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EDITORIAL

What Does The Bible Teach?

"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God"

Cross is the central theme and the heart of Christianity. Of what cross the apostle Paul was speaking at 1 Corinthians 1:18? He was not speaking of a cross that is worn as a piece of Jewelry. He was not talking there of a cross that might be put on a building. Rather, he was mentioning the cross of Christ; the cross on which the Son of God, Jesus Christ was killed. Under the Roman's rule of that time those who were convicted of serious crimes, such as murder or robbery, etc., were put to death on the cross. A cross was made of two sawed log pieces that were joined together in the shape of English letter "T", and was rugged and heavy. Those who were convicted of crimes were beaten with stripes; then they were forced to carry the cross on their shoulder to the place of execution which was called "the place of skull", most likely, because skulls of dead men were scattered everywhere there. Upon reaching there, the one to be crucified was put on the cross; bound, and his hands and feet were nailed to the cross. Then, the cross was lifted by several Roman soldiers; and the lower part of the cross was put

into a large hole or pit that was already dug up for the purpose of holding the cross. Thus the man on the cross was left to die on the cross suspended between heaven and earth. It is written, in the Bible, about Jesus, that although, he was in all points tempted as we are, yet he was without sin. (Hebrews 4:15). Again, it is written of him; "Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth." (1 Peter 2:22). The story of his whole life on earth has been recorded in four books of the Bible, and we are told about all the good things he did to all men, but he never committed any wrong. Even Pilate, the governor, before whom Christ was brought, knew that there was no fault in Jesus (Luke 23:4); too, he knew that because of envy the Jews wanted him to be crucified (Matthew 27:18). But he yielded to their demand and delivered Christ to be crucified, on the basis of false accusations that the Jews had brought against him, because he feared that there was going to be an uproar and a great violence in the city; as the leaders of the Jews had set their mind not to accept anything less than the crucifying of Christ (Matthew 27: 15-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-40 & 19:1-16).

Remarkably, in the passages cited above from the Scriptures, Christ, even when Pilate wanted him to speak, did not speak anything in his own defense. Astonishingly, when Pilate said to Christ: "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify you, and power to release you?" Only then, did Christ open his mouth and answered: "You could have no power at all against me, unless it had been given you from above." (John 19:10, 11). Christ, who had raised the dead; healed multitudes of people; had calmed the raging sea and the storm; had come from heaven on earth as the Son of God to save man from sin. (John 1:1, 2, 14; 3:16). He could, with his power, as God, have eliminated, if he wanted to, all his enemies. But he had not come to destroy, but to save; yes, even his enemies. (Acts 2:22, 23, 38; Luke 23:34). To his disciples, before his death, he had said: "Therefore my Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John 10:17, 18). And, as Peter preached to the Jews, just seven weeks after the sacrificial death of Christ, in Jerusalem, he said, "Men of Israel,

hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—Him, being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death." (Acts 2:22 & 23). It was the plan and scheme, and as Peter said, the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God that by His grace His Son might taste death for everyone. (Hebrews 2:9). On the cross of Christ the love of God for humanity was demonstrated, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us! (Romans 5:8). On the cross, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them. Indeed, as the Scripture says, He made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:19 & 21).

The message of the cross, is the message of the love of God. Only cross does reveal the true love of God, the love with which He loves us all. The message of the cross, is the message of peace and reconciliation. Sin separates man from God, and thus creates the Chasm, the gulf or the enmity between God and man. But when Christ died on the cross by the will of God, he became the propitiation for man's sin, he created the bridge over the gulf. The message of the cross, is the message of the manifestation of the power of God, to demonstrate, as the apostle Paul said, at the present time His righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:26). He loved man, but not his sin. He made peace with man, but not with sin. Instead of punishing the whole humanity for sin, God punished His own Son for the sins of the world. Thus, today the one who believes in Christ and repent of sins and is baptized for the remission of sins, as Christ has commanded (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38), perceives and acknowledges the power of God in the message of the cross of Christ, but it is foolishness to those who are perishing, indeed.

What Should We Bring to Worship?

J.C. CHOATE

God is the creator and we are His creation. We are not God but we have been created in His image. He breathed into us the breath of life and we became living souls. We are in His likeness with a spirit, an immortal soul. Therefore we are to acknowledge Him, to worship, praise, and honor Him as our God and as our maker.

When Jesus met the woman at the well in the city of Samaria, *"The woman said unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he"* (John 4:19-26).

