sin!

- C. Caused trouble!
 - 1. Herod did not want to change! Lose prestige!
 - 2. Herodias had no intention of change. Satisfied with sin!
 - 3. Therefore, John preached truth and suffered.
 - 4. Herodias took advantage of Herod:
 - a. Got him drunk.
 - b. Stirred him up by using her own daughter in a lascivious dance.
 - c. Got him committed before his friends, he had no way out (or so he thought)!

III. RELEVANT PREACHING WILL GET RESULTS TODAY (II Tim. 4:1-4).

- A. Attack on current sins will:
 - 1. Cause some to repent.
 - 2. Cause others to be hardened.
 - 3. But it must be done.

- B. Refusing to be swayed by public opinion will:
 - 1. Cause admiration by some.
 - 2. Hatred and persecution by others.
 - 3. However, GOD'S will has never depended on public opinion!

- C. May cause trouble.
 - 1. The self-righteous do not want to change.
 - 2. The hard-hearted are satisfied and have no intention of change.
 - 3. However, when GOD'S word is preached, He is glorified.

- D. When relevant preaching is done, the good and honest will:
 - 1. Hear
 - 2. Believe
 - 3. Repent
 - 4. Confess Christ
 - 5. Be Baptized

Conclusion:

- 1. Relevant preaching emphasizes obedience.
 - a. Obedience is necessary for salvation.
 - b. Obedience to GOD'S will gets results (Rom. 6:17-18).
- 2. Invitation

<p>Donald F. Rhodes Class of 1969</p>

Moses, My Servant, Is Dead

Joshua 1:2

Introduction:

1. Romans 15:4
2. Today, we are going to look at Joshua 1.

I. SITUATION: *“Moses, my servant, is dead.”*

- A. He (Moses) had announced to them that he must die, and now had gone on.
 1. He was the only leader many of them had ever known.
 - a. Some were there when they left Egypt, but were very young.
 - b. Most were born during the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.
 2. He represented GOD to these people.
 3. He led them 40 years toward the goal they were now poised to achieve.
 4. What were they going to do?
 - a. Accept that Moses is gone!
- B. Our situation

II. SOLUTION: *“Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people.”*

- A. Joshua was chosen by GOD to be the new leader.
 1. He needed to act like it!
 2. The period of mourning Moses’ death is now past. Now, lead the people.
- B. The people were to get busy. There was work to be done. All were to help (Josh. 1:12-15).
 1. Stop dwelling on the past; concentrate on the present work.

2. Continued mourning over Moses will not help, only hinder the work.
3. The solution, then, is to be busy working. *“Active employment would turn away the people’s thoughts from unduly dwelling upon the absence of Moses, and would prove that all wisdom and energy had not died with him, nor had GOD also perished in His servant’s death.”* (Pulpit Commentary).

C. Our work that needs to be done.

1. Personal examination.
 - a. Am I a help or a hinderance to the solution?
 - b. Am I committed to GOD as I should be? As I once was? Or is He second place? cf. Ephesus (Rev. 2:4).
 - c. Am I walking as I should be (Phil. 2:2; Heb. 4:11)?
2. We need to *“tell the story.”* We sing, *“I love to tell the story.”* Do we?
3. Personal study/Family Bible study?
4. Worship.
5. Fellowship (Acts 2:44ff; 4:32ff; I John 1:5-7). Encourage each other.

III. STRENGTH:

- A. Joshua 1:5-9 — The source.
 1. Three times: *“...be strong and courageous.”*
 - a. Why? GOD will be with them, if...
 - b. Verses 7 and 8.
 2. We need to *“hunger and thirst after righteousness?”* (Matt. 5:6), apply it.
 - a. It does not mean that we won’t encounter difficult times.
 - b. James 1:2-4.

Conclusion:

1. We must put the past behind us and move on.

2. If we don't, we will stagnate and slowly die.
3. What shall it be? What are we going to do?

Denton C. Landon
Class of 1983

The Value Of A Soul

Matthew 16:26

Introduction:

Christians need to exercise zealous evangelism in the communities in which they live and labor. However, first the children of GOD must realize and acknowledge the awesome value of even a single soul. Songs like *"Far and Near," "Must I Go And Empty Handed," "Rescue The Perishing," "Seeking The Lost,"* and *"Will You Not Tell It Today,"* emphasize an evangelistic urgency.

It is a grievously sad day when the children of GOD seem to care little for the welfare of their souls and exhibit even less concern for lost souls! Planet Earth is now home to several billion souls, the vast majority of whom are lost and will cross the threshold of eternity unprepared to meet man's Creator and GOD.

It is, also, evident from the Scriptures that all of heaven, and godly servants, greatly care for the souls of mankind. Further, the most valuable commodity on the earth is the human soul. And, since GOD Himself has made each soul priceless, all souls are of an equal value before GOD, regardless of race, education, social status, occupation, age, gender, or any of the other dissimilarities which make us different one from another.

I. GOD'S CONCERN FOR THE SOULS OF MEN IS ABUNDANTLY DEMONSTRATED IN SCRIPTURE.

- A. GOD'S intention before the creation of the world to redeem man once he fell away, shows that GOD is deeply concerned about the souls of men.
 1. I Peter 1:18-20; Titus 1:1-3; Eph. 3:1-12.
 2. Though the word *"world"* may mean *"age"* in some applications in Scripture, *"world"* is translated *"times eternal"* in the ASV rendering of Titus 1:1-3. Ephesians 3:1-13 (especially verse 11) says that Jesus Christ's coming to save lost men was in the *"eternal purpose"* of GOD, hence, before the *"world"* began.

- B. GOD further demonstrated his concern for mortal souls by preparing man for the reception of the Savior
 - 1. At a divinely appointed time, after a number of centuries of interaction with GOD, the Messiah came to earth (Gal. 3:22-29; 4:1-5), to reveal the “*mystery*” of the Gospel (Col. 1:26)
 - 2. The ages preceding the Gospel Age were preparatory to the deliverance of the Gospel by our Lord (John 1:17), and prefigured and foreshadowed the Gospel Age (Heb. 9:9; 10:1).

- C. No greater concern for man’s welfare could be shown by GOD than the sending of the **ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD** to die for a sin-sick and dying world.
 - 1. John 3:16; I John 4:9-10; Rom. 8:32.
 - 2. Further, while men were **CONTENT** in their sins, GOD sent Jesus to die upon the cross and thereby bear the sins of the world (Rom. 5:8; Heb. 9:28).

II. JESUS CHRIST ALSO DEMONSTRATED CONCERN FOR THE SOULS OF MEN: HE TOO GREATLY VALUES THE HUMAN SOUL.

- A. First, Jesus willingly fulfilled the will of the Father and came to earth and shed His blood on the cross.
 - 1. John 4:34; 6:38.
 - 2. Christians should endeavor to have the mind of Christ (I Peter 4:1-2; Phil. 2:5), which was to fulfill the will of the Father.

- B. The compassion and tears of the Lord also demonstrate His concern for the lost.
 - 1. Jesus once grieved over the lost souls in Jerusalem which would not hearken to the Gospel (Luke 19:41-42).
 - 2. Our Lord even exhibited great compassion upon the cross, after men for whom He came to save, crucified Him (Luke 23:34).

- C. Our Lord's Great Commission also reveals intense heavenly concern for the human soul.
 - 1. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46; Acts 1:8.
 - 2. The Great Commission represents the transferral of Christ's mission to save souls (Luke 19:10), to "*earthen vessels*" (II Cor. 4:7).

III. EVEN THE ANGELS IN HEAVEN ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF MEN.

- A. Angels rejoice when souls obey the gospel.
 - 1. Luke 15:7-10.
 - 2. The implication is that the angels are grieved or sorrowful at the loss of souls.
- B. Angels, as heavenly messengers, have often revealed GOD'S will to many, by which through obedience to the same, souls can be saved.
 - 1. The primary function of angels was to serve as a medium of revelation of God's will to man (Dan. 10:1-21; Rev. 1:1).
 - 2. At least once, an angel also directed a preacher to a lost soul who needed to hear the gospel (Acts 8:26).

IV. THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOULS OF MEN: HE TOO ACKNOWLEDGED AN INHERENT VALUE IN THE HUMAN SOUL.

- A. Paul's many personal sacrifices and the afflictions borne by him in order to preach the gospel to lost souls testify of the value of souls and his concern for them.
 - 1. The apostle suffered bitter persecution which doubtless he would not have endured had he not been deeply concerned about souls (II Cor. 11:23-28).

2. Paul also willingly suffered the forfeiture of his station in life as a Pharisee and a Jew for the preaching of the gospel to lost souls (Phil. 3:4-11).
- B. So concerned about lost souls was the apostle Paul that he encouraged others to also preach the gospel.
1. Paul passed the gospel baton to Timothy and others (II Tim. 2:1-2).
 2. Like Christ, he prepared others to carry on in the proclamation of the gospel to lost souls in anticipation of his death (II Tim. 4:1-8).

Conclusion:

GOD is concerned about, and hence places an immense VALUE on, the souls of men. But, why do even Christians and whole congregations, and sometimes it appears the whole brotherhood, idly watch friends, neighbors, and loved ones depart this life completely unprepared to meet GOD? Why do the children of GOD often appear to be completely unconcerned about either their own souls' welfare or others lost souls? The answer may be that (1) we DO NOT REALLY BELIEVE that non-Christians are REALLY LOST, or (2) we DO NOT REALLY CARE!

How many children of GOD have forgotten WHY they are really on this earth (Eccl. 12:13-14) and have traded their souls away for a piece of this green earth (Matt. 16:26)? In order for a soul to be saved, it must concern itself with its own salvation (Phil. 2:12), and exhibit the same concern for other souls (Mark 16:15-16; James 5:19-20), as was demonstrated by GOD, Jesus Christ, the angels, and the apostle Paul.

Whose soul are YOU ALLOWING TO GO TO A DEVIL'S HELL because YOU WILL NOT tell him about the gospel? How many souls is this congregation willing to allow to GO TO HELL before it "*pulls out all of the plugs*" (within the parameters of Biblical authority, of course) and turns this community upside down (Acts 17:6) with the gospel of Christ? Our friends, neighbors, and loved ones are dying in sin everyday; what are YOU going to do about it? Souls are at stake, including YOURS!

Evangelistic success depends not on PASSIVE programs of evangelism orchestrated by a local congregation or its preacher or elders, but evangelistic success begins with each INDIVIDUAL

“knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men....” (II Cor. 5:11).

Louis Rushmore
Class of 1977

The New Testament Church: God's Tool For Evangelism

Philippians 2:12-16

Introduction:

One of the major purposes of the Christian life is that we are to shine as lights in the world. We have no greater purpose than this (although we must emphasize that other things are equally as important; e.g., worship, edification, benevolence, family life).

Until we believe that the world is lost without Christ, we will remain woefully inadequate in fulfilling the "*great commission*" in our generation.

Our text points out these things and should be memorized by every Christian. This text also serves to lead us into a discussion of the mission we have: offer the gospel plan of salvation to more than five billion souls (as of the summer of 1987).

Each point in this lesson does two things. First, we establish and discuss a truth that relates to our theme. Second, we apply each point to our theme and mission.

I. ALL OF THE SAVED ARE IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

A. The scriptures clearly teach this: Eph. 5:23; Heb. 12:22ff; Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:10; 2:1-22.

B. Questions:

1. Can we expect those who are *outside* the church to do this work?
2. Do we have the right to hire a mercenary army to accomplish our mission?
3. Should we be satisfied if we don't do our part in making friends for Jesus?

II. WE MUST BE BUSY: *THE WORLD IS LOST!*

A. The scriptures clearly teach this: Rom. 1:18—3:31;
Eph. 2:12; 5:14-16.

B. Questions:

1. Do we believe this?
2. Do you think about the world's condition as we sing?
 - a. Great commission songs?
 - b. Judgment songs?
 - c. Invitation songs?

III. OUR PURPOSE IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED UNTIL WE REACH OUT TO EVERY SOUL IN EVERY GENERATION.

A. The scriptures clearly teach this: Matt. 28:18-20;
Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:8.

B. Questions:

1. Do you see this as their mission in the first century (and as our mission now)?
2. Do you see that there is no other way but to *GO*?
3. Do you see that we must *TEACH*?
4. Do you see that we must have a *PLAN* (cf. Acts 1:8)?
5. Do you see that it takes *MONEY*?

IV. CHRISTIANS ARE TO DO THIS WORK.

A. The scriptures clearly teach this.

1. Refer again to the Great Commission passages we have already noted.
2. See also I Cor. 3:9; I Peter 3:15; and the many passages which emphasize the power of our example (e.g., Gal. 5:22-23).

B. Questions:

1. Do we realize that *our* souls are involved as well as the souls of those we are trying to reach?

2. Do we realize that it is up to *us* to *teach* and *uphold* the truth?
3. Do we realize that this is a *work*?
 - a. Phil 2:12-16
 - b. I Cor. 15:58

V. OUR LIVES MUST BE PURE IF WE ARE TO BE USEFUL AS CO-LABORERS WITH GOD.

- A. The scriptures clearly teach this: Eph. 5:25-27; Rom. 12:1-2; Acts 5:1-11; Gal. 5:19-23; John 15:1-8.
- B. Questions:
 1. How often have you heard of someone who rejected the way of truth because of an ungodly Christian?
 2. How often have you pondered the fact that people really do look closely at *your* life?
 3. How much growth can you see in yourself over the last decade? Year? Month? Week?

Conclusion:

1. We must not place this aspect of New Testament Christianity on the back burner! It is far too easy to squander opportunities, waste dollars, bury talents, and keep the truth from this old sinful world!
2. We must ever be ready (see Rom. 1:3, 4, 11ff).

Skip Andrews Class of 1970

Caring For The Aging

Introduction:

1. One sees it on TV and in the ads. Who is associated with the glamorous, throbbingly exciting life-style? Mostly young people. (Older people are featured in advertising; they sell denture cream, pain killers, and laxatives)!
2. Yet, growing old is a natural process of life. In many eastern societies the elderly enjoy a variety of fulfilling responsibilities. In most Western industrial nations, on the other hand, the aging and the aged are often left out of the mainstream by a culture that worships youth.
3. GOD instructed His people to "*Honor thy father and mother*" (Ephesians 6:2).

I. SOME MYTHS ABOUT AGING.

- A. A typical attitude toward the aging is seen in the myths prevalent about aging:
 1. Many believe that the majority of the aged are senile. Surveys (Riley and Forner, 1968) indicate that fewer than 10% are demented or disoriented. Rotwinick & Pfeiffer in 1975 found that fewer than 20% of the elderly could not remember things.
 2. That at least one-tenth of old people live in institutions is thought to be so by the majority. However, only 4.8% of persons 65 or over were residents of any long-stay institution according to the latest census figures. Even among those over 75, only 9.2% were residents of such institutions.
 3. Many believe that "*old*" people have no interest in or need for sexual fulfillment. The "*Duke Longitudinal Studies*" found that sex plays an important role in the lives of the majority of men and women through the

seventh decade of life and even beyond in many instances (Palmore, 1974).

4. Many think that drivers over the age of 65 are “*accident prone.*” The truth is that this age group has fewer accidents than persons under 30 and about the same number of accidents as middle-age persons.
5. It is commonly thought that the elderly are “*set in their ways.*” There is some evidence that older people tend to become more stable in their attitudes, but it is clear that most older people do change and adapt to the many major events that occur in old age — such as retirement, widowhood, serious illness, etc.
6. Most feel that old people take longer to learn something new. This is true (studies by Botwinick 1967, and Riley and Forner 1968), but this does not mean that it is impossible for them to learn. They learn as well as younger folks when the aged are given enough time to learn.
7. Multitudes lump older people in one category and believe that they are “*all alike.*” There is as much difference in the aged, however, as there is at any age level. Maddox and Douglas in a 1974 survey found that the aged are a diverse group and even tend to become more heterogenous than younger groups.
8. The myth is held that older people tend to become more religious as they age. Surveys show that a person’s religious tendencies depend on upbringing not present age status.
9. Many believe that old people are “*cranky*” and easily irritated or upset. A Kansas City, MO survey found that over one-half of the aged said they are never or hardly ever irritated and this proportion increased to two-thirds at age 80 or over.

B. Many believe that they have no responsibility toward the aged. What does the Bible record about such?

II. SOME BIBLE TRUTHS ABOUT THE AGED.

- A. Real life is growing younger as one ages (II Cor. 4:16b).
- B. Later life is a time when there are still tasks to be performed (Titus 2:1-4).
- C. The elderly who are deep in faith are not challenged by GOD to “*sit in a rocking chair*” and “*act old*” (Isa. 40:31).

III. SOME BIBLE CHALLENGES TO THE MATURE.

- A. The mature are in a process of growth, as seen above, but this time of life is different.
 - 1. The aged season presents some unique times for the faithful (Eccl. 3:1).
 - 2. The mature years are a time for self-examination and contemplation (II Cor. 13:5).
 - 3. The mature years are a time to really “*let go*” of the world. (Debt is owed to Dan Blazer, M.D. for the two thoughts here). One spends a lifetime trying to be independent only to discover that as he ages he is more and more dependent on others. Learning to accept help from others can be difficult for strong-willed people. But, this is the time of life when one can really learn to “*deny self*” (Matt. 16:24).
- B. The mature must rely on hope. One is “*saved by hope*” (Rom. 8:24). Imagine coming to the end of life without such!

*GOD keep my heart attuned to laughter,
When youth is done;*

*When the days are gray days,
Coming after the warmth of the sun.*

*GOD keep me then from bitterness,
From grieving, when life seems cold.*

*GOD keep me always loving and believing
As I grow old. (Author unknown)*

IV. SOME BIBLICAL TEACHING ON CARING FOR THE AGED

- A. *"Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise"* (Eph. 6:2).
1. In Jesus' day the Jews practiced "*Corban*" (Mark 7:10).
 2. This practice was designed to avoid "*honoring father and mother*" (Mark 7:10-12, cf. Matt. 15:4-6).
 3. Any money available to care for an aged parent was supposedly "*given*" to the temple (Mark 7:11). The child would then claim he did not have enough to help his parent (Mark 7:11). The priesthood of the day collaborated in this (Mark 7:12-13)! Rauer writes that this vow of "*Corban*" might never be actually given to the temple but that the vow itself allowed the one to forego helping his aged parents! (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).
 4. Such an attitude toward one's parents who need help is said by the apostle Paul to be "*worse*" than the acts of an unbeliever (I Tim. 5:8).
 5. GOD wants His children to take care of their aged parents.
- B. The mature must continue to "*live*" and to be helped to live and enjoy life by the younger.
1. Hezron married at age 60 (II Chron. 2:21).
 2. Eli was still judging Israel at age 98 (I Sam. 4:15).
 3. How old was Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born? (Gen. 21:5).
 4. Somone has written a poem called,
"The Versatile Age"

*The old rocking chair is empty today,
For Grandmother is no longer in it.
She's off in her car to the office or shop
And buzzes around every minute.
No one shoves Grandma back on the shelf*

*She's versatile, forceful, dynamite;
That isn't a pie in the oven, my dear;
Her baking today is ceramic.
You won't see her trudging early in bed,
From her place in the warm nook;
Her typewriter clickety clacks through the night,
For Grandmother has taken up fencing!
She isn't content with crumbs of old thought,
With meager and second-hand knowledge;
Don't bring your mending for Grandma to do,
For Grandma has gone back to college!*

- C. *"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord"* (Lev. 19:32). God expects one to respect the aged.

Conclusion:

1. The later years of life can be active, full, meaning full, and full of grace and beauty. *"...the beauty of old men is the gray head"* (Prov. 20:29).
2. The younger must practice the golden rule toward the aged (Matt. 7:12).
3. Imagine coming to the end of life without hope in GOD! One must be a Christian to have this hope.

Keith Mosher
Class of 1975

I Believe God

Acts 27:25; Gen. 15:6

Introduction:

1. Faith, or belief in God always includes more than the intellectual acceptance of a thing. It always involves the person who has faith being willing to do what GOD has said (James 2:18).
2. GOD always means what He says.
3. There has always been a tendency on the part of man to underestimate the power of GOD'S word.
 - a. Naaman wanted a miracle performed (II Kings 5).
 - b. The rich man of Luke 16 wanted Lazarus sent back to his five brothers with a message.
4. Man needs faith like Paul and Abraham had, willing to do whatever GOD requires, regardless of whether he understands how GOD is going to bring it about, or why.

I. WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN GOD WITH REGARD TO THE CHURCH.

- A. Christ is the supreme head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).
- B. He paid for it with His blood (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25).
- C. Every saved person is a part of it (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23).
 1. There is no such thing as being saved today and joining the church next week or month.
 2. When one does that which saves him, he also does that which makes him a member of the church that Christ built.

II. WE NEED TO BELIEVE WHAT GOD HAS SAID IN REGARD TO MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.

- A. GOD'S design for marriage is male and female. It was Adam and Eve and not Adam and Steve (Matt. 19:4).
1. GOD has never sanctioned a marriage of man to man.
 2. Neither has He sanctioned a marriage wherein two women were involved.
- B. There is only one reason given in the New Testament for divorce and remarriage - fornication (Matt. 19:9).
1. Even our children can understand this principle.
 2. When I send my children to the store and tell them not to get anything except a loaf of bread they understand what I have said.
 3. I believe my brethren, who want to, can understand this.
- C. Any violation of this principle set forth by God results in adultery (Matt. 19:9).
1. Adultery in this case is not the second marriage as someone has claimed, (the ceremony).
 2. In John 8, the Scribes and Pharisees did not catch a woman while the marriage ceremony was being performed, yet they caught her in the very act of adultery.
 3. It is not the getting of a divorce. These same people did not catch the woman getting a divorce.
 4. In Matthew 5:28 Jesus said, *"But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*
 5. This does not involve looking on a woman while she is getting married or getting a divorce.

- D. I had never heard until recent years that adultery was anything other than the illegal sexual relations between two parties. To say other than this is nothing but a cop-out.
- E. The claim is made that a person may commit adultery, but there is no such thing as living in adultery.
 - 1. Common sense tells you that as long as a couple continue to live together and continue to do that which constitutes adultery, that they continue to live in adultery.
 - 2. As long as a man continues to steal he continues to live the life of a thief.
- F. Brethren, we need to believe what GOD has said about marriage, divorce and remarriage.

III. WE NEED TO REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS SAID ABOUT REMISSION OF SINS.

- A. Remission of sins is connected with preaching (Luke 24:46-47).
 - 1. GOD'S plan involves the preaching of His word (I Cor. 1:21; John 6:44-45).
 - 2. Jesus commanded the apostles to go and preach (Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19-20).
 - 3. The book of Acts relates the faithfulness of the disciples doing what Jesus said (Acts 8:4).
- B. Remission of sins involves faith in Christ (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24).
- C. Remission of sins involves repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3).
 - 1. Repentance includes more than a GODLY sorrow (II Cor. 7:10).
 - 2. If repentance does not involve more than simply saying that one is sorry for his sins, then John lost his head in vain.

3. John the baptist told the people of his day that they needed to bring forth fruit meet for repentance (Matt. 2:8).
4. He was simply saying that they had to prove repentance by their action.
5. Again, common sense tells one that if he is stealing he must quit such when becoming a Christian. And the same is true of adultery. One must quit any sinful action in repentance.

D. Remission of sins involves baptism (Acts 2:38).

1. Baptism stood between Saul and having his sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
2. Baptism stands between us and salvation (Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21).

Conclusion:

1. GOD did what He told Paul He would do.
2. GOD will still do what He says He will do today.
3. Therefore we need to believe GOD to the point of doing exactly what He says on every subject.
4. Will you obey Him today?

Dewey Medlin Class of 1973

God's Relationship With His People

Introduction:

One of the most familiar books of the Bible is the book of Exodus. It tells, in marvelous detail, of the relationship between GOD and His people. This is a relationship that has existed in all of the various periods of GOD'S dealing with man and continues until today. Therefore, we would do well to understand it.

I. GOD HEARS, AND IS CONCERNED, ABOUT HIS PEOPLE.

- A. As the book of Genesis closed, His people were in Egypt as guests of the king.
- B. However, things have changed by the time of the events of Exodus 1.
 - 1. No longer are they guests, but slaves.
 - 2. The reason? 1:8.
- C. Now, at first glance it would seem that GOD had forgotten them.
 - 1. But then you come to 2:23-25.
 - 2. Notice: As soon as you read of their crying to GOD, He hears.
 - a. He had not forgotten them.
 - b. They had forgotten Him.
- D. Just as GOD heard them and cared for them, so He does for his children today.
 - 1. cf. II Peter 3:12.
 - 2. No night is so black that GOD cannot see, no tempest so loud that He cannot hear.

II. GOD DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE.

- A. What good would it have done the Hebrews if GOD had heard only?

- B. He is more than simply an observer, He is a helper.
- C. Therefore, He delivered them Chapters 3-12.
- D. Today we are in danger of bondage as well.
 - 1. Not necessarily physical slavery, but spiritual.
 - 2. Sin and Satan are taskmasters, ready and willing to enslave.
- E. Yet GOD will deliver us too: I Cor. 10:13; Gal. 1:4; II Peter 2:9.

III. GOD GUIDES HIS PEOPLE.

- A. When the Hebrews left Egypt, GOD did not abandon them, but provided them with guidance with the pillar of cloud/fire. (13:21).
- B. And again, He has not left us without guidance either.
 - 1. We do not wander through the wilderness of life just making the best of it.
 - 2. We have all of the guidance that we need in the Bible John 16:13; II Peter 1:3).

IV. GOD DISCIPLINES HIS PEOPLE.

- A. Notice the events of chapter 32.
 - 1. Did GOD bless His people in rebellion? Ignore their wrong? No!
 - 2. He disciplined them.
- B. Yet this is the same God who heard their cries, delivered them, and guided them.
 - 1. Why?
 - 2. For their own good.
- C. However, today we have the idea that discipline is a thing of the past.
 - 1. We seem to think that since GOD does not execute His discipline miraculously and

personally that He does not discipline at all.

2. Yet we are wrong.

D. Notice II Thessalonians 3:6, 14; I Corinthians 5.

V. GOD REWARDS HIS PEOPLE.

- A. In the very next chapter after you witness God's discipline; He sent them off toward "*a land flowing with milk and honey*" (33:1-3).
1. They did not deserve it, but if they would be faithful it could be theirs.
 2. What love!
- B. There is still a reward for the faithful child of GOD.
1. Hebrews 4:9.
 2. But there is a requirement, v. 11, "*Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest.*"
- C. We must do our part (Obey, Be faithful).
Have you done that?

<p>Jeff Clark Class of 1985</p>

The Christian In Suffering And Perseverance

I Peter 2:21-23; 4:12-16

Introduction:

1. The Text I Peter 4: 12-16
2. First Century Christians were under severe persecution.
3. Suffering for Christ should be a joy and not a burden (James 1:2).
4. Man has known suffering since the days of Adam (Gen. 3:17).
 - a. **Suffering:** Undergoing physical or mental pain, anguish, agony, of body or mind.
 - b. **Perseverance:** Steadfastness, with determination, diligence, and patience with the object of completing a task: overcoming a difficulty.
5. We have many Bible examples of suffering:
 - a. Job was known for his wealth (Job 1:3).
 - b. Moses was GOD'S servant (Heb. 11:24-25).
6. But we have a perfect example to follow, Jesus Christ (I Pet. 2:21-23).
7. There is only one way in which we can suffer and be pleasing to GOD (Matt. 5:10-12).
8. For us to suffer according to the approval of GOD, we must think like Christ (I Pet. 4:1)

I. HOW DID CHRIST SUFFER FOR US?

- A. He suffered for us when He left heaven.
 1. Heaven is described as a place where the water of life flows, precious stone, and the tree of life (Rev. 21,22).

2. Man is limited in describing such a place as heaven (II Cor. 12:4).
 3. Christ came to a world of sickness, sin, and sorrow.
- B. Christ humbled Himself, and died on the cross (Phil. 2:8).
1. Christ left an exalted position to the lowest.
 2. Often we want high places, but not Christ.
- C. Christ suffered while on this earth (Isa. 53:3-5).
1. Isaiah looks to the future event of the suffering savior.
 2. Christ knew what He would have to suffer on earth (John 1:11).
 3. Christ suffered for us physically.
- D. He suffered for us in His death.
1. The principle suffering was His death (Isa. 53:6; I Pet. 2:24).
 2. Christ died alone on the cross (Matt. 27:46; I Pet. 2:24).

II. THINGS THAT A CHRISTIAN WILL HAVE TO SUFFER.

- A. A Christian will have to suffer temptation.
1. Jesus was tempted by Satan (Matt. 4:1-11).
 2. Satan is waiting for every opportunity (I Pet. 5:8).
 3. The sin is not in the temptation but yielding to the temptation (James 1:14).
 4. One is never exempted from temptation because of his vocation (Eph. 1:4).
- B. A Christian may suffer physical persecution because of his vocation (Eph. 1:4).
1. Fiery trials may come our way (I Pet. 4:12).
 2. We may be tempted to deny Christ because of heavy persecution (John 18:177-27).
 3. We are approved of God if we are persecuted for righteousness sake (Matt. 5:10).

4. Paul suffered many things because he preached the gospel.

III. IN ALL THIS CHRIST ENDURED.

- A. Christ was made complete and became the author of eternal salvation because He endured the suffering (Heb. 5:8-9).
 1. If Christ had yielded to temptation and persecution we could not have salvation.
 2. He committed Himself unto GOD (I Pet. 2:24).
- B. Christ is our perfect example in suffering and perseverance (I Pet. 2:21-24).
 1. He is our saviour.
 2. He will be our judge (II Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25: 31-46).

Conclusion:

1. Christians will face persecution and suffering in their lifetime.
2. Paul said "walk worthy of the vocation where-with ye are called." (Eph. 4:1).
3. Christianity is a profession and not a hobby.
4. We must endure to the end even if it will cost us our life (Rev. 2:10).
5. We will receive the crown of life if we endure (James 1:12).

Joel Wheeler
Class of 1986

Will God Accept Your Baptism?

Introduction:

Recently in a study with one of another religious body, the question was asked: "*Now preacher, if I were to come to 'your' church would it be necessary for me to be baptized again?*" The men went on to point out that although the preacher didn't teach baptism for the remission of sins, he knew what baptism should be for and therefore he felt he was baptized correctly.

After further study it was learned that prayer had been offered for the forgiveness of his sins and the man was asked before baptism, "*Do you believe that GOD, for Christ sake, has forgiven your sins?*"

The man then, in essence, was asking if I would accept his baptism but was missing the important question, "*Will GOD accept my baptism?*"

I. WAS HIS BAPTISM THE ONE BAPTISM OF EPHESIANS 4:4-6?

- A. Though there were many baptisms mentioned in the Bible, there was **only one** after Christ's death, which anyone was ever commanded to obey (Acts 10:47-48).
 - 1. Holy Spirit baptism was a *promise* but never a *command*; and then limited to the apostles and possibly the household of Cornelius (Acts 1:4-5; 2:3-4).
 - 2. John's baptism was not valid after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension (Acts 18:24-26; 19:1-7).
 - 3. The baptism of fire was for the wicked and would be administered by GOD and Christ at the judgment (Matt. 3:10-12).

- B. Then what was the **one baptism** of Ephesians 4?
 - 1. It was a baptism of *water* (Acts 10:47).
 - a. It was a *burial* in water (Rom. 6:3-5).

- b. Subjects were *taken to* the water (Acts 8:36; 16:13-15, 33).
 - c. Action was on the part of the subjects and not the element (Acts 2:38).
- 2. The purpose of baptism was "*for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38).
 - a. Paul, though he prayed and fasted three days was not saved until after baptism (Acts 9:9-12; 22:16).
 - b. Peter said it is baptism that "*doth also now save us*" (1 Peter 3:21).
- 3. It is through baptism that we *get into Christ* (Gal. 3:27).
 - a. Baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3).
 - b. Christ's blood shed in His death (Matt. 26:28).
 - c. Contact Christ's blood in baptism (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:17-18).
 - d. Christ's blood shed for the church (Acts 20:28).
 - e. We are added by the Lord to the church with the proper baptism (Acts 2:41, 47).

II. WAS IT (BAPTISM) PRECEDED BY THE PROPER OBEDIENCE?

- A. The Bible teaches that we must have *faith*, but not faith only (James 2:24).
 - 1. Without the proper faith our baptism would not be acceptable (Heb. 11:6).
 - a. Must be a living and active faith (James 2:18).
 - b. We might believe (that is have faith) that our home is on fire, but if we don't act upon that belief and get out of the house, or put the fire out, will that faith do us any good? Can we be saved from the fires of hell without likewise acting upon our faith?
- B. The Bible also stresses the importance of

repentance (Acts 17:30).

1. What does it mean? To turn again. A change of mind that brings about a change of action.
 - a. It is the results of godly sorrow (II Cor. 7:10).
 - b. Being turned from the world and turned toward GOD.
 2. Repentance takes place in the mind of the sinner. This is why some who have repented truly of sins feel better toward themselves but sometimes fail to realize they must still be forgiven.
- C. Christ said those confessing Him before men would be confessed before the Father (Matt. 10:32-33).
1. How do you confess Christ (Rom. 10:9-10).
 - a. Christ's question to the apostles (Matt. 16:13-15).
 - b. Peter's answer (Matt. 16:16).
 2. If we are ashamed of Him in this life He will deny us before GOD.