The Samaritans were the descendants of Jews who had intermarried with non-Jews. They had therefore become a rejected people worshipping there in a local mountain. This woman knew that the Jews worshipped in Jerusalem where the temple was located. But Jesus pointed out that the time would come when people would neither worship there in mountain nor in Jerusalem, but wherever they happened to be. He went to say that God was looking for true worshipers, those who would worship in spirit and in truth, those who would worship with understanding and with sincerity according to His teaching.

Thus we worship today. We assemble on the first day of the week to study God's word, to talk to the Father through prayer, to sing praises to Him, to partake of the Lord's Supper in

remembrance of the Lord's body and His blood, and to give of our means. (Acts 20:7; 2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 16:2).

While our sole reason for coming together as the Lord's people on the first day of the week should be to worship God, it is sad that some come for other reasons. Some attend merely from habit, others do so to meet their friends, and some to please the preacher. Some young people attend only because their parents expect them to do so. When people assembled for these wrong reasons they miss the blessings the Father has in store for those who love Him and worship Him scripturally. If you are guilty of this wrong, please repent and then experience the joy and happiness that come to those who worship God in spirit and in truth.

The Lord has promised to be with us and to bless us as we worship Him according to His will, but if we are to receive those blessings we must bring certain things with us to worship each Lord's Day. Consider the following:

1. We should bring a pure heart to worship God. We are children of God. We have been washed in the blood of Christ. We are forgiven of our sins and we should seek to walk in the Lord's ways in all that we say and do. John said, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7).

2. We should come in obedience. We are not coming to please men or for some ulterior motive, but rather our desire is to comply with God's teaching. We will not be going through a form or a ritual, but we will obey the Lord's guidelines in every part of worship. (Matthew 7:21).

3. We should bring with us worship that is from the heart. We should concentrate on what we are doing and show sincerity in every phase of our worship. We have not come to put on a show, to entertain or to be entertained, but rather to put our whole heart and soul into what we do to please the Lord. (John 4:24).

4. We should bring reverence for God and we should reverence in all of the acts of worship. We must remember that show the object of our worship and praise is the one God of heaven. He is not to be treated with disrespect or mockery.

(Psalm 111:9).

5. We should bring a humble spirit. We must not be there to be seen of men, to attempt to exalt ourselves, or to receive recognition for our part in worship. We are to bow before the Lord and exalt him. (Matthew 5:5).

6. We should come to set a good example. Others are watching: our children, our friends, fellow Christians, and people in general. We want to regularly attend the assemblies of the church and then worship from the heart. (Acts 2:42).

7. We should bring love, forgiveness, joy happiness, edification, and fellowship with and for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are one family, united in Christ. We are saved and we have hope. We have much to be thankful for and much to rejoice about. (1 Corinthians 12:13).

If we prepare ourselves in these ways, our approach to God will be as Jesus described to the Samaritan woman, "... *in spirit and in truth*." Thus, our worship will be accepted by Him, and we will receive within ourselves all the benefits of that worship.

Especially for Women

Can A Woman Preach Publicly?

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

In most denominations today, women take an active public part in worship. The thinking is that society has progressed past the ancient biblical times when women were "inferior" and "repressed", and that now they are free to do anything men can do. many people actually glory in this new thinking, believing that at last the injustices done to women through the centuries have been removed. So women preach, women become bishops, they wear the religious robes of men and they do the work of men.

Is this new liberty approved of God? Is the Bible actually only the product of its day, the writings of the thinking of men of the first century and ages prior? If its words are truly from the mind of men and not from the mind of Almighty God, then we

have ignorantly been held captive by prejudices of the past. But if the Scriptures are the inspired, God-breathed message to man from the heart of God Himself, then no human has the authority to call it "dated" or to set it aside as irrelevant to this age.

Jesus plainly said, *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day"*(John 12:48). He told the apostles, *"And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven"* (Matt. 16:19). The Scriptures, repeatedly, are claimed to be the word of God, not man: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. . ."* (2 Tim. 3:16). Our Lord, in the closing message of the Scriptures, warned, *" . . . If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book"* (Rev. 22:18, 19).

It is no small matter to deal with the word of God. To change anything which He has written, assuming an authority greater than God, Himself, is to bring damnation on oneself. Paul warned in Galatians 1:6-9 that even if an *angel from heaven* taught something different to what had been taught through the direction of the Holy Spirit, that one would be accursed of God. Men—or women—who take such presumptuous authority to themselves will face condemnation in the judgment.