Conclusion:

"Will GOD accept your baptism?" The question is not will this or that religious group accept your baptism, or will this or that individual accept your baptism but ***"will God accept it?"*** Were you baptized by immersion (burial) in water to contact the blood of Christ so that you might have the remission of your sins? Was this after you have believed in Christ, repented of past sins, and confessed Christ as the Son of GOD? If not, then can you know that GOD will accept your baptism? If not, why would you take a chance with the most valuable possession GOD has given you, the eternal soul (Mark 8:36-37)?

Charles Brady Class of 1971

The World

Galatians 1:4

Introduction:

The world, as used in the Bible has many meanings and inflections. **KOSMOS**: primarily order, arrangement, ornament, adornment. The earth (Matt. 13:35; John 21:25; Acts 17:34; Rom. 1:20). Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews (Rom. 11:12, 15). Humans in alienation from and in opposition to GOD (John 7:7; 8:23; James 1:27). Temporal possessions (Matt. 16:26).

AION: age, period of time (Matt. 28:19-20). **OIKOUMENE**: The inhabited earth.

There are many lessons one can learn from the Word of GOD in the context where these words are found.

I. THE GOD OF THIS WORLD AND HIS INFLUENCE (II Cor. 4:4-5).

- A. The gaining of this world (Matt. 16:26).
 - 1. The wives and riches of Solomon (I Kings 10:1ff). And yet Solomon left the Lord (I Kings 11:4, 8-9).
 - 2. The rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16ff).
 - 3. Our attitude toward material blessings (Matt. 6:19-34).

- B. The conforming to the world (Rom. 12:1-2).
 - 1. We are not to go back under our former sinful way of life (I Peter 1:14).
 - 2. One is in a worse condition if he goes back than he was before he became a Christian (II Peter 2:19ff).

- C. The friendship of/or to the world (James 4:4).
 - 1. Not being opposed to the social drink (I Peter 4:3).
 - 2. Being in favor of mixed swimming (I Tim. 2:8-12).
 - 3. Forsaking the assembly is wrong (Heb. 10:24-25).

- D. The love of the world (I John 2:15-17).
 - 1. Demas was drawn back to the world (II Tim. 4:10).
 - 2. The preachers attitude toward riches of this world (I Tim. 6:6-14).

- E. The lusts of this world (Titus 2:12).
 - 1. One is not to lust for the former lascivious way of life (I Peter 4:3-4; Eph. 4:17-20)
 - 2. We are blessed in the fact that we have the examples of former years (I Cor. 10:6-11; II Tim. 2:22).

II. ALMIGHTY GOD AND HIS INFLUENCE **(John 6:44-45, 63; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12).**

- A. The reconciling of the world (II Cor. 5:18-20). The commission to the apostles.
 - 1. We are reconciled to GOD by being in the one body, the church (Eph. 2:15-17; Col. 1:20-22).
 - 2. Christ suffered on the cross to reconcile us to GOD (Heb. 2:17-18).

- B. The crucifying of the world (Gal. 6:14).
 - 1. We are put to death the old man by obeying the gospel (Rom. 6:1-8).
 - 2. We continue to put to death the lusts of the flesh by the faith of Jesus; the teachings of the Spirit in the New Testament (Gal. 2:20; 5:24-26).

- C. We must be unspotted from the world (James 1:27).
 - 1. There were those at Sardis who had not "*defiled*" their garments (Rev. 3:4).
 - 2. The faithful child of GOD is to hate the garment spotted by the flesh (Jude 23).

- D. Satan does have his influence. But, the Lord is greater and stronger. And He will help us if we allow him (Psm. 18:1-2; Phil. 4:13). The Lord

does this through His word.

1. We are to answer with, "*It is written...*" (Matt. 4:1-11).
2. The Lord provides the "*way of escape*" through His word (I Cor. 10:13).
3. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation (II Peter 2:9; Psm. 34:17-19).
4. One must do his own part in becoming a Christian and in being a faithful child of GOD (Rom. 10:17; John 8:21-24; Luke 13:3-5; Acts 8:37; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:47; I John 1:6-9; Rev. 2:10; James 4:7-8).

Edward Lee Davis
Class of 1985

Prayer As Worship

Introduction:

1. Proper New Testament worship is GOD'S worship. GOD is the one to honor. So we must listen to Him.
2. We must have Bible authority for everything we do in the realm of religion (Col. 3:17).
3. What does GOD tell us to do in the church as acts of worship?
 - a. Congregational singing (Heb. 2:12).
 - b. Scripture reading (Col. 4:16).
 - c. Prayer (I Tim. 2:8).
 - d. Communion (Acts 20:7).
 - e. Preaching and teaching GOD'S Word (II Tim. 4:1-4).
 - f. Giving (I Cor. 16:1-2).
4. Our subject today, is *PRAYER AS WORSHIP*. The subject itself indicates that prayer is worship.
 - a. In fact, prayer is the general word for worship and praise unto Jehovah GOD.
 - b. Prayer involves (Eph. 4:18; Phil. 4:6):
 - (1) Thanksgiving and praise
 - (2) Supplication or asking for what we need from GOD.
5. Worship means to pay homage and respect unto GOD. The prime meaning of worship is "*to bow down.*" In worship we are to praise, adore, and exalt His Holy name.

I. THE IMPORANCE OF PRAYER.

- A. Prayer being the privilege of communion with GOD, is one of the great spiritual blessings we as Christians have after obeying the gospel of Christ.
- B. Yet the privilege of prayer is grossly neglected in the lives of Christians. And if one is too busy to pray then that person is just *too* busy.

- C. Prayer is a command of GOD.
 - 1. Luke 18:1
 - 2. I Thess. 5:17
 - 3. Phil. 4:6
 - 4. Lack of prayer is more than just weakness, it is a sign of unbelief, and it is a sin.

- D. Prayerlessness is a sin. Lack of prayer in one's life is:
 - 1. A sin against GOD
 - 2. A sin against oneself.
 - 3. A sin against our fellow man.

- E. *"Prayer will make a man cease from sin, but sin will make a man cease from prayer."* Proper prayer will prevent one from sinning (Luke 6:12; Matt. 26:41; Matt. 7:7-8).

- F. It is of extreme importance that Christians know how to pray. Prayer is a privilege and a duty. Prayer is the utterance of faith (James 1:6).

II. VARIOUS KINDS OF PRAYERS.

- A. There are different kinds of prayers:
 - 1. Private prayers (Matt. 6:6).
 - 2. Family prayers.
 - 3. Public prayers (Acts 2:42; I Tim. 2:8; James 5:16).

- B. When we assemble on the Lord's day for worship we pray together as an act of worship. We send up our prayers and petitions together to GOD'S throne.

- C. Yet there are dangers in public prayer. One of the dangers of public prayer, is the tendency to show off.

- D. The man who publicly prays to show that he is a saint is not a saint. It is so easy to try to impress someone in the audience, or to wonder what others are thinking.

- E. We must pray to GOD in sincerity. It is when we are alone with GOD in secret prayer that we can most deeply realize our dependence on Him.
- F. If we are praying publicly we ought to put thought and preparation into our prayers. And if we are leading prayers publicly we should give thought to the needs of those we are leading in prayer.
- G. We should not use vain repetitions (Matt. 6:7).
 1. Sometimes we repeat the same words and expressions in prayer.
 2. So many times our public and private prayers consist of the same words and cliches.
- H. Our prayer life should be characterized by freshness, considering that each day brings new blessings and challenges.
- I. Those who lead in public prayers, should make their prayers uplifting, edifying, helpful, sincere and reverent.

III. TO WHOM IS PRAYER TO BE ADDRESSED?

- A. Prayer is to be addressed to GOD the Father (Eph. 3:14-15; Matt. 6:9).
- B. Jesus commanded us to pray to the Father (John 14:24).
- C. We are to close our prayers in the name of Jesus (John 14:24; Eph. 5:20).
- D. Prayer is to be addressed or directed to "*GOD the Father*" and never to Jesus.

IV. GOD ONLY ANSWERS THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE.

- A. GOD only answers the prayer of His people. One must be a Christian in order to have his prayers answered.

- B. All people are GOD'S creatures, but only those who obey the gospel of Christ are GOD'S children (John 9:31; I Peter 3:12).
- C. Some peoples prayers are not answered because they are religiously wrong (John 9:31).
- D. One must be a faithful Christian in order for GOD to answer his or her prayers. Sin in the life of a Christian will hinder his prayer life (Psm. 66:18).
- E. There are some people who don't pray (James 4:2). And there are others whose prayers do not reach the ceiling, because they ask for the wrong things and with the wrong motives (James 4:3).
- F. Prayer is conditional. We must ask according to the will of GOD (I John 5:14; Phil. 4:19).
- G. A Christian with some unconfessed, unrepented sins in his life cannot get his or her prayers answered.
- H. A worldly Christian cannot get his or her prayers answered (James 1:7-9; 4:4).

V. DOES GOD ALWAYS ANSWER PRAYER?

- A. Yes, GOD always answers prayer. Sometimes GOD says "yes" and sometimes GOD says "no" (II Cor. 12:6-9).
- B. We must be willing to wait on the Lord's time in answering. Always remember that whatever GOD says, HE WILL DO (I John 5:14; Phil. 4:19)!
- C. We must pray in the right spirit and with the understanding (I Cor. 14:15).
- D. When GOD commands us to do something, He is not going to set that aside because we ask Him to. GOD will not save a man without obedience to the gospel (Rom. 1:16; II Thess. 1:6-9).

- E. When GOD commands us to do something that has got to be done; all the prayers in the world will not set that obligation aside.
- F. Prayer is not a substitute for work and intelligence.
- G. GOD will not interfere with the free moral agency of man. No mighty angels will descend to force men to do what they will resist.

VI. WE MUST BE SINCERE AND HAVE A SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE IN PRAYER.

- A. James 4:7 says, "*Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*" Prayer is a part of our warfare. And Satan will try to hinder us from praying.
- B. Satan can put thoughts into your minds, and he can take thoughts out (John 13:2). We must stand against the devil in prayer.
- C. The devil fears our prayers. The devil knows that we can defeat him with prayer.
- D. Another reason that our prayers are not answered is that our prayers are sometimes half-hearted, and soon forgotten.
- E. We must be serious about GOD and take Him seriously. Many times we don't mean business with GOD.
- F. James 5:16 tells us the prayer that is answered is fervent prayer.
- G. May GOD forgive the coldness, half-hearted, and lazy attitude that some have in their prayers.

Conclusion:

1. It is awfully important that Christians know how to pray.

2. We are commanded to pray.
3. Failure to pray is a sin. The reason that we enter temptation so easily is that we fail to pray as we should.
4. We are to come to GOD not only asking Him what we need but also praising His wonderful name.
5. Prayer is to be addressed to Jehovah GOD; and we are to close our prayers in the name of Jesus.
6. GOD does not answer a sinner's prayer; neither does he answer an unfaithful Christian's prayers.

Willie Cox
Class of 1980

Launch Out Into The Deep

Introduction:

1. The first disciples are called (Luke 5:1-11).
 - a. The Lord challenged the disciples to launch out into the deep. As Christians we too must be willing to leave the shore and launch out into the deep.
 - b. When we first obey the gospel we are in the shallows, but we are not to stay there. We are to grow until there is more depth to our Christian life.

2. Growth in Christ (II Pet. 1:5-8).
 - a. Deeper and deeper in our love, knowledge, commitment, faith and joy!
 - b. Song: "Deeper and deeper".

I. INTO THE HEART OF JESUS (*Love*).

- A. *"Seeking to know the reason why He should love me so."* (John 3:16)?
 1. The love of Christ passages knowledge (Eph. 3:14-19).
 2. The why is beyond understanding.

- B. *"Why He should stoop to lift me up from the miry clay, Saving my soul, making me whole, Tho' I had wandered away"*.
 1. To appreciate the love of Christ we must realize what He have up — Heaven; What He suffered (Matt. 27:46); What this means to us (Eph. 2:1).
 2. Song: "My Savior's Love".

II. INTO THE WILL OF JESUS (*Commitment*).

- A. *"Praying for grace to follow, seeking His way to*

know." (II Pet. 1:2; 3:17, 18).

1. Knowledge of GOD'S Word should lead us to submit (James 1:21-25).
2. We must be willing to humble ourselves and submit to His will (I Pet. 5:6).

B. *"Bidding Him take, brake me and make,
Till I am molded and meet."* (Luke 5:8-11).

1. Must go deeper and deeper into our commitment till we can say as Jesus in all things *"Thy will be done."*
2. Song: "Have Thine Own Way Lord".

III. INTO THE CROSS OF JESUS (Faith)

A. *"Following thro' the garden facing the dreaded foe,"*
(Heb. 9:27).

1. We all have an appointment with death. There are temptations and trials to be faced in every life! ALL OF US (II Tim. 3:12).
2. Drinking the cup of sorrow, sobbing with broken heart: O Savior help! Grace for my weakness impart." (Matt. 6:13).

B. There are temptations but we have the Lord's promise (I Cor. 10:13). Trials to face but He has said, Rom. 8:18.

1. Even in death we have hope (Rev. 2:10; Psalms 23:4).
2. Song: "It is well with my soul".

IV. INTO THE JOY OF JESUS (Contentment)

A. *"rising with soul enraptured far from the world below"* (Eph. 1:3).

1. Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:39); Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25).
2. We can rejoice always as Christians (I Thess. 5:16-18).

B. *"Joy in the place of sorrow, peace in the midst of pain"* (Phil. 4:4, 6, 7).

1. *"Jesus will give, Jesus will give; He will*

uphold and sustain."

2. Song: "Blessed Assurance"

Conclusion:

1. Assurance for the child of GOD/no hope for those out of Christ!
 - a. This is why the gospel is preached — invitation extended.
 - b. We begin in the shallows. As we grow - launch out into the deep.
2. Into the heart of Jesus - Love; Into the will of Jesus - Commitment; Into the cross of Jesus - Faith; Into the joy of Jesus - Contentment.
 - a. Cannot stay in the shallows. The longer we are Christians the more depth there should be to our Christian life...more understanding...knowledge...patience... love...faith...etc...
 - b. Luke 5:11
 - c. Song: "I Surrender All"

<p>Steven C. Nowlin Class of 1981</p>

Love Shown Is Love Known

Matthew 22:34-40

Introduction:

Someone once said, "*Love shown is love known.*" In many communities, and throughout the world, there are people who do not know love because it is not being shown to them. Thus the opposite statement, "*Love not shown is love not known,*" is a painful daily reality for them. Such would not be the case if many would follow the supreme, divine and eternal examples of GOD and His love.

I. HOW DID GOD MAKE HIS LOVE KNOWN?

- A. He showed it.
- B. The apostle John wrote much about GOD'S love.
 - 1. GOD loves the world (John 3:16).
 - 2. GOD loves us by calling us sons (I John 3:1, 16).
- C. GOD did not just say, "*I love the world or I love you,*" and then not show His love.
- D. The love of GOD is seen by the fact that everything has been provided for man's physical and spiritual benefit (James 1:17).
 - 1. The creation of this world is a demonstration of GOD'S love (Gen. 1:1; Psm. 19:1-5).
 - 2. Man's spiritual well being is seen in the sacrifice of GOD'S Son (Eph. 1:3; John 3:16).

II. HOW DID JESUS CHRIST MAKE HIS LOVE KNOWN?

- A. He showed it.

- B. Many times the Lord demonstrated His compassion for others.
1. Jesus showed His love for the widow of Nain (Luke 7:13).
 2. He showed His love for the lost (Matt. 9:36).
 3. He showed His love for those possessed with demons (Mark 9:22).
 4. He showed His love for the sick (Mark 1:41).
 5. He demonstrated His love by teaching others.
 - a. Nicodemus (John 3).
 - b. The woman of Samaria (John 4).
- C. While in the upper room, He told His disciples about the greatest love one can show.
1. For one to lay down His life for another (John 15:13).
 2. Christ laid down His life for all who obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9).
- D. Thus, Christ's love is evident because He showed that love on the cross two thousand years ago.

III. HOW DOES ONE MAKE HIS LOVE KNOWN TO OTHERS?

- A. He shows it.
- B. Love is to be shown in marriages.
1. Husbands and wives are to love each other (Eph. 5:21-23).
 2. A marriage will not last long if love is not demonstrated.
- C. Love is to be shown in families.
1. Runaways often say the reason they don't want to be at home is because there is no love in their families.
 2. Fathers are to show love to their children (Eph. 6:4).
 3. Mothers are to show love to their children (Titus 2:4).
 4. Children are to show love to their parents (Eph. 6:1-3).