In the Scriptures we have no example of a woman standing up and preaching, by God's authority. Many women followed Jesus and ministered to the needs of Himself and His apostles, but none of them were appointed to preach. When the seventy were chosen and sent out, there is no indication that a woman was among the number. All of the apostles were men, and when Peter stood up with the eleven to preach the gospel for the first time, no woman also preached.

Surely Mary, the mother of Jesus, had a powerful "testimony" she could have given. Mary Magdalene had been miraculously healed by the Lord, and it was to Mary that He first appeared (perhaps because she had greater faith at that point than any of the apostles, whom He upbraided for their unbelief in Mark 16:14). But neither of these women was allowed to preach.

Mary and Martha were close friends of Jesus, and they could have told in convincing words of the day when Jesus had raised Lazarus, their brother, from the dead. But neither God nor the apostles asked them to do this.

Why? Because the woman's role in society, in the home, and in the Lord's church is not the same as the man's. Men are given the responsibility to make the public defense of the Gospel, to preach it fearlessly so that those who hear may be converted and may be able to teach others also.

Women, on the other hand, are to learn in quietness. We read, *"Let your women keep silent [one translation says, 'to be in quietness'] in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says, And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church"* (1 Cor. 14:34, 35).

1 Timothy 2:8-14 adds: *"Therefore I desire that the men [the word in the Greek is 'males'] pray . . . in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."*

"Let a woman learn in' silence [quietness] with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence [quietness]. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."

Women, again, have been listening to Satan—and weak men have been repeating Adam's mistake of weakness—for women are taking over the work of preaching in many pulpits. Look at those women who presume to make themselves preachers: most are extremists, in their messages, in their dress, and in their claims. In recent years, two Pentecostal women preachers who have claimed to be great ones in the world have also dressed themselves with huge wigs, with the most extreme clothes, with the gaudiest make-up on their faces, and with the costliest of jewels. They are perfect illustrations of women who have followed Eve's example and have turned a deaf ear to everything God has said concerning their behaviour.

No, women are not authorized by God to preach.

Test Your Religion

FRANCIS DAVID

The book of James is a small book of the Bible, but though it is small, it contains many great messages for us. This book tells us that we need to follow everyday religion. We may sometime boast about our religion but do we really practise it? The writer James says if we do not practise our religion everyday then it is a VAIN religion.

As we come to the chapter one and verse twenty six we read: "If anyone among you think he is RELIGIOUS and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is USELESS. Being a Christian when we talk to people, what does our religion reveal? In our day to day dealing with people, what does our religion reflect?

Our religion is based on the life and works of Jesus. We want to follow him everyday because He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Following Christ Jesus is what Christianity is all about. Let Christ be seen in us everyday.

In chapter three James talks about the tongue and he says that tongue is a little member in our bodies and it is sometime very difficult for man to tame it. Reading from verse three "Indeed, we put bits in horse's mouth that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships, although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, or reptile and creature of the sea is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But No man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." (James 3:3-8). How beautifully James has described the nature of tongue. We as God's children need to be very careful while using our tongues daily. You know, when we talk to people, it reveals and reflect who we are. A Christian is always careful while using his tongue. The word of God says "Let no corrupt

communication proceed out of your mouth but what is good for necessary edification that it may impart grace to the hearers (Eph. 4:29). Our Lord never used his tongue in vain. Its written about him that "HE committed no sin, nor was guile found in HIS mouth" (I Pet. 2:22). Further we see Peter tells Christians that "he who would love to see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile." (I Pet. 3:10). Apostle Paul writes to Christians and he says: "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ . . ." (Phil. 1:27).

The next important thing that we want to see is that a Christian is always careful while dealing with people. He tries his best to be fair with people. Being the children of God, we believe that we have been created for good works. In Ephesians 2:10, Paul is telling the Christians that "We are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand that we should walk in them." When we deal with people what does our personality reflect? Does it reflect that we are mean, ugly and having bad attitude? NO, if we really have the mind of Christ, our dealing will reflect in whom we believe and to whom we belong. Our attitude and behaviour should be respectable. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Do we really possess the mind of Christ?

Christians are peculiar people (I Pet. 2; Titus 2:12-14), They are different (2 Cor. 6:17). They are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. On the Sermon on the mount Jesus says "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden . . . (Yes, your good works, your good attitude is not hidden, it is seen by people) . . . and then Jesus says Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:13-14).

Jesus Christ our master, our Lord is the greatest example who ever lived upon this earth, His life was full of good works. His attitude and dealing with people was excellent. He always did the right thing. Lets walk according to HIS will. If we do so, we wouldn't have problem to practise the EVERYDAY RELIGION. Our master suffered for us and left us an example, so that we should follow his steps (I Pet. 2:21).

Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth

GARY C. HAMPTON

Paul told Timothy to "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). This verse clearly points out our need to study. Study will help us know what to do be approved of God through obedience to his will. Paul's words to the young preacher also let us know there is a right and a wrong way to divide scripture. We must carefully study the truth so that we may rightly divide its teachings and be acceptable in God's sight.

Before The World Was Formed

God planned his creation before he began to create. His plan included the free moral agency of man, which meant that man could sin and fall away from God. Thus, God prepared for the eventuality of man's fall before he framed the world. In speaking of our redemption by the precious blood of the Savior, Peter says: "Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Peter 1:18-20). Paul agrees with Peter and says God chose for the saved to be in Christ all along, but did not send him until the time was right.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love . . . that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him (Ephesians 1:3-4, 10).

Creation And The Fall

Man was formed by God out of the dust of the ground and created in the image of God. God made a special garden and placed man in it to "tend and keep it" (Genesis 1:26; 2:7-15).

Besides these assigned tasks, God only set forth one law, so far as the written record is concerned. Man was not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17). Woman was created to be a suitable helper for man (2:18).

Satan became the father of liars by adding just one word to that which God has said (Genesis 3:4; John 8:44). He told a partial truth that made sin seem attractive (Genesis 3:5, 7,22). He appealed to fleshly desire by telling Eve that it was good for food. Satan aroused her desire through sight, as she saw that it was "pleasant to the eyes." He took advantage of wrongful pride through causing her to think it was "to be desired to make one wise" (3:6; 1 John 2:15-17). In God's words to the serpent, after man's fall, God presented the first great foreshadowing of his plan to send Christ; "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (3:15). In his death on the cross, Jesus suffered a painful bruise like one we might get on the heel, but in his resurrection Jesus dealt a mortal, or head, wound to Satan.

While he was in the Garden of Eden, man enjoyed a close relationship with God (Genesis 3:8). Man's sin placed a barrier between him and God (Isaiah 59:1-2). The long road to the restoration of that relationship, or fellowship, began with the Patriarchal Age. During that age, God spoke to the head of the house, or Patriarch.

When God Spoke To The Fathers

Once man had sinned, God had to put into action his plan to bring him back. We call the first step in that plan the Patriarchal Age. In that age, the head of a household would direct his family as God directed him. For example, God spoke to Noah and instructed him to build an ark of gopher wood (Genesis 6:12-14). Notice that other families were destroyed for their disobedience, but Noah's was saved because he led them in the way of obedience. The writer of Genesis says, "Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did" (Genesis 6:22) As the writer of Hebrews reports, "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness

which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7). As Noah and his family came forth out of the ark, we can see that great patriarch leading his family in worship to God (Genesis 8:15-20). His righteousness caused God to bless his family and promise never to destroy the world by water again (8:21-9:1).

Abraham was another of the Patriarchs to whom God spoke (Genesis 12:1-4). We should notice again that certain blessings accompany obedience. Further, God knew he would be a good spiritual leader for all those in his house, both servants and children (18:18-19). Abraham obeyed even in the most difficult of circumstances, thus teaching his son, Isaac, the way of obedience (22:1-13, especially 7-8; Hebrews 11:17-19; Genesis 26:1-3, 6).

The Law Delivered On Sinai

After the Patriarchal Age, God dealt with man through the written law of Moses (John 1:17). This law was specifically delivered only to Israel, causing some to believe the Gentiles continued to worship God at the direction of their fathers (Exodus 19:3-6; Acts 10:1-4). Just as the people of the Patriarchal Age died in the flood because of disobedience, the disobedient under Moses' law were punished (Leviticus 10:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:1-10; Judges 2:10-14). The law showed man that he could not live a perfect life, and pointed out the great need for a means of overcoming sin, but it did not make such a means available to the people (Hebrews 10:1-4). That law fulfilled its purpose when it showed man his need for a perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ. "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come we are no longer under a tutor" (Galatians 3:19-25). Its stories serve as an example to us of how God will deal with disobedient man. "Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Fellowship With God Is Restored In Christ

Jesus came to fulfill the law and its many promises of a Savior. Our Lord told his disciples, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass

away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled" (Matthew 5:17-18). Just as the prophets has said, Jesus was born of a virgin in the little town of Bethlehem. He was crucified between two thieves, but buried in a rich man's tomb. He carried man's sins to the cross despite the fact that he had been rejected by the very ones he came to save (Isaiah 7:14; 53:1-12; Micah 5:2-3). In his death, Jesus took the old law out of the way and put his law into force. Paul told the Christians at Colosse, "Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:11-17). Christ's resurrection was the final great proof that he is God's anointed (Acts 2:22-36). He ascended to heaven and took his rightful seat on the throne of power.