- D. Love is to be shown to neighbors.
1. Showing love to neighbors is above sacrifice (Mark 12:30-34).
 2. "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:25-37)?
 3. Love for neighbors must be shown and not merely spoken (James 2:15-17; I John 3:16-18).
 4. One will be judged in the last day by how he treated his neighbors (Mat. 25:31-46).

IV. HOW DOES ONE MAKE HIS LOVE KNOWN FOR AND TO GOD AND JESUS CHRIST?

- A. He shows it.
- B. One is to love them.
1. Because they first loved him (I John 4:19).
 2. He is not to love in word only (I John 3:18).
- C. How is one to demonstrate his love for GOD and what He has done?
1. To merely remark that one loves GOD and what He did for mankind is not enough (Matt. 7:21).
 2. One must keep the commandments of GOD (I John 5:2-3; John 14:15, 23).
- D. What does GOD command that one is to do in order to show his love?
1. The non-Christian must become a Christian.
 - a. Hear the word (Rom. 10:17).
 - b. Believe the word (Heb. 11:6).
 - c. Repent of past sins (Acts 17:30).
 - d. Confess with the mouth that Jesus is the Son of GOD (Rom. 10:10; Matt. 10:32).
 - e. Be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 2. The Christian must be faithful in following GOD'S Word to the end of life.

Conclusion:

GOD showed His great love for you by giving the greatest and best gift, His son. Jesus showed His love for you by giving His life for you. You can have your sins washed away by the blood of Jesus and have eternal life, if you will demonstrate your love for the Heavenly Father by obeying His will. Have you made known your love to Him yet?

C. Stephen Law
Class of 1983

Introduction To II Timothy

Introduction:

1. One of the most important books of the New Testament is Second Timothy.
2. This epistle should increase the faith of Christians everywhere.
3. This epistle should be read and re-read by preachers and Christians to enhance their faith and keep them preaching the pure gospel of Christ.

I. PAUL'S LAST EPISTLE.

- A. Mainly personal rather than a doctrinal letter.
- B. Paul facing imminent death at the hands of Nero.
 1. Imprisoned for the second time in Rome (1:8; 2:9).
 2. Nero began persecuting Christians around A.D. 64, and passed the blame on to them for his burning of Rome.
 3. Paul was placed in jail as an evildoer for the gospel (2:9).
- C. Paul is alone except for Luke (4:11).
- D. Timothy apparently is still in Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3).
- E. He was often visited by Onesiphorus. In spite of Paul's condition, he cheered and refreshed him (1:16).
- F. He longs to see Timothy again (4:9).
- G. After a lifetime of service and suffering for Christ, victory for Paul is now just around the corner (4:6, 21).

II. PAUL'S LAST CONCERNS.

- A. If you were in prison, what would be your last concerns?
- B. Fatherly concern for Timothy (1:2,4).
- C. Concern for the continuance of the gospel (2:2).
- D. Concerned with the preservation of the purity of the gospel (3:15-17).

III. PAUL'S LAST APPEALS.

- A. Appeals to brave adherence of the gospel by Timothy (1:3-18).
- B. Appeals for steadfastness and endurance in the work of the Lord (2:1-13).
- C. Appeals to Timothy to follow his example (3:10-13).
- D. Appeals for faithful preaching of the word in light of the coming apostasy (4:1-8).

IV. PAUL'S LAST WARNINGS.

- A. Not just to Timothy, but to those of all ages.
- B. Study (2:15).
- C. Shun vain and profane babblings (2:16).
- D. Sad times coming (3:1ff).
- E. Sound in the word (4:2).

V. PAUL'S FINAL INSTRUCTIONS AND FAREWELLS.

- A. May be put to death anytime, but he is not ruffled (4:6-8, 17).
- B. Last charge to Timothy to go on preaching GOD'S message (3:14).

- C. Paul's fellow missionaries (Titus, Tychichus, Trophimus, etc.), are all away; Trophimus is sick, and Demas has defected (4:10, 20).
- D. Paul was all alone at his first trial, but he knew GOD was with him (4:16).
- E. Winter was setting in and he wants his cloak, books and papers (4:13).
- F. He has Luke with him and the faithful Christians at Rome to warm his heart, and the hope that Timothy and Mark will reach him in time.

VI. PAUL'S LAST DAYS.

- A. There is no record in the inspired text as to what happened to Paul after this. However, early tradition and the apostolic fathers, among them Clement, a companion of Paul (Phil. 4:3), have written that shortly after this epistle, within a few months, Paul had his second hearing, was sentenced to death by execution, was led out of the city by the Ostian gate to three fountains and there beheaded.
- B. Thanks be to GOD that we have these admonitions from this great man.
 1. Remember our upbringing as Christians and hold fast (Chap. one).
 2. Study (Chap. two).
 3. Beware of perilous times (Chap. three).
 4. Stick to the word, and avoid the philosophies of men (Chap. four).

Conclusion:

1. Let us close the way the apostle Paul did. The last thing this inspired man wrote: "*Grace be with you. Amen.*" (II Tim. 4:22).

<p>Bill Brandstatter Class of 1988</p>
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A Higher Calling In Speech

Introduction:

How we talk is a very important topic to consider as Christians. Speech is a very basic element of our existence. We live in a talkative society; radio, television, one-on-one and group conversations, and so on, all involve talking. Some even talk so much, they talk in their sleep.

But the issue is not how much people talk, but rather maintaining purity in speech, so as to glorify the name of God and cause people to be saved. Jesus got right down to the problem (Matt. 12:34-37; 15:18,19).

I. THE PROBLEM STATED.

- A. The present society in which we live.
 - 1. Totally corrupted by impure speech.
 - a. People use it in general conversation angry or not.
 - b. Virtually no restraint on TV, in films, radio, etc..
 - c. It even found its way into the Living Bible (e.g., I Sam. 20:30)!
 - 2. It is so disgracefully commonplace, many no longer even recognize it for what it is when they hear it. (A preacher's daughter told her parents that a movie she went to see was excellent. The parents were aware of many usages of Gods' name being used in vain in the film. Her dad paid her way to see it a second time so she could "listen" to it. The girl was shocked at what she heard and had failed to discern the first time she saw it).
- B. It has not always been accepted.
 - 1. Leviticus 24:15,16 (Put to death).
 - 2. In 1745, the "*Profane Oaths Acts*" was passed

in England which made profanity punishable by the courts.

3. On August 3, 1776, George Washington wrote, I am sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing, a vice here tofore little known in the American army is growing into fashion. I hope that the officers will, by example and influence, endeavor to check it; and that both they and the men will reflect, that we have but little hope of the blessing of heaven on our arms, if we insult Him by piety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low....that every man of sense and character detests and despises it.
4. But things are so different now. I know of a young Christian man who recently declared himself to be a "*Conscientious Objector*" and got out of the U.S. Army because the language was so awful he felt it to be damaging to his religious convictions.

C. The situation is even critical among Christians.

1. Not outright "*cussing*" so much.
2. But widespread profanity. Profanity: using things sacred in a non-sacred way. It is not the same thing as cursing, as such, though the two frequently mix. Cursing can be right or wrong.
3. Due to a lack of instruction, Christians often do not even realize what they are doing. They use euphemisms, which is nothing more than substitute profanity.

II. THE CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM.

A. Many have a blatant disrespect for God's word.

1. The Bible is very explicit on the subject.
2. In both testaments.
 - a. Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12
 - b. Rom. 3:14; Col. 3:8; James 3:10 (we hear people like this often).

- B. A weakness of intellect.
1. Some have no concern for what comes out of their mouths, no matter when, where, or any other circumstance.
 2. God instructed the people to “*learn to do well*”. (Isa. 1:17)
 - a. We can learn better if we do not know better.
 - b. We have dictionaries, (some very large), full of good words.
 - c. Must slow down and be careful with our words (Prov. 29:20).
- C. Ignorance.
1. Starts in childhood when adults laugh at children using dirty words.
 2. Parents may instruct incorrectly by telling children to substitute euphemisms.
 3. Substitution is unacceptable (cf. James 5:12).
Euphemism: a word, generally used in mild oaths, substituted for something sacred.
 - a. Many examples can be read from dictionaries.
 - b. **Gee, golly, gosh, gee whiz, thank goodness, Gad, Egad:** all refer to God and Christ. But these are usages of their names in vain, i.e., profane usages.
 - c. Darn - damn; heck - hell, etc.
- D. A desire to be “*cool*.”
1. Young people especially want to be “*with it*.” It is “*in*”; it’s the “*latest thing*”. They have a language all their own.
 2. But neither young nor old can conform to this world and its ways.
 - a. Rom. 12:1,2 - (be not conformed).
 - b. I Cor. 15:33 - (let’s not “*join the crowd*.”)

III. ATTACKING THE PROBLEM

- A. Correct ourselves.

1. We must make our own selves right first (Matt. 7:1-5).
 2. Job 27:4; Psa. 39:1; 141:3; Prov. 19:1; 25:11; Eph. 4:29.
- B. Bring it to people's attention.
1. Many simply do not know better, including Christians.
 2. Christian brothers and sisters should appreciate this concern by fellow-saints.
- C. I Cor. 15:33; Stay away from people, books, movies, etc., that are bent on bad language.

Conclusion:

1. James 1:26 - Let us be called to "*A Higher Calling in Speech.*"
2. Invitation: The sweetest thing one can ever say is "*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*" (Acts 8:37). Romans 10:9,10. Do like the eunuch: confess and be baptized for the remission of sins.

<p>Michael R. Hughes Class of 1977</p>
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The Greatness And Rewards Of Service

Mark 10:35-45

Introduction:

Our context reveals that James and John had asked the Lord for an exalted position in the Kingdom. This was a natural desire from a carnal point of view. However, that request upset the other apostles. Jesus calls them together to explain that greatness and Lordship over men is recognized in the Gentile world, but not so in the kingdom.

Jesus uses a paradox to teach this truth, *"True greatness is not found in exalted positions and lordship over men, but in servitude to mankind."* This is a principle that is true not only in the spiritual realm but politically, socially and economically. Let us note some areas and rewards of service in the kingdom.

I. BIBLE TERMS THAT DENOTE THE NATURE OF SPIRITUAL SERVICE.

- A. Servant — *"Text"* *"G. K. Dulos."*
 - 1. To enslave — to be in bondage — to serve — to be under.
 - 2. Paul refers to himself this way, Phil. 1:1; Rom. 1:1 (by choice and not force).
 - 3. We should feel this way when we understand the Lordship of Christ (Acts 2:26).

- B. Minister: *"Deaconos"* Text.
 - 1. To serve — work of ministering — to minister to.
 - 2. Refers to work of Deacons — work of evangelist (II Tim. 4:5).
 - 3. It is something we are to train for (Eph. 4:11-12).
 - 4. A congregation of 200 has 200 ministers.
 - 5. Let us study areas of Christian service.

II. SERVICE TO GOD, CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

- A. Respect for the sovereignty and authority of GOD.
 - 1. This is said to be the “*whole*” duty of man (Eccl. 12:13), Explain.
 - 2. His sovereignty is demonstrated in creation providence, grace.
 - 3. His authority is summed up in commandment keeping or respect for the Bible (cf. Eccl. 12:13; II Tim. 3:16-17; I John 5:3).
 - 4. This is an underlying principal of all service and worship. (Praying, singing, preaching, giving, Lord’s supper).

- B. Obedience to Christ and submission to His Lordship.
 - 1. Before we will obey we must submit (Matt 16:24).
 - 2. Obedience to Christ’s command in becoming a Christian.
 - 3. Walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:4-6).

- C. Seeking first the kingdom (Matt. 16:31), “*what is involved?*”
 - 1. Giving ourselves as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2).
 - 2. Seeking the righteousness of GOD.
 - 3. Faithful and regular attendance in worship.

III. SERVICE TO OUR FELLOW MAN.

- A. Seek and save the lost (Matt. 28:19-20 “*great commission*”).
 - 1. Must develop a love and concern for them (Rom. 10:1; 9:3).
 - 2. Have we lost our concern for the lost? We don’t go — commune around our building — watered down preaching — neglect of minorities.

- B. “*Show him the way,*” “*by life we live*” (II Cor. 3:2; Matt. 5:13,16).

- C. Be benevolent to him (Gal. 6:10).

IV. SERVICE TO ONE ANOTHER “As Brethren.”

- A. There is to be a special closeness in the church.
1. Brethren — “*Common yoke fellows.*”
 2. Vineyard — spiritual house, spiritual body (I Cor. 12:12-27).
- B. What service do we owe one another?
1. Love one another (John 13:35; I Cor. 13:4-8).
 2. Speak not evil one of another (James 4:11).
 3. Forgive one another (I Cor. 12:25; Heb. 10:24).
 4. Care one for another (I Cor. 12:25; Heb. 10:24).
 5. Pray one for another (James 5:16).
 6. When need arises “*restore*” one another (Gal. 6:1-2).

V. REWARDS FOR SERVICE.

- A. Obedience to commands is for our benefit (I John 5:3).
- B. We are promised providential care (Matt. 6:33).
- C. Broaden our circle of friends.
- D. Create an abundant and happy life (John 10:10; Matt. 5:4-11; Acts 20:35).
- E. Hear the Lord say, “*well done thy good and faithful servant*” (Matt. 25:21-27).

Calvin Barber Class of 1968

The Mistakes Of Peter

(By Today's Standards)

Introduction:

1. Acts 2:14-40 records Luke's account of the first gospel sermon proclaimed after the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, as foretold in Daniel 2, Joel 2 and Isaiah 2.
2. It seems logical, to me, that this sermon, which was wholly inspired by the Holy Spirit, would serve as an ideal pattern after which to model sermons today.
3. It is heartbreaking to think that this sermon would be totally unacceptable in some religious circles today; both within and without the Lord's church. Peter and the eleven, on this occasion, failed to cater to man's "*felt needs*" and desires. We should not be surprised that many find fault with Peter's lesson, for TRUTH is seldom popular among those who follow Satan.

I. LET US EXAMINE SOME MISTAKES PETER MADE, IF JUDGED BY TODAY'S STANDARDS.

- A. The lesson was not designed to entertain.
 1. He forgot to make people laugh.
 2. He provided no amusements to hold the young people.
 3. No gimmicks were employed to draw and hold folks (John 12:32).
- B. Peter relied heavily on Scripture.
 1. It has been said of preaching in our day, "*The more Scripture a preacher quotes, the less he knows.*" Peter must have been mighty dumb.
 2. In this sermon the inspired speaker quotes and applies no less than five sections of

Scripture. Almost half of his lesson is made up of Old Testament quotations.

- C. In Acts 2:14, 36; Peter assumed that one could **know** truth.
 - 1. Today many have rejected the idea that we can know, (be certain), that one is right religiously.
 - 2. All hope of our salvation rests on our ability to know truth (John 8:32). If one cannot know truth, then:
 - a. Jesus is a liar.
 - b. We cannot be made free.

- D. Peter, in Acts 2:23, broke a cardinal rule when he named specific sin.
 - 1. Today's trend is a desire to hear sins, watered down, talk; being careful never to offend anyone.
 - 2. II Tim. 4:1-5 must still be the guideline for the successful preacher.

- E. Acts 2:37 shows that Peter made folks feel guilty.
 - 1. The cry today is to help people feel good about themselves, rather than feel the guilt of sin.
 - 2. It is that guilt, **GODLY** sorrow, which leads men to repentance (II Cor. 7:9,10).

Conclusion:

- 1. Acts 2:38-40, the same old invitation.
- 2. When asked, "*What shall we do?*"
 - a. Peter didn't say, "*Nothing, you already believe, that's enough.*"
 - b. He didn't say, "*Pray till you get a sign from heaven*" or any other popular false doctrine.
- 3. Peter said to those believers, "*Repent, and be baptized for (in order to) the remission of sins.*"
 - a. This same plan is in effect today.
 - b. Some may scoff at the giving of the plan today, but it still stands.

4. If you are not a Christian won't you be one?
 - a. After believing, repent (Luke 13:3, 5).
 - b. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10).
 - c. Be baptized that your sins might be removed (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-5).

A. Dean Gittings, Jr.
Class of 1980

The Treasures Of The Snow

Job 38:22

Introduction:

1. GOD is the GOD of nature — not “*mother nature*” (Psm. 19:1).
2. Snow and ice cause us much concern, yet they offer opportunities to see the glory of GOD.
3. “*Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?*”

I. SNOW IS IN GOD’S PLAN FOR NATURE.

- A. Job 37:6, Snow was given by command of GOD and as proof of His wisdom and righteousness.
- B. John 38:29, Does snow come from man or GOD?
- C. Psalm 147:16
- D. Psalm 147:17 (Ice equals hail)
- E. Psalm 148:8, Snow is shown with things that praise the Lord (cf. 148:7).
- F. Job 38:22, GOD is saying in effect, “*Can you explain the phenomenon, the beauty of the crystals, and formation of the snow? Have you been to the point of origin? Do you understand the beneficial effects of snow fall (supplying nitrogen to the soil)?*”

II. SNOW IS A BLESSING AND A SIGN OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE SEASONS

- A. II Sam. 23:20, The season of snow is a time of year known by man.
- B. Job 24:19 — The melting of snow in the heat of the spring and summer indicates the changing of the

seasons as GOD has planned.