In taking away the law at the cross, Jesus tore down the barrier between Jew and Gentile, or man and man. The blood shed on that cross also gave man the means of over-coming sin, which for centuries has stood as a barrier between man and God (Ephesians 2:11-16; Hebrews 9:22). The Gentiles, as well as the Jews, were granted repentance unto life (Acts 10:34-36, 40, 42-43, 11:15-18). In fact, it can be said that all are one in the church, or in Christ, since it is his body (Ephesians 2:16; Galatians 3:26-28). Thus, peace can be preached to all (Ephesians 2:17-19). We are built upon the foundation of Christ, and are a temple in which God can live (2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16). Man had walked with God in the Garden of Eden. Now, in Christ, we can be in fellowship with him again through the blood of his glorious Son (1 John 1:3-7).

Basic Rules For Effective Bible Study

GUY N. WOODS

We should recognize in the outset of this effort that there is a great deal of difference between reading and study. True, one cannot study without reading; but one may certainly read without studying; and, unfortunately, this is the extent of what most

people today do. We would be far—very far—from discouraging any one in reading the New Testament devotionally; all of us ought daily to read a portion thereof for the spiritual sustenance it provides and for the elevation of spirituality it produces; but, it is a fact that one may read devotionally for a life-time and never acquire an indepth knowledge of the sacred text.

Much of that which goes under the guise of study is far short of it. Our eyes may move along the page and the words pass one by one through our minds with little or no residual benefit. When the book is closed or the speech to which we have listened is over, we are able to recall but little or nothing of that which we have read or heard. This, though common, is unprofitable, and may not be properly classified as learning from study at all.

A second level is that in which we clearly apprehend that which we have read or heard; and we conclude that we have indeed mastered the matter; but, tomorrow, or next week, when we attempt to recall these things earlier considered, we discover that they are no longer with us. We then understood that with which we were interested but did not retain it in memory. Why this occurs we shall determine later. It is sufficient for our purpose at the moment to note that this level of "study" may not properly be classified as learning.

The highest, and really the only true level of learning is that in which we not only fully understand that which we have heard or read, but we are able to recall it with ease thereafter. This is the litmus test of all learning: the ability to recall the details later.

There are one hundred and four weeks in two years. Approximately one half of the subject matter of the New Testament—about one hundred chapters—was written by Paul, apostle to the Gentiles. One with only average intelligence and no more than a grammar school education, by following the simple system of inductive study now to be considered, and by devoting fifteen minutes a day to the effort, may become familiar with a chapter a week, in which case, half of the New Testament will have been mastered in two years.

But, suppose it takes twice as long—four years—and to this let us add one more year for good measure—five years—the student will have become familiar with every word of half of the New Testament in five years by devoting only fifteen minutes a

day to the effort. Five more years of fifteen minutes a day in the other half of the book and one will have become familiar with every word in the New Testament in ten years.

What an easy and enjoyable effort it becomes using this method of study to the enrichment of our own minds and hearts and to the acquisition of the ability to introduce others to the Way of Salvation! What a small price to pay for the wisdom we are able thus to obtain for ourselves and the power thus acquired to assist others to find the way to heaven! Is it possible that any reader of these lines is unwilling or unable to give this much time to the study of the message of the Cross and the story of Redemption? The possibility is surely well within the reach of us all. Arise fifteen minutes earlier; take fifteen during the day from some task not important or claim for this a few moments otherwise wasted and acquire and use this inestimable blessing of knowing thoroughly the divine will and the wonderful privilege of being able to teach it to others.

Three steps are absolutely essential to the implementation of this system of study:

(1) One must study regularly—fifteen minutes every day.

(2) This study must be done under strict conditioned circumstances.

(3) One must have and use the basic books necessary to such study.

Don't Dare Miss Heaven!