- C. Prov. 25:13, The snow of Lebanon or Hermon was used in drinks to refresh, there was no man-made refrigeration back then.
- D. Prov. 26:1, Snow is unseasonable and out of place in the summer time of the year.
- E. Isaiah 55:10, Snow nourishes, fertilizes (provides nitrogen); some crops require cold weather; and cold weather kills insects.
- F. Jeremiah 18:14, Will one leave the coolness of the melting snow waters which refresh so for another place?

III. SNOW IS USED IN THE WORD OF GOD TO REPRESENT WHITENESS AND PURITY

- A. Exodus 4:6, This was a sign from the Lord for Moses.
- B. Numbers 12:10, She, with Aaron, had spoken against Moses. GOD smote her, Moses interceded for her, and she had to stay outside the camp for seven days. After seven days, she returned to normal and the camp moved on.
- C. II Kings 5:27, Recount the story of the actions of Gehazi, servant of Elisha.
- D. Lamentations 4:7, The Nazarites were pure from clean and obedient living.
- E. Job 9:30
- F. Psalm 68:14, The land was covered with bones; thus, appearing to be as if covered with snow.

IV. SNOW IS USED IN THE WORD OF GOD TO REPRESENT PURITY OF GOD.

- A. Daniel 7:9, Splendor, not just color, like the sun shining on snow in its brilliance, and honor and purity are represented.
- B. Matthew 28:3, Said of the angel of the Lord who appeared to the women at the tomb.
- C. Mark 9:3, Said of Jesus at the transfiguration.
- D. Revelation 1:14, Said of the Son of man (Christ).

V. SNOW IS USED IN THE BIBLE TO REPRESENT PURITY OF MAN.

- A. Lamentations 4:7, By their clean life.
- B. Psalm 51:7, David desired cleansing represented by the "*hyssop*" (a plant used in their ceremonial washings). David desires his defilement be removed that he may be entirely clean.
- C. Isaiah 1:18, Scarlet was double-dyed (permanent), cleansing could not be accomplished by human agency — only by the Lord.

Conclusion:

- 1. GOD has blessed us with **all** that we need (II Peter 1:3).
- 2. GOD has blessed us with the opportunity to have our old sin-stained soul washed in the blood of Christ, and be made **whiter than snow** (Acts 22:16).
- 3. Hear GOD'S call: Isaiah 1:18.

Song: "*Though your sins be as scarlet*" or "*Whiter than snow.*"

Bobby Liddell Class of 1979

Fearfully Looking For The Judgment

Hebrews 10:26-31

Introduction:

1. There are many things that cause fear in man (movie; near accident; bad news, disease, etc.)
2. Fear also comes to those who ponder the subject of the judgment.
3. The question we all need to ask ourselves is: "*Where will I spend eternity?*" The Bible speaks of only two places.
 - a. Hell: a place described in the Bible as a place of torment, destruction, an abode of the sinful (Rev. 21:8).
 - b. Heaven: a beautiful city where Christ, God, angels, and the saved will have everlasting peace and rest (Matt. 25:46).
4. We need to decide which place we would rather spend our never-ending eternity in.
5. Let us look at how the Hebrew writer explains what happens to those who choose not to follow Christ (I Peter 2:21).

I. WILFUL SIN (V. 26-27).

- A. Definition: A sin of habit; one committed with open violation to God's law (Vine's Expository Dict. of N. T. Words).
- B. Matthew 10:33.
 1. We deny Christ by wilfully sinning, and bring Him to open shame.
 2. "*No more sacrifice,*" there is no other sacrifice to be made for sin (cf. Gal. 5:4).
- C. Hebrews 10:27.
 1. This is the condition of those who have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

2. How do we look for the judgment (fearfully), (II Thess. 1:7-9), or with anticipation, (Matt. 25:23; II Tim. 4:8)?

II. SORE PUNISHMENT (Vs. 28-29).

A. Verse 28, (describe punishment under Old Law).

B. Verse 29.

1. Heb. 2:3; 6:6.
2. John 3:18
3. Luke 12:47-48 (cf. James 4:17).
4. The use of the word "*sanctified*" (v. 29) shows clearly that the subject in question was once a faithful Christian, a true child of God, one set apart.
5. But now he is a child of the devil, an enemy of righteousness (cf. Matt. 12:30).

C. "*Despite unto the Spirit*" (Matt. 12:32 — explain).

III. "*Vengeance Is Mine*" (Vs. 30-31).

A. "*We know Him.*"

1. That is, we know His character; that He is the God of truth.
2. We know that He will certainly execute His punishment upon His enemies while at the same time fulfill all His promises that He has made unto His children (cf. II Peter 3:9a).

B. "*Vengeance belongeth unto me*" (Deut. 33:35).

1. Cf. John 5:20-29.
2. Some claim today that He is a loving God, therefore He will not punish anyone, but be forgiving to all.
 - a. It is true that He is a loving God (I John 4:8), but He is also a God that keeps His promises (cf. II Peter 3:9a; II Thess. 1:8).
 - b. One of His promises is that He will punish those who do not obey Him (Luke 13:3, 5).

- C. *"The Lord shall judge His people"* (Deut. 33:36).
1. God is so very just and righteous that He will not allow the sins of His own people to go unpunished.
 2. Example: children of Israel in the wilderness; Ananias and Sapphira (cf. Num. 21; Acts 5).
- D. Verse 31.
1. If God is infinite, holy and just (and He is), it must be indescribably awful to fall into His hands to be punished for ever and ever.
 2. The place where those to be punished are sent is described as a place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth; a place of pain and anguish; a place of never-ending destruction.
 3. How terrible it would be to live eternally in a place such as this, especially when we have a place of everlasting peace and joy awaiting us.

Conclusion:

1. II Peter 2:20-22; Matthew 12:45.
2. I John 1:8-10.
3. II Peter 2:9

D. M. Boyd Class of 1987

Men Needed

Introduction:

In today's world where the doctrines of the hour are humanism, liberalism, and permissiveness, we need men who will speak out.

The 1986 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Eli Weasle said, Neutrality helps the oppressor never the oppressed and silence encourages the tormentor never the tormented.

We need to realize that the same blood flows through our veins as flows through the veins of evil men. Evil men are no stronger than we. We must **fight** for good as valiantly as they do for evil.

I Corinthians 16:13.

I. II CHRON. 14, ASA: A MAN THAT TOOK A STAND.

- A. Asa **DID** that which was good and right (II Chron. 14:2).
 - 1. Took away false religions (II Chron. 14:3).
 - 2. Commanded people to replace false beliefs with truth (II Chron. 14:4).
 - 3. He prepared for the fight while the kingdom was quiet (II Chron. 14:6).

- B. Asa cried unto GOD, his mighty tower (II Chron. 14:11).
 - 1. A thousand thousand (1,000,000) Ethiopians came against him (II Chron. 14:9).
 - 2. But GOD delivered His servant for his trust and obedience sake (II Chron. 14:12).

II. A MEEK MAN.

- A. Moses was meek above all other men (Num. 12:3).

- B. Meek men are able to stand (Num. 16:3).
 - 1. Moses' cousins, Dathan and Abiram and Korah came to call (Num. 16:3).

2. They said, "*Moses you take too much upon yourself.*"

C. Meek Moses fell on his face (Num. 16:4).

D. But GOD lifted him up (Num. 16:21).

1. The Lord caused a new thing to happen (Num. 16:30).
2. The earth swallowed Dathan, Abiram, and Korah and all theirs (Num. 16:31-32).

III. A MEEK MAN WITH A MESSAGE, MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. Men without a message are like mercenaries without a war. A man with capabilities but no cause. Both are a waste of a man.

B. A certain Jew named Apollos was mighty in the scriptures (Acts 18:26).

1. But Apollos was not correctly instructed.
2. Aquilla and Priscilla took him aside and expounded more perfectly the way of GOD.

C. Apollos then mightily convinced the people with the mighty message of the Lord.

1. Apollos spake not in tongues.
2. Apollos did no miracles.
3. Apollos convinced the people, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Conclusion:

We need men today, men willing to be meek, for the Lord said, "*If we would humble ourselves He would exalt,*" but we also need men with the message and those mighty in the message. Hebrews 5:14 expresses the way. Use the message and you will be a man of GOD.

Johnny Robertson
Class of 1988

Exposition Of Acts 5:20

Introduction:

1. Background (vs. 17-42).
2. Note: They did as commanded (vs. 25, 26-29).
3. They preached Christ (vs. 30-32).
4. In the lesson, analyze text, make application.

I. GO

- A. Christianity is a religion of going (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15).
- B. People are lost (Luke 16); We need to be going.
- C. Christianity is then a religion of action! (How active are you? Are you just attending?)
- D. Must bear fruit (John 15, not dead on the vine).
 1. Must receive nourishment (Acts 20:32).
 2. It's available! Must receive it.
 3. Must weed out obstacles to growth.

II. STAND

- A. Christianity, a religion of standing (conviction).
- B. Robertson: "*take a stand*," bold and pictorial command.
- C. Eph. 6:10ff I Cor. 16:13.
- D. GOD doesn't want us to be "*mealy-mouthed*" but courageous, bold (Josh. 1:5-7).
- E. Elders, preachers, deacons, Christians must stand! (Song: "*Stand up, stand up for Jesus....*") Jude 3.

III. AND SPEAK....

- A. GOD has communicated His will by words (II Sam. 23:2).
- B. We are to communicate to the lost by words. (Someone has to speak! Rom. 10:13-17).
- C. They in text-temple, worldwide (Col. 1:23).

IV. ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE.

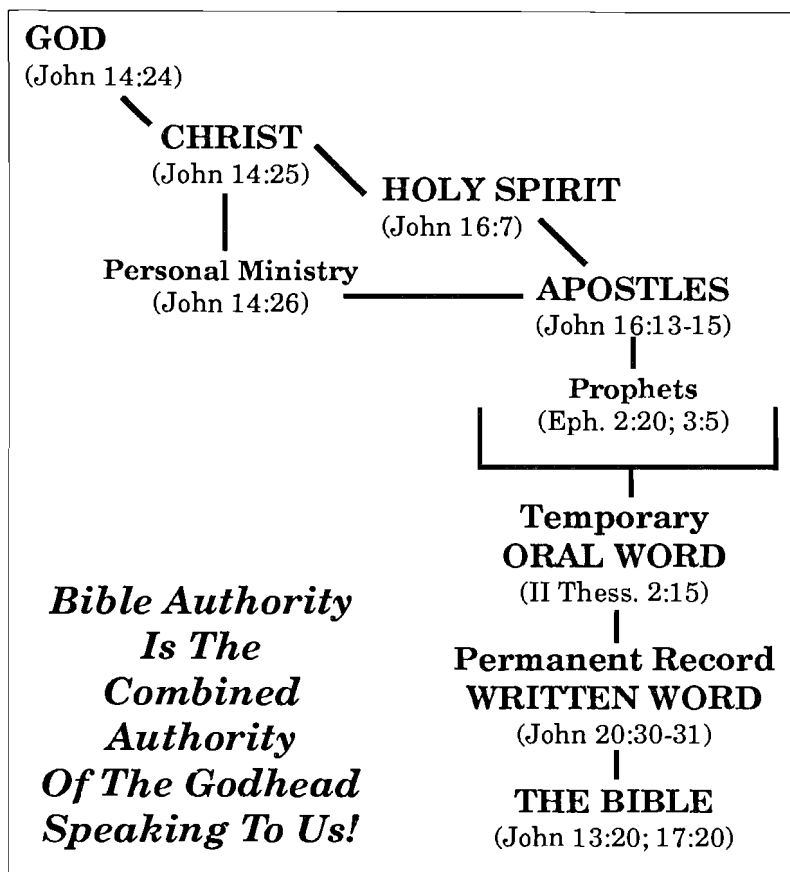
- A. Not just part! (Acts 20:26,27).
- B. Cannot ignore parts with which we may not be comfortable. (Baptism, divorce and remarriage, repentance, assembling, withdrawing, etc.)
- C. They are words of life (Sadducees denied) John 6:63, 68.

Conclusion:

- 1. Aren't we glad they did go and teach?
- 2. People obeyed the word and have hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2).
- 3. You can too.

Billy Bland Class of 1977

Bible Authority And Christ



Introduction:

1. When Christ walked among men and taught them it is said (Matt. 7:28-29; John 7:46). Think of how wonderful it would have been to see Him and have Him speak to us.
2. But He was crucified and after His resurrection He said (Matt. 28:18; I Peter 3:22; Col. 2:10).
3. In Colossians 3:17 it says that we must do all "in His

name” or by His authority. Can we know what He expects of us since He is not here to tell us personally? How does II Timothy 3:16-17 help us know what to do in our lives?

4. There is a great need for authority in all areas of our lives. We will never outgrow being under the authority of someone regardless of how old or how powerful we become. Think of some illustrations which prove this point. Even the President answers to Congress and the people.
5. Among Bible believers nearly all accept that the Bible in some way is a pattern or blueprint for living. Do you agree with that?
6. Our question is, *“Is the Bible an all-sufficient guide in every area of our lives?”* The answer is *“YES!”* We will show that the Bible is GOD’S final authority for us as Christians.

I. BIBLE AUTHORITY IS CHRIST’S AUTHORITY.

- A. See the chart above for an illustration as to how the Bible has come to us from the GODHEAD.
- B. Some people say that we worship the Bible or that we elevate it above Christ. We do not place the Bible over Christ when we accept it as authoritative. Rather, we recognize that the Bible is authoritative because it comes from Christ (Matt. 28:18-20).
- C. Some people say that they would believe what the Bible says if GOD said it to them.

II. WHAT THE SCRIPTURES CLAIM TO BE.

- A. GOD speaking to man (Matt. 22:29-32).
- B. The voice of GOD’S Holy Spirit (Acts 1:16, 20; Rev. 2:1, 7).
- C. Men speaking as GOD inspires them (Acts 13:27; John 5:45-47; Luke 16:29-31).

- D. Thus, the Bible claims to be GOD speaking to mankind through the writings (Scriptures) of specially selected men whom He inspired through the Holy Spirit! Therefore, if GOD were speaking to us in person today, He would not say anything different than He did through the inspired Scriptures. Consider how important it is to read and follow the Bible (II Tim. 3:16-17).

III. THE BIBLE IS ALL-SUFFICIENT.

- A. The Scriptures are fully inspired and inerrant — they do not contain error (Matt. 4:4; II Tim. 3:16-17).
1. We are warned not to tamper with the words of GOD in any way (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19).
 - a. Do not add to it nor take away from it.
 - b. Every word is pure.
 - c. Adding or subtracting from the word brings punishment.
 2. No other gospel is to be preached than that which the apostles of Christ preached (Gal. 1:6-9).
 3. Inspiration of the Scriptures involves not just the thoughts or ideas, but the very words inspired by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:9-13).
 - a. The Holy Spirit revealed the mind of GOD.
 - b. The Holy Spirit revealed words to the apostles.
 - c. Thus, the mind of GOD was revealed in the very words revealed. Who would dare to change the mind of GOD?!
 - d. Remember Jesus saying that, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of GOD*" (Matt. 4:4; Deut. 8:3).
- B. The Scriptures are a complete pattern.
1. The Scriptures claim that they:
 - a. Are able to completely furnish us for every good work (II Tim. 3:16-17).

- b. Provide us with all things pertaining to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3).
- c. Are the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).
- d. What more could we ask for? Since the Scriptures were complete in the first century, we do not need....
 - (1) Latter-day revelations which supposedly come from GOD. How could GOD add to a completed revelation?
 - (2) Human creeds which are supposed to explain and define the Scriptures. How can uninspired man say anything better than GOD has already said?

C. The Scriptures are able to do what GOD intends for them to do.

- 1. The Scriptures are:
 - a. Quick (living) and powerful (Heb. 4:12).
 - b. Able to build us up and give us an inheritance (Acts 20:32).
 - c. Part of the Christian's armour, the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:11, 17).
 - d. Able to make us wise unto salvation (II Tim. 3:15).
 - e. Able to save our souls (James 1:21).
- 2. The Scriptures are a pattern, a blueprint to be followed exactly (Rom. 6:17; II Tim. 1:13; 2:2).

D. The Scriptures reveal man:

- 1. As he was in the original creation (Gen. 1,2).
 - a. Gen. 1:1 tells of how creation, including man, had its beginning.
 - b. Gen. 1:26-27 tells of our creation in GOD'S own image.
 - c. Gen. 1:28-30 tells of the wonderful

paradise in which man and woman dwelt before sin.

2. As he came to be (Gen. 2).
 - a. How man was tempted and sinned against GOD (Gen. 3:1-6).
 - b. How that sin separated them from close communion with GOD (Gen. 3:8-24).
 - c. The consequences and penalties that came upon mankind because of sin.
3. As he ought to be (the purpose of the New Testament).
 - a. Man is a sinner doomed to eternal damnation unless saved through Christ (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
 - b. We ought to obey GOD rather than men (Acts 5:29).
 - c. We ought to walk and to please GOD (I Thess. 4:1).
 - d. What manner of persons we ought to be in all holy living and godliness (II Peter 3:11).
 - e. It instructs us as to how to become what we ought to be (Rom. 6:17; Heb. 11:6; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:9-10; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
4. As he will be (John 5:28-29).
 - a. The righteous will be like Christ (I Cor. 15:53; I Thess. 4:17; I John 3:2).
 - b. Disobedient will be like Satan and his angels (Matt. 25:41, 46; II Thess. 1:9; Rev. 21:8).

E. The Scriptures are forever and so are the doers of the Word.

1. Christ's words are promised by Him to never pass away (Matt. 24:35).
2. The word of the Lord endures forever (I Peter 1:22-25).
3. The blessings of salvation are for the doers of Christ's word (Matt. 7:24-27).

Conclusion:

1. How do we apply what we have learned? In summary:
 - a. Christ's authority is in His Word, the Bible, specifically the New Testament.
 - b. The apostles' authority and words are equal to that of Christ, since He sent them.
 - c. Thus, the Bible's authority is Christ's authority.
 - d. The Bible is GOD speaking as surely as if He appeared here now and spoke.
 - e. Since the Bible is fully inspired, every word is important.
 - f. The Bible is complete, able and a pattern to be followed.
 - g. The Scriptures will stand forever.
 - h. If we follow them, we will stand forever.
2. We need no latter-day revelations, no human creeds, nor any so-called modern prophets. If you have been following such things, to be pleasing to GOD, you must abandon them.
3. Since every word in the Bible is important:
 - a. We must try to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where it is silent.
 - b. We must strive to call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways.
 - c. We must do only those things which the Bible authorizes and not feel free to do every thing which it does not specifically condemn.
 - d. We cannot believe error and live rightly before God.
4. Make the Scriptures your only standard of right and wrong in religion.

Ted Clark
Class of 1972

Joshua's Advice Is A Christian's Challenge

Joshua 21:41-45; 22:1-5

Introduction:

1. Read Joshua 21: 41-45.
2. When the Israelites came out of Egypt the Lord was with them and they won a great battle.
3. When they came to the bitter waters of Marah, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
4. When they came to Rephidim and sought water, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
5. When they fought the Amalekites at Rephidim, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
6. When they came to Mt. Sinai, God made a covenant with them, and they won a great battle.
7. When they encamped at Kadesh and needed water, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
8. When they wandered for forty years because of their sin, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
9. When they came into the land of the Amorites, they faced Og, King of Bashan and Sihon, King of the Amorites. Neither Og nor Sihon would let Israel pass through their land to cross over the Jordan and enter Caanan, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
10. When the Jordan was in its swelling period and

they needed to cross, GOD was with them for He divided the waters, and they won a great battle.

11. When they encamped at Gilgal and planned to take the land of Jericho, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
12. When they proceeded to conquer the land of Canaan, God was with them, and they won a great battle.
13. They had won many great battles on their journey and had obtained all the land promised.
14. Read Joshua 22:1 - "THEN" - when they had conquered in all the battles from Egypt to Caanan, "then" Joshua gives his advice. - 22:5

I. "TAKE DILIGENT HEED"

- A. Def. (Webster) - Steady application, a constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken; perseverance.
- B. Jude 3 - Jude was very persistent.
- C. II Tim. 4:9-13 - Diligence of Paul to study God's word.
- D. II Pet. 1:5,10 - Christians are to be diligent in acquiring the Christian graces.
- E. Heb. 6:10-11 - GOD is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love, but we must show the same diligence to the end - I Cor. 15:58.

II. "LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD"

- A. John 14:1-3,15 - John was the apostle "whom Jesus loved"; and out of John's writings we read a great deal of the love of Christ.
- B. Matt. 22:35-40 - Greatest commandment is to love GOD.

- C. Christ died for the Mockers, those who spit in His face, those who nailed Him to the cross; Christ died for all men and what He asks in return is for us to love Him and keep His commandments.
- D. Simply saying "I love Jesus" is not enough. Love demands obedience (I John 3:18).
- E. We should have the attitude of Paul, That we can never do enough for the Lord (Phil. 1:21,24).

III. 'TO WALK IN ALL HIS WAYS'

- A. I John 1:7 - The Christian walk is one that follows the path of Christ.
- B. Rom. 6:4 - The Christian walk follows baptism.
- C. Rom. 8:1-2 - The Christian walk is walking after truth.
- D. Eph. 2:10 - The Christian walk is a walk of good works.
- E. Eph. 4:1; II Thess. 2:14 - The Christian walk is a worthy walk.
- F. Phil. 3:16 p - The Christian walk is according to the same rule.

IV. "KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS"

- A. If a person truly loves God and is walking in all His ways, then keeping His commandments will follow.
- B. Notice the book of Ecclesiastes:
 1. Eccl. 1:13 - Solomon sets forth to find the meaning of life.
 2. Eccl. 2:1 - He sought pleasure.
 3. Eccl. 2:3-10 - He sought wealth.
 4. Eccl. 12:13-14 - Yet his conclusion to the

meaning of life is to “Fear GOD and keep his commandments for this is the whole of man”.

V. ‘CLEAVE UNTO HIM’

- A. This means not to be wavering (Micah 6:8).
- B. James 1:5-8 - According to James our faith is to be unwavering.
- C. I Cor. 3:11 - If we are to be unwavering we must build our lives on the foundation of Christ.
- D. So many will miss service because they were offended, some because they did not want to get up and go, some because they just do not care, we need to cleave unto Him. Take every opportunity to come, study, learn, and worship.

VI. SERVE HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL.

- A. If you are going to love the Lord, walk in all His ways, keep His commandments, and cleave unto Him, you must do it with all of your being; with everything you have.
- B. There are three parts of man:
 - 1. Emotional - Heart
 - 2. Spiritual - Soul
 - 3. Intellectual - Mind
- C. If we are to serve God we must use all of our:
 - 1. Intellect - II Tim. 2:15
 - 2. Emotion - Eph. 4:32
 - 3. Spirituality - Rev. 2:10

Conclusion:

- 1. When Joshua gave this advice to Israel he knew that they felt like they had conquered all, received their promise, and now they were ready to sit down. So he encourages them to go on and to continue working.

2. In our life we fight many battles for the Lord. But we still have to continue on and serve God with all our being.
3. Have you been giving your all to the Lord? Have you obeyed Him?

Kenyon Mosher
Class of 1988

The Prophet Jonah

Introduction:

1. A real character:
 - a. Matt. 12:38-41. Christ equated the “*sign of Jonah*” as a sure indication of the resurrection.
 - b. If one could deny the sign in Jonah’s case he could, on the same basis, deny the sign (and resurrection) of Christ.
2. Background:
 - a. Jonah was the new prophet in the land. Elisha’s death is recorded in II Kings 13. The next prophet of record is found in II Kings 14:25 (Jonah).
 - b. Jeroboam was the new King on the throne. The land recovered was a matter of prophecy. II Kings 14:25 ties Jeroboam and Jonah together. This land had formerly belonged to Judah. Now it is taken by Israel. This means that both Israel and Judah were enjoying a time of independence. When plagued by their enemies they usually did not fight among themselves. This period of independence (800 B.C.) reflected national strength as well as the fact that Assyria was not yet the conquering force she would be later.
 - c. Results:
 - (1) National pride is high. Both the new prophet and the new king have experienced success. Compare the national sentiment to that felt by America when a new President(Reagan):
 - (a) Defended the Island of Granada.
 - (b) Forced down a jet filled with terrorists.
 - (c) Convinced Khadafy of Libia to hush.
 - (d) Many people felt pride in America again.

- (2) Suppose these had happened as a result of prophecy? How would the Prophet and President feel? How would they be treated?

I. JONAH: THE PROUD PROPHET (Chap. 1).

- A. His arrogant pride (a matter of sin).
1. 1:3 cf. 4:2 shows this to be true.
 2. Jonah would rather die than see Ninevah repent. Why? Assyria was not yet a potent enemy for Israel! No! The simple truth is that Jonah could not bear to go to a Gentile city and preach about the God of heaven. He would rather glory in her destruction than to see her saved — all because of Jewish pride.
- B. He paid the fare: (v. 3).
1. True with all cases of people who indulge in pride or selfishness. There was a price to be paid. The price:
 - a. He willingly left the office of the prophet. This isn't a weak faith. It is **OUT AND OUT REBELLION** against GOD'S command.
 - b. He chose to sever his relationship with GOD rather than preach to Ninevah (Gentiles?! Having made this decision he could sleep during the storm).
 2. Jonah swapped one Gentile city (Nineveh) for another (Tarshish). He was being spiteful. Do you have trouble recognizing "*arrogant pride?*" Well, if you do something out of spite — BEWARE!
- C. Applications regarding pride:
1. Husband won't apologize when he is offensive to his wife, because he is "*head of the house.*"
 2. A brother won't go to a brother when he has offended and so his offering to GOD is not acceptable.

3. A new Christian is faced with having to give up some activities he likes — but feels he can't bear up under the ridicule and pressure from his worldly friends. *"I can't quit drinking;" "I can't miss hunting on Sundays!" "I can't correct my friends filthy language!"* Why? *"My actions would condemn my friends,"* is the reply. But if we participate in sin we aren't obedient to Christ.

II. JONAH: THE PENITENT PROPHET (Chap. 2)

A. Penitence expressed:

1. V. 4 *"I will look again toward the holy temple."*
2. V. 7 *"When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple."*
3. V. 9. *"I will pay that I have vowed"* means I will once again fulfill the office of prophet.

B. Application:

1. Penitence is easily seen in Jonah's life. When a person repents they are *"pricked in the heart"* (Acts 2:37). They are bothered about the wrong they have done and wish to correct it. Jonah said, *"when my soul fainted within me."* His prayer to God and his vow to GOD are signs of that repentance.
2. There are many who need this kind of penitence.
 - a. Alien sinners (II Peter 3:9).
 - b. Christians who have strayed (Acts 8:22).
 - (1) Forsaking the assembly (Heb. 10:25).
 - (2) False teachers (Boston/Crossroads, Divorce).
 - (3) Those living in immorality (I Cor. 5:9-11).
3. *"That isn't us,"* you say. Well it wasn't

Jonah either. Jonah's sin was that he would not preach God's word to the lost. How about you?

III. JONAH: THE POWERFUL PROPHET (Chap. 3).

A. Why powerful?

1. Size of the city: "A great city" (vs. 2-3).
 - a. Circumference of about 60 miles (3 days journey).
 - b. 120,000 people not able to discern between their right and left hands (children). Approximately 600,000 was the total population.
2. Magnitude of their repentance.
 - a. Whole city turned out (even the king (vs. 6-7).
 - b. Prince to pauper repented.

B. Really, only one reason why he was a powerful prophet. **His message was from GOD** (yet only 8 simple words).

1. Rom. 1:16 "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of...*"
2. It is simple too (Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess and be Baptized).

IV. JONAH: THE POUTING PROPHET (Chap. 4).

- #### A. Jonah was angered over Nineveh's repentance (see v. 4).
1. He sat in the shade under the gourd provided by GOD to shield him from the hot sun. When the gourd died, Jonah exclaimed, "*It is better for me to die than to live*" (v. 9). Jonah finally felt the brunt of the hot sun and east wind. He says, "*Well, without the gourd, I'd rather die.*" GOD'S reply is such that Jonah is made to realize that he (Jonah) cares less for the people who have repented than he does for the gourd which died,
 2. GOD felt that strongly about those in Nineveh!

B. Are we pouting about our service to GOD (Rom. 12:1-2)?

1. All right Lord! If you say we have to attend the worship service I will go — but I want you to know I will miss the football game.
2. All right Lord! If you say I need to study the scriptures, I will read some. But don't expect me to be any great scholar.
3. Teenagers face a "*crooked generation*" today. Some may protest against Dad, Mom and the Church.
 - a. Eph. 6:1-3. "*Children, obey your parents...*"
 - (1) Can't wear short skirts!
Mother, people will think I am retarded.
 - (2) "*What do you mean be in by 11:00? Don't you trust me?*"
 - b. At worship service:
 - (1) File nails, write notes, whisper.
 - (2) Act disinterested.

William F. Becker
Class of 1982

The Written Word Compared To The Word In The Flesh

John 1:1-5, 14

Introduction:

1. In Luke 1, we have the account of this incarnation, how that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary.
2. Let us consider our relationship with the word of GOD as we compare the written Word with the Word in the flesh.

I. THE BIRTH OF CHRIST (Luke 1:35).

- A. Jesus was born of woman by way of the Holy Spirit.
- B. Jesus was born by the power of GOD into this world. It was a miracle and not after the common law of reproduction.
- C. Likewise the word of GOD was delivered to mankind.
 1. Notice what Paul recorded by inspiration (I Thess. 1:5).
 2. Jesus told His apostles (Acts 1:8).
 3. We read of this occasion in Acts 2:1-4.
- D. Thus we are able to compare Jesus Christ and the word/gospel entering into this world: both with the power of GOD and of the Holy Spirit.

II. FURTHERMORE, I SUGGEST TO YOU THAT INTO THE HANDS OF MARY THE FLESH WAS GIVEN WHICH HOUSED THE SECOND PERSON OF THE GODHEAD.

- A. We read concerning this occasion in Matthew 1:23.
- B. Jesus came from GOD and so did the Bible.

- C. Paul said on many occasions that the word He taught was from GOD, and not from man, nor His own.
 - 1. I Cor. 11:23a
 - 2. Furthermore, Paul stated, Gal. 1:8-12
 - 3. As Jesus is the only begotten of the Father, there is no other gospel, only one and that is a certified gospel.

- D. We today have this inspired word of GOD (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:21).

- E. Jesus in the flesh was proven to be the Son of GOD by many infallible proofs, likewise the word is proven.

- F. As Jesus in the flesh was given into the hands of Mary, I suggest to you that into our hands the precious word of GOD is given.
 - 1. As the song suggests: Into Our Hands The Gospel Is Given (*"Swiftly We're Turning"*)
 - 2. Paul realized his responsibility toward the gospel.
 - a. I Tim. 1:11
 - b. And he charges Timothy: *"...keep that which is committed to thy trust"* (I Tim. 6:20).
 - 3. The command is to us: Mark 16:15.
 - 4. It is an awesome thing to realize the gospel, the power of GOD is given into our hands! We **must** take it into all the world.

III. AS PARENTS, JOSEPH AND MARY WERE TO NOURISH AND CARE FOR THE YOUNG CHILD JESUS.

- A. We need to nourish the gospel in our lives (I Peter 2:22).

- B. We need to strengthen one another with it (Luke 22:32).

IV. JOSEPH AND MARY WOULD DEFEND THE CHILD.

- A. When Herod sought to kill the child, Joseph took

Jesus and *"His mother by night, and departed into Egypt,"* thus protecting Him from Herod (Matt. 1:14).

- B. Paul tells us: *"I am set for the defense of the gospel"* (Phil. 1:17).

**V. THEN AS ANY MOTHER AND FATHER,
THEY WERE NOT TO ABUSE THE CHILD.**

- A. We are not to abuse the word of righteousness.
- B. As we learn from Gal. 1:7 there are those that would *"pervert the gospel of Christ."*
- C. We must handle aright the word of GOD (II Tim. 2:15).

**VI. THE PARENTS OF JESUS COULD HAVE
HINDERED THE GROWTH OF JESUS,
BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.**

- A. We can hinder the gospel in many ways, but perhaps the number one way would be by not living it.
- B. Paul tells us one way to avoid hindering the gospel: *"but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ"* (I Cor. 9:12).
- C. Many churches have been split and torn asunder by proud men who had to have their own way.

**VII. DON'T YOU KNOW JOSEPH AND MARY
MUST HAVE BEEN VERY PROUD TO
HAVE BEEN THE PARENTS OF THE
SAVIOR OF THE WORLD. THEY WERE
NOT ASHAMED OF HIM.**

- A. Likewise Paul states: Romans 1:16
- B. Compare also Mark 8:38

**VIII. NO DOUBT JOSEPH AND MARY WORKED
TOGETHER IN HARMONY AND LOVE**

TO CARE FOR THE CHILD.

- A. In comparison we today should work together in love and harmony to further the gospel of Christ.
- B. *“For we are labourers together with GOD”* (I Cor. 3:9).

IX. REMEMBER WHEN THE YOUNG MAN JESUS WAS LEFT BEHIND IN JERUSALEM? DON'T YOU KNOW THE PARENTS WERE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS AND SOUGHT FOR HIM DILIGENTLY?

- A. Parents can relate to this.
- B. We need to be like Ezra of old: *“for Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel”* (Ezra 7:10).

X. THEN WE COME TO THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST. WHILE HE HANG ON THE CROSS AND SUFFERED THE PAINS OF DEATH FOR YOU AND ME — HIS MOTHER STOOD AND LOOKED UPON HIM.

- A. It must have grieved her terribly seeing her first born dying.
- B. It should grieve us today that the gospel is dying in the lives of men and that men are dying without the gospel. We are commanded *“to go.”*
- C. The word of life is in our hands (John 6:63).
- D. Don't you know that if it had been in Mary's power she would have preserved that life.
- E. We need to preserve the gospel in the world today by living it, and teaching it.

- F. If we preserve the gospel in our lives it will preserve us throughout eternity in heaven, "for it is the power of GOD unto salvation."

XI. JESUS ACCOMPLISHED THAT WHICH HE SET OUT TO DO WHILE ON EARTH (John 17:4).

- A. And so will His word: "*it will not return to me void,*" thus saith the Lord (Isa. 55:11).
- B. Some day we shall all stand before that Word that was made flesh and give account of how we have handled the very word that will judge us.

Conclusion:

1. It indeed was a great honor for Mary to have born the child Jesus, but notice what Christ said concerning this: Luke 11:27-28.
2. How is your relationship to the word of God?
3. Gospel plan of salvation.

Perry Sexton
Class of 1988

A Living Sacrifice

Romans 12:1-2

Introduction:

1. Two words are of great importance and deserve emphasis. They are **consecration** and **renewal**.
 - a. **Consecration** instructs us to *"be ye transformed," "set apart as Holy," "devoted to sacred or serious use."*
 - b. **Renewal** is explained in the text, verse two, as *"renewing of your mind," "to make new or fresh again," "revive,"* and *"resume."*
2. Therefore, the text, Romans 12:1-2, can be stated as follows: *"a plea for dedication to God which results in humility and obedience to His will."*
3. Romans 12:1-2 is a great text. The word *"therefore"* makes this text a **pivotal** text. Chapters 1-11 of Romans deals with doctrine. Chapters 12-16 of Romans deals with practical applications.
4. Romans 5:5-9, Paul talks of God's vast mercy toward men.
5. In summary, Paul says in Romans 11:36, *"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever, Amen."*

I. CONSECRATION.

A. Presentation.

1. *"Present your bodies a living sacrifice"* (v. 1).
2. GOD gave His son for man's sacrifice and service.
3. Acts of presentation are a **privilege**.
 - a. Gives us the opportunity to place our self at GOD'S disposal.
 - b. Offers us the chance to be a mighty instrument in the hand of GOD.
4. We are to present **all**, not part.
 - a. Luke 9:62
 - b. Luke 9:23

- c. Look at the value and glory of the human body.
 - (1) I Cor. 6:19
 - (2) I Cor. 3:17
 - (3) I Cor. 6:20
- d. Look at GOD'S greatest demonstration (Phil. 2:7).

B. Sacrifice.

- 1. This concerns the energies of the body, soul, and spirit.
 - a. Eyes (II Tim. 2:15). We are to study.
 - b. Ears (James 1:19). We are to be swift to hear. (This involves instruction).
 - c. Hands (Eph. 4:28). We are to use our hands to help those who cannot help themselves.
 - d. Feet (Jonah 1:3). We are not to flee from responsibility.
 - e. Tongue (Eph. 4:29). Our mouths should not produce corrupt speech.
 - f. Emotions (Gal. 5:19-21). Works of the flesh are to be replaced by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).
 - g. Affections (Matt. 10:37). Our love for family is to be second to our love for GOD (the Father, Christ, the Son, and the Holy Spirit).
- 2. Sacrifice equals:
 - a. Living (Rom. 6:11, 13, 18).
 - b. Being holy (I Peter 1:15).
 - c. Acceptable to GOD (II Cor. 5:9).
 - d. Spiritual and reasonable service, our everyday life to God. We are alive to God!

II. RENEWAL.

A. Transformation.

- 1. Romans 12:2 — *“transformed.”*
- 2. This is the presentation of our bodies by or through transformation of the mind.

3. Prov. 23:7 — Before there is an outward transformation, there must be an inward transformation.
 4. The first step — *“be not fashioned according to this world.”*
 - a. We usually are more concerned of what others think rather than what GOD thinks.
 5. There is no fellowship between Christ and Satan.
 - a. Therefore, there can be no fellowship between their soldiers in:
 - (1) Ideas.
 - (2) Practices.
 - (3) Lifestyles.
 - b. We cannot participate on both sides.
 6. Unlike the world, we are becoming like Christ — transformed by the renewing of your mind.
 - a. Desire for Christ.
 - b. Think of soul.
 - c. Think of eternity.
 - d. Think of judgment of GOD.
- B. Conversion — *“to turn from one belief or course to another.”* A definite and decisive adoption of religion.
1. Change of mind.
 2. Change of behavior.
 3. Change of relationship.
 4. Col. 1:13-14.
- C. Prove — *“once transformed, a Christian must be able to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of GOD.”*
1. Christians examine every situation and circumstance carefully and thoroughly, and determine the will of GOD.

Conclusion:

1. Mark 12:30.
2. True love to the Lord is with dedication of mind, the thinking of part of men. Knowledge of truth:
 - a. Dedication of heart, the feeling part of man. Obedience to truth.
 - b. Dedication of soul, life within the body.
 - c. Dedication of our strength.
 - d. Dedication of our prayers:
"Lord, wear us out in thy service."
 - e. Dedication of our singing:
*"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, MY ALL!"*
Isaac Watts

Roy O. Williams
Class of 1978

Prayerful Diligence

Neh. 6:1-16

Introduction:

1. If the book of Nehemiah teaches nothing else, it teaches that courage, grief, diligence, and prayerfulness must accompany any great endeavor for GOD.
2. In this lesson we find that the Jews had been back from their captivity for about 52 years. Only the temple was completed. The city laid waste without walls, and the gates lay in ashes. Nehemiah, the king's "cup bearer," requested permission to return to the city of Jerusalem to build the walls. The request was granted (Neh. 2:6).
3. The work was to begin, yet Satan was not idle. Very soon, after the request was granted, Tobiah, Sanballet and Geshem sought mischief against, and derided Nehemiah's work. At one point they even conspired to "*fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder*" it (Neh. 4:8).
4. But the Jew's diligence and Nehemiah's prayerfulness silenced their enemies. Thus the walls were completed in record time.
5. Our text is one such example of prayerful diligence. A series of events takes place after the:

I. WORK NEARS COMPLETION (V. 1).

- A. Sanballet (Moabite), Tobiah (Ammonite), and Geshem (Arabian), were governors and joint-governors of Samaria who aligned themselves against GOD'S people.
- B. The sight of a nearly-completed wall, minus the gate, greatly concerned the enemy. Walls were a city's greatest system of defense during that time.

II. WICKED NEGOTIATES COMMUNION

(V. 2).

- A. They wanted to “*meet*” in the village of “*Ono*” (approximately 25 miles northwest of Jerusalem).
- B. But Nehemiah knows of their sinister motives. All they wanted was a mischievous meeting; an opportunity to deceive, demur and destroy Nehemiah and his work.
- C. We must be careful not to compromise with GOD’S enemies, as so many are prone to do these days (Psm. 1:1-2; Jer. 6:16; Eph. 5:11).

III. WATCHFUL’S NOBLE COUNTERACTION

(V. 3).

- A. Nehemiah was too diligent to stop his work and dabble around with these pseudo-unity folks.
- B. Never should GOD’S people stop good works, righteous living, holy obedience and diligence, lowering these godly standards to accomodate the ungodly. Nehemiah didn’t do such, and neither should we!
- C. Nehemiah counteracted with two statements:
 - 1. *“I am doing a great work”* and
 - 2. *“Why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”*
- D. Many are the temptations that strike at Christians causing them to either avoid, or cease faithfulness to GOD. But whatever they may be, they are incompatible with GOD and His will (I John 1:3, 6-7; II Cor. 6:14-17).

IV. WICKED’S NAGGING CONTINUATION

(V. 4).

- A. You have to say one thing to the enemy’s credit, they didn’t give up easily. They were very persistent.

Four times these messengers were sent with the same message, *"come down and meet with us."* And to Nehemiah's credit, he answered them the same way each time — NO! NO! NO! NO!

- B. A lesson that we should all learn: Satan doesn't stop with the first try. He is going to keep trying until he thinks he can get you to *"budge."* But Nehemiah is proof to substantiate the New Testament teaching that GOD will not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to resist, but will provide the way of escape (I Cor. 10:13; James 1:12; I Peter 4:12-13; 5:8-9; Gen. 39:7-12).

V. WRITING NARRATES CONTENTION

(Vs. 5-7).

- A. Sanballet, and the others having failed in their first plot, determines to send his servant one more time. But this time the message is different.
- B. Sanballet says in the letter that there was a rumor going around among the heathen that Nehemiah and the Jews were building the walls in order to fortify themselves for a rebellion against the Persian king, and that they (Jews) were going to set up Nehemiah as their new king (v. 6).
- C. Nehemiah realized that this would cause great anger with the Persian empire, and would bring about confusion and fear with the Jews. Hoping that this would cause Nehemiah to become afraid and panic, Sanballet calls him down for counsel.
1. Before we notice Nehemiah's answer, look how the Jews' enemies tried to stop them.
 - a. First, they *"laughed"* at them (2:19).
 - b. Next, they tried to *"fight"* them (4:8).
 - c. Last, they tried to *"compromise"* with them (text).
 2. This is not an uncommon procedure that enemies of the cross use today.

- D. Nehemiah, without a doubt somewhat fearful (vs. 9, 13-14), resolved even still to answer NO!

VI. WISE NOTICES CONTRADICTED (V. 8).

- A. It is not hard for Nehemiah to recognize that this was some concoction of cold and callous hearts.
- B. When one is right, standing upon GOD'S unyielding truth, evil cannot triumph (John 3:20-21; 8:32; Psm. 34:22; Job 27:8).
- C. Nehemiah knew that his own heart was free from the lie being spread by his enemies.

VII. WEAKENED NAMED CONSOLATION (V. 9)

- A. Nehemiah realized his fear and weakness. He knew that the rumors were false, yet the fact that they were being spread presses upon him to stop the work. But Nehemiah's virtue leads him to call upon GOD to strengthen his hands. His strength did not lie within himself, but it was in the hands of GOD.
- B. Paul said truthfully that our Lord Jesus Christ will "*stablish you in every good word and work*" (II Thess. 2:16-17).

VIII. WALL'S NOISED COMPLETION (Vs. 15-16)

- A. 52 days, within which was practically every type of discouragement, conspiracy and fear, and the walls of Jerusalem were completed.
- B. This was of such a task that the swiftness of completion would not go unnoticed by their heathen neighbors. Undoubtedly, they knew that the GOD of heaven was with Nehemiah and his people.
- C. Nehemiah's prayer, "*O GOD, strengthen my hands*" was answered.

Conclusion:

1. God's people, though tempted to fear, can find their strength in Him to do those things which need to be done. But we must be diligent (Eccl. 9:10).
2. Both the enemy and GOD'S people were diligent, but the determining factor to victory was, and always will be GOD.
3. We need more people who are upright, courageous and unselfish. We need men today like Nehemiah; men who call us to our high duty and inspire us with the divine will.
4. Hear - Believe - Repent - Confess - Baptized.

Howell Ferguson
Class of 1984

Creation: Genesis 1

Introduction:

1. Genesis means beginning.
 - a. Scientists agree to this in the 2nd law of thermodynamics.
 - b. Law of cause and effect.
2. Need to study Genesis (Rom. 15:4), because of the false teachings of evolutionist.
3. Why evolution is believed.
 - a. Told that all educated people believe it (Rom. 1:22).
 - b. This is not true, 89% of the scientists that worked on the Apollo 10 Space Flight didn't believe it. (Note: Otis Gatewood, "*There Is A GOD In Heaven*" page 157).

I. Verse 1.

- A. No effort to prove that GOD is.
 1. Psalm 14:1: Today this is even being said out loud.
 2. If upon being shipwrecked on an island we find a hosue, we would know someone had been there. The fact that the world is here means that it had to have had a builder. The Bible tells us that it was GOD (Heb. 3:4).
- B. Created = brought into existence, explained in Hebrews 11:3.
- C. Psalm 19:1.

II. VERSES 2-5.

- A. We are now introduced to the third person of the GODHEAD, the great law giver.
 1. Here He gives the laws of nature.
 2. He had a part in giving the laws of the Old Testament (II Peter 1:21).

3. He had a part in giving the New Testament laws (John 14:26).
- B. We can not break GOD'S laws, rather we break ourselves on GOD'S laws.
 - C. How long was the first day of verse five?
 1. A day as we know it consists of a light time and a dark time, and is 24 hours.
 2. No reason to make this day longer unless we would seek to accomodate the evolutionist.
 3. Exodus 20:11. The sabbath that the Jews received was 24 hours long. This was equal to the time that GOD rested. Why not the six days also?
 - D. "*GOD said*" shows the power of GOD'S word (Heb. 4:12; John 12:48).

III. VERSES 6-8.

- A. The clouds are separated from the seas at this time.
- B. Term heaven used three ways in the Bible.
 1. The atmospheric heaven.
 - a. Rain and snow are said to come down from heaven (Isa. 55:10; Acts 14:17).
 - b. This is the use made here.
 2. The celestial heaven, home of the stars (Gen. 15:5).
 3. The third heaven (II Cor 12:2). This implies a first and second.
 - a. GOD'S throne is there (Matt. 5:34).
 - b. Christ is preparing us a home there (John 14:1-3).

IV. VERSES 9-10.

- A. GOD saw that it was good.
 1. Weight and measure perfect — gravity in relation to other planets.
 2. Rotation of earth just right for life and man

as GOD made him.

3. We have just the right area of sea to land surface for rainfall, regulating temperature etc.
4. The sun is about 93,000,000 miles from the earth if it was closer we would burn up, if it was further away we would freeze.

V. VERSES 11-13.

A. GOD'S law of nature is that seed will produce after its kind.

1. Every time we plant corn and corn comes up we prove this law of GOD.
2. Every time the evolutionists plants corn and grows oak trees he proves evolution.
3. We need to use common sense when dealing with the evolutionist.
4. We also need to use common sense in studying the Bible.

B. Christ used this natural law in Luke 8 to teach about GOD'S word.

1. Pure seed sown will produce Christians — nothing more.
2. Some have tried to improve upon GOD'S Word (seed) and have produced denominations (hybrids). We can't improve upon that which is perfect (Gal. 6:7).

VI. VERSES 14-19.

A. Today we see these heavenly bodies doing what GOD appointed for them to do during the fourth day of creation.

1. They are signs of GOD'S care for mankind; they signal the seasons when we are to plant and harvest, etc.
2. Days are determined by the time it takes for the earth to revolve on its own axis.
3. The year is determined by the time it takes for the earth to make a revolution around the sun.

4. What is the length of the week determined by?
- B. The Bible is not a science book, but it is scientifically accurate.
1. Ill. Matthew Fontain Murry discovered shipping lanes after reading of the paths in the sea (Psm. 8).
 2. When Sir Isaac Newton was told by an atheistic friend that his model of the solar system had to have had a maker, he said, so would the real solar system (Psm. 19:1).

VII. VERSES 20-23.

- A. A single cod fish will lay up to 9,384,000 eggs. Is this abundantly?
- B. GOD provides the balance in nature that is needed.
- C. Today fish and birds bring forth after their kind.
- D. What came first the chicken or the egg? The Bible says, *"GOD created ... every winged fowl."*
- E. The evolutionist say that the first bird crawled out of a mutilated reptiles egg. Was it male or female? Could it reproduce by its self?

VIII. VERSES 24-25.

- A. All animals reproduce after their kind. This can be proved.
 1. Cats always have kittens. Dogs have puppies. Goats have kids, etc.
 2. What is the evolutionists answer to this? *"You don't understand, it had to have happened this way, because the only other answer is special creation and that is unthinkable."*
- B. Job 12:7-9.
 1. The instincts of salmon could not be taught.

2. There is no way that the water spider could have evolved.
3. What of the engineering skills and social life of the bee?
4. The only answer possible is that **THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN!**

IX. VERSES 26-27.

- A. Who are the "us" spoken of in verse 26?
 1. The Father in verse 1.
 2. The Holy Spirit in verse 2.
 3. The Son was there also (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17).

- B. Man is made in the likeness of GOD, His righteousness, His holiness, His knowledge (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Not physical likeness (John 4:24).

- C. Webster says, to have dominion, is to have supreme authority.

- D. GOD made both male and female.
 1. The man is to be the head of the home (Eph. 5:23).
 2. The woman is to be a keeper at home (Titus 2:4).

- E. Compare human body with what man has made (Exa. Human hand with mechanical hand).

- F. Man is made up of body, soul and spirit (I Thess. 5:23).

- G. First man made full grown, rest born (Earth created with the appearance of age).

X. VERSES 28-30.

- A. "*Count your blessings, name them one by one*" (Song).

- B. Meaning of the word "*replenish*" (Webster) "*To fill,*

to finish, to complete, to consummate, to recover former fullness."

- C. The church today contains all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:22-23).

XI. VERSE 31.

- A. GOD created everything perfect.
- B. Man created for a purpose.

Conclusion:

1. Why have atheists been able to foster their ideas (Hitler, Marx, etc)?
 - a. When man is taught that he is only an animal he will begin to act like one.
 - b. Forty years ago it was against the law to teach evolution in the schools of Tennessee. Today it is against the law to teach the Bible account of creation.
2. It is important that man knows that GOD created him, and that he must obey Him (II Thess. 1:7-9).

<p>Donald Finney Class of 1977</p>
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Seeking The Truth From The Master Teacher

John 8:30-32; Matthew 7:28-29

Introduction:

Jesus is correctly called the **Master Teacher**. He was not like the religious teachers of His day (or any day), because He had the personal knowledge and authority needed to instruct another effectively (Matt. 7:28-29). Our Lord had the great ability to impart spiritual truths using various kinds of illustrations, like parables and metaphors. When asked why He spoke in parables, He said it was so they would know or understand the mysteries of the kingdom (Matt. 13:10-11). What commonly intelligent person could fail to understand the parable of the sower or the parable of the talents? Yet there are some in our day who claim we cannot know the truth. Such a false teaching leads many to discouragement and failure to study. Not only did Jesus teach that we can know the mysteries of the kingdom, but the apostle Paul also taught that we can understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ by reading his inspired writings (Eph. 3:3-4). It is comforting to know this vital truth and it is vital that we read and study GOD'S comforting Word. Only by hearing, believing, obeying and continuing in the Word of Christ will we know the truth (John 8:30-32). This is a mark of a true disciple of Christ: he is diligent in seeking the truth. He will read and study daily and the results will be blessed indeed: freedom from ignorance and error, knowledge and understanding of truth, nobility (Acts 17:11-12), and eternal life (John 5:39). Therefore, let us sincerely seek the truth always. It is not easy, but Jesus compared it to things easy to understand. Let's notice some of those comparisons from the book of Matthew.

I. SEEKING THE TRUTH IS LIKE BEING A DETECTIVE (Matt. 7:7-8).

- A. Detectives must ask, seek, and knock to solve crimes.

1. They must knock on doors and ask witnesses for clues.
 2. They must seek and examine all available evidence.
- B. Likewise, the truth-seeker must ask, seek, and knock.
1. The witnesses have already testified and written (John 20:30-31; Acts 10:39-43; I John 1:1-4).
 2. Each of us must honestly examine all the evidence of GOD'S written Word (Heb. 11:1; Rom. 10:17; II Tim. 3:16-17).
 3. This has always been the plea of GOD'S people (Jer. 6:16).
- C. The reason many do not understand the truth is because they do not ask, seek, and knock.
1. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day refused to examine his claims and proofs (Matt. 26: 57-68; also see Jer. 6:16-17 and Acts 7:51ff).
 2. Many do the same today: atheists, agnostics, all false teachers. But they have no excuse (Rom. 1:18-20; Acts 14:17).
 3. Therefore, let's do our detective work and ask, seek, and knock for the truth.

II. SEEKING THE TRUTH IS LIKE BEING A CAPTAIN OF A SHIP (Matt. 7:13-14).

- A. A ship's captain must often guide his vessel through narrow, difficult passages.
1. This is the meaning of the word, "*strait*."
 2. Maps show many such straits in the seas and oceans; the straits of Florida, Gibraltar, Bering, etc.
- B. Like a ship's captain, the truth-seeker must enter the strait gate, the narrow difficult way to truth.
1. Truth is absolute, not subjective. There is only one source, not many (John 14:6; 17:17; Gal. 3:1; Eph. 1:13).

2. Many today try to separate truth from love, grace and mercy, but GOD does not (Psm. 85:10; John 1:14; Eph. 4:15).

C. So, let's carefully follow through the straits of truth.

1. This takes study to rightly divide the truth (II Tim. 2:15).
2. Turn not to the left or right (Prov. 4:25-27; Rev. 22:18-19).

III. SEEKING THE TRUTH IS ALSO LIKE BEING A SHEPHERD OR A FARMER (Matt. 7:15-20).

- A. Shepherds must beware of wild animals, and farmers must beware of weeds. If no distinctions are made, financial failure is certain.
1. David was a successful shepherd (I Sam. 17:34-35).
 2. Wise farmers know corrupt crops are unproductive and spreads disease (I Cor. 5:6; Luke 13:7).
- B. Truth seekers must also distinguish between good and bad, truth and error.
1. Both exist! Both are manifest! They are different (Matt. 13:24; Gal. 5:19ff).
 2. Many fail to see the difference (Isa. 5:20; 7:15).
 3. Spiritual failure is worse than a farmer's financial failure (Matt. 16:26; Luke 12:20).
- C. How do we make the needed distinctions?
1. Study GOD'S Word (Acts 20:28-32; I John 4:1, 6).
 2. Examine their fruits (Matt. 7:20; II Peter 2:1ff).
 3. Refuse and condemn error (Rom. 16:17; Jude 3).

IV. SEEKING THE TRUTH IS LIKE BEING AN ARCHITECT (Matt. 7:24-27).

- A. Builders must use the right pattern, place, materials, and methods.

B. Truth-seekers must do likewise.

1. The right pattern and materials are the teachings of Christ (Matt. 7:24; John 12:48; I Peter 2:21).
2. The right place or foundation is Christ and the Church (I Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; I Peter 2:5).
3. The right method is hearing and doing (Matt. 7:21ff; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 18:8).

C. Therefore, build your spiritual house right (Psm. 127:1; Prov. 24:3-4).

V. SEEKING THE TRUTH IS ALSO LIKE BEING A PATIENT (Matt. 9:12-13).

A. Patients know when they are sick and they go to the doctor.

B. Likewise, truth-seekers are looking for something!

1. A cure for the soul's diseases (Rom. 3:23).
2. The right physician — Jesus (I Peter 2:24-25; Matt. 11:28).
3. His prescription (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38).
4. His health book (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3).

C. So, do not refuse the Great Physician's remedy and remain sick (Jer. 8:22; Isa. 1:5-6, 16-20).

VI. ALSO, SEEKING THE TRUTH IS LIKE BEING A TREASURE HUNTER (Matt. 13:44-46).

A. Treasure hunters know what is valuable and they will sacrifice to get it.

B. Truth-seekers must do the same.

1. Real treasures are in Christ (Col. 2:3): forgiveness (Col. 1:13-14), the kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33), truth and wisdom (John 1:17; Prov. 3:13ff), heaven (I Peter 1:4).
2. Such spiritual treasures will never pass

away; they are secure in heaven's vault
(Matt. 6:19-21).

3. Earthly treasures fade away (Prov. 23:4-5;
I Tim. 6:7).

- C. Therefore, be like a treasure hunter: buy the truth
and sell it not, and the reward will be great (Prov.
23:23; 24:14).

Conclusion:

Being a truth-seeker is exciting. The people of Jesus' day were moved by such plain language. People today are moved when they investigate the truth. Could it be that there are truth-seekers with us today? GOD will bless you greatly if you are. Those who are not, should be. Notice one Bible example of a sincere truth seeker: the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27-40). The eunuch actively sought the truth. He traveled a great distance to worship (v. 27). He read GOD'S Word (v. 28). He desired Philip's guidance (v. 31). He asked a sincere question (v. 34). He faithfully listened to and obeyed the gospel (vs. 35-39). He was thus able to rejoice (v. 39). Won't you do the same?

Tony Belcher Class of 1986

“More About Jesus”

Introduction:

1. This song has thrilled the hearts of millions
 - a. “*The old, old story*” is precious.
 - (1) Mark 16:15
 - (2) Luke 24:47
 - (3) Acts 8:4
 - (4) I Cor. 15:1-4
 - b. Do people really want to know more?
 - (1) Matt. 13:15
 - (2) John 12:42-43
 - (3) Acts 7:51
 - (4) II Tim. 4:1-4

I. THERE ARE SOME THINGS PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THE BODY TO KNOW.

- A. Life and works: (less about baptism).
 1. John 3:16
 2. John 12:48
 3. Acts 8:12, 35
 4. II John 9-11

- B. Trial and death: (less about the church).
 1. Matt. 16:18
 2. Acts 2:47
 3. Acts 20:28
 4. Eph. 5:25

- C. Resurrection: (less about legalistic authority).
 1. Matt. 28:18
 2. Rom. 1:4
 3. Phil. 2:9-10
 4. I Peter 4:11

- D. Ascension: (less about work).
 1. Acts 1:11
 2. Eph. 2:8-9

3. Phil. 2:12
4. II Peter 1:5-10

E. Second Coming: (less about preparation).

1. Matt. 24:36
2. I Cor. 11:26
3. I Thess. 4:14-17
4. II Peter 3:9-12

Conclusion:

1. What is the least popular information about Jesus?
 - a. Judgment:
 - (1) Matt. 12:36
 - (2) Matt. 13:41-43
 - (3) II Thess. 1:7-9
 - (4) Rev. 20:12-15

Roger Jackson Class of 1970

Introduction To The Decalogue

Exodus 10:1

Introduction:

1. Events prior to Christ: Eden, Flood, Ur, Sinai.
One of greatest: Giving of Law to Israel.
2. Facts: (Decalogue: "the ten words") Names:
Exod. 21:11; 34:28; Matt. 19:17; Exod. 31:18 "finger"
32:15 "both sides"; v. 19 "broken"; ch. 34 replaced;
40:20 kept in ark of covenant.
3. Divisions: vv. 1-4 Duties to GOD, vv. 5-10 Duties
to man.

I. AND (Ties things together: sugar/spice, grits/eggs, obedience/salvation.)

- A. Gen. 6:14 What would have happened if left
off pitch inside? outside? Did GOD not have power
to save Noah without pitch? Gen. 6:22.
- B. Link:
 1. Exod. 19:25-20:1 "And" linked GOD with
Israelites thru 10 Commandments. Ex. 19:5
Acceptance dependent upon obedience to
His Word.
 2. Exod. 20:18-19 Fearful thing to be in
presence of GOD. All will someday.
- C. Heb. 9:27 Will everyone die? Also judgment.
Heb. 5:8-9 Only ones obedient to Word will be
saved in Judgment. Lk. 6:46.
- D. Mark 16:16 AND: B+B=S. Salvation dependent
upon obedience.

II. GOD

- A. Gen 1:1 Bible always assumes GOD. Doesn't try

to prove. States GOD as greatest fact and moves on: "In the beginning - GOD!"

- B. Psm 14:1 Can't imagine house railing against its architect/builder. (Rom. 1:20-22). How dare puny man rail against architect/builder of universe.
- C. Prepare: Exod. 20:1 Creator of Mosaical Law was GOD; it was designed to prepare Israel for GOD (Exod. 20:20).
- D. Tutor: Gal. 3:23-24 Law designed to teach Israel how to be accepted to GOD. v. 25 Creator removed it for something better. Today the New Testament teaches how to be acceptable to GOD (Heb. 8:6-8). New Covenant = New House (Heb. 8:8; I Tim. 3:15) GOD'S house. Cf Rom. 16:16. (Also: New Worship: Heb.9; Sacrifice: Heb. 10; Name: I Peter 4:16)
- E. Eccl. 5:1-2 We are in presence of Magnificent Eternal GOD who brought entire universe into existence. Cf. I Cor. 11:20.

III. SPAKE

- A. Power: (Gen. 1:1-3; Psm. 33:6,9; Exod. 20:1; Psm. 19:7).
- B. Heb. 1:1-2 GOD no longer speaks directly to man. 2 Pet. 1:3 No need.
- C. Heb. 2:1-4 Why religious world teaches differently? Jude 10; Jude 3 No more messages. Rom. 1:16 POWER in Word; POWER to Save.

IV. ALL

- A. Gen. 8:1 GOD saved Noah, rest; why? Gen. 6:22 "All." Exod. 20:1 GOD spoke ALL; intended ALL to be obeyed: (Exod. 19:5).

- B. Heb. 5:8-9, "All" again. James 2:10 No unimportant commands.
- C. Mark 16:15-16, Refuse to be baptize = go to hell. Refuse to teach gospel?

V. THESE

- A. Gen. 2:4, These are the generations, history. God created these things by His power. Not a primeval explosion/galactic contraction. Gen. 1:1 Eye-witness = GOD.
- B. Exod. 20:1 Created universe! Spake these words! These Israelites, no one else: (Deut. 5:1-3). Not to anyone today.
- C. Those: 2 Cor. 3:14 Many teach can be saved by 10 Com. Those = words of men. Gal. 5:4 THESE are words of GOD.

VI. WORDS

- A. 2 Sam. 23:2, Not thoughts, ideas of GOD but words; the very WORDS of GOD.
- B. Exod. 20:1; 24:4a Old Covenant by inspiration of GOD. But even then GOD, through inspired Moses, looking at better: (Deut. 18:15).
- C. Acts 3:22, Peter, through inspiration, speaking to people trying to live under Old Law (I Peter 1:25).
- D. Jer. 20:9, Hard to understand denominational world but more difficult to understand erring brethren: (1 John 2:19; 4:5).
- E. Heb 5:11, VERY WORD OF GOD and people accept everything except this Word. Even Christians sit in pews and let it go in one ear and out the other. If all we do in Kingdom is sit on a pew, will ride that pew into hell: (Heb. 10:26-31).

VII. SAYING

- A. Gen. 2:16-17, GOD speaks: utmost importance. It pertains to more than the body, breath; it pertains to our souls; our salvation.

- B. Exod. 20:1, GOD said these Words to Israel, that through obedience they might be acceptable to Him.

- C. John 12:48; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb. 5:8-9; 9:15

Conclusion:

If you are not a member of the Lord's church, GOD desires to make a covenant with you. A covenant wherein you can have peace with GOD today and confidence before the throne of judgment. In this covenant He will blot out your sins/transgressions. (John 8:245; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:47)

If you are a member of the NT church, and have gone astray: (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 5:16; Heb. 12:18-29).

<p>Ron Wilson Class of 1972</p>

Married To Christ

Introduction:

1. Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to unite these two in wedlock. If there be those who may oppose, speak now or forever hold your peace.

This union is GOD approved. It shows their love for each other and may this love last for all eternity.

Do you promise to honor, cherish, obey, and absolutely forsaking all others, keep thyself only to him and be to him in all things a faithful and true wife — for richer for poorer, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health.

Do you remember making these vows to each other? As we heard these words, we were happy as two hearts were blended together and became as one.

But we are not going to talk to you about your vows to each other, but your promise to Christ and GOD.

2. II Cor. 11:2, as a chaste bride to Christ.
3. Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19; II Peter 3:7. GOD'S love for man and man's love for GOD.

I. HONOR (I Peter 3:17).

- A. We should honor Christ in the church because He gave Himself for it.
- B. Honor to whom honor is due (Rom. 13:7).

II. CHERISH

- A. Define: to hold in high esteem.
- B. Do we show the world our love (Luke 15:8-10)?
- C. We would not hurt ourselves, why hurt the church?

III. OBEY

- A. Matthew 7:24-27
- B. We should obey the commands of GOD and never question or doubt them (Matt. 6:33).

IV. FORSAKING ALL OTHERS

- A. The ten commandments dealt with man's worship (Exod. 20).
- B. I Corinthians 4:2
- C. We need to teach these things (II Tim. 2:2).
- D. Hebrews 10:25-26.

V. FOR RICHER OR FOR POORER

- A. The little boy came running in to tell his mother about killing a bear, but he added dad shot him.
- B. We need to say look what we did, not look what I did or you did.
- C. Time of temptation (II Tim. 4:10).

VI. IN SICKNESS OR IN HEALTH

- A. When things are going the way we want, everything is fine. But what if the apple cart is upset?
- B. Do we begin to blame everyone but ourselves?
- C. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15).

Conclusion:

- 1. We need to be more faithful to the one who loves us

and has given Himself for us (John 3:16).

2. Have we kept ourselves pure and spotless before Christ and GOD? If not, now is the time to do something about it.

Milton Barlow
Class of 1970

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