JOHNNY RAMSEY

Not only is heaven a prepared place for prepared people it will also be too sweet to miss! How deeply tragic it would be to so live as to be absent when the golden street of that celestial city opens wide to receive its own. We dare not miss the eternal joy of that land beyond the river of death where the redeemed of all ages will gather for the grandest fellowship ever known. H.L. Gilmour wrote these wondrous words of hope:

"How precious the thought
That we all may recline,

Like John the beloved and blest,
On Jesus' strong arm,
Where no tempest can harm,
Secure in the heaven of rest!"

We have the ability to hope to the end for the joys yet to be revealed (I Peter 1:13) as we look for the glorious appearing of the Lord (Titus 2:13). Because our citizenship is truly in heaven we have genuine hope as an anchor for the soul as we look for a better country (Hebrews 11:16). Christians comfort one another with the eager anticipation of being received into glory after the toils of this life come to an end (Psalm 73:24). We know, because Job 3:17 tells us, that there is a place "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest." We surely plan to go there.

But, love of worldly things will cause millions to miss heaven. An unknown poet clearly reminds us of the tenacity of materialism:

"You have time to resort to mountain and glen;
And time to gain knowledge from books and men,
Yet not time to search for the wisdom of God
But what of your soul when you are under the sod?
then, what of the Judgment-pause, think. I implore!
For time will be lost on eternity's shore."

We certainly need to make a definite reservation for heaven lest our names fail to be enrolled there "with the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12). Such a tremendous goal demands that we abstain from evil, actively pursue righteousness and grow daily in the traits of spiritual maturity that result in an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of heaven (II Peter 1:11). When we come to the crossroads of life, that will determine our destiny, we must, with courage, choose the challenging road of Christianity rather than glitter and gold of selfishness and compromise (Matthew 7:13-14). Suffering for the cause of the Lord means we will reign with Him forever (II Timothy 2:11-12). Steadfast loyalty shall be abundantly rewarded (1 Cor. 15:58) but cowardice will eventuate in a realm wherein many are banished from God's presence (John 8:21-24). For those who are forever lost it would have been far better never to have been born (Mark 14:21)!

Therefore, we need to take heed lest we neglect so great salvation and have to pay the sad dividend of a tragic blunder, called by the writer of Hebrews, *turning back to perdition* (Hebrews 3:12; 10:38-39). *What are the major reasons so many will miss heaven?*

1. The Power of Satan: II Corinthians 2:11
2. The Separation of Sin: Jeremiah 3:25
3. Shallow Excuses: Luke 8:14 and 14:18
4. Ungodly Parents: Proverbs 14:11
5. External Religion: Ezekiel 33:31
6. Delay: Hosea 10:12
7. Dying Outside of Christ: Revelation 14:13

We can overwhelm all of these ploys of the Devil through the blood of Christ, the Word of God and a life of surrender to the Savior (Rev. 12:11). Heaven will be too grand and eloquent to miss. Do not dare make the mistake of living in error and dying in sin lest the majestic sweetness of glory pass you by! T.S. Teddlie powerfully wrote this gospel song:

"Now is the time to prepare, my friend,
Make your soul spotless and free;
Washed in the blood of the crucified One,
He will your answer be.
What will it be? What will it be?
Where will you spend your eternity?"

A lack of love for Truth (II Thess. 2:10-12) keeps millions still in the bondage of iniquity and thus, unprepared, to meet the Judge of all the earth (Jude 6). One of the saddest points to contemplate concerning the vast number of those who will be lost in the final day is the empty lives they manifested while upon the earth. May we so live and love and grow in the Lord's will that heaven can be our eternal abiding place because we chose to live for Christ in the here and now! By matchless grace and mercy of God we dare not miss heaven.

"Sing the song of Moses
And the Lamb by and by,
And dwell with Jesus evermore."

Keeping The Children Unspotted From The World: The Design/designer Principle

GLENN COLLEY

James wrote, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27).

Every Christian parent pleads with God for help to rear his or her child to love the Lord and faithfully follow His word. We pray that we will be able to guide them in a way that is right (Prov. 22:6), and keep them unspotted from the world. But that's tough, Jesus recognized the difficulty among all His disciples when He prayed, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John 17:15).

From time to time we want to present articles in The Bible Teacher which will offer practical, helpful advice to Christian parents in rearing their children right, and keeping them unspotted from the world.

Now to the body of this article. Every child, of understanding age, should be able to explain clearly the "Design, Designer" argument when asked why he believes there is a God. This simple explanation should be repeated over and over until the child can say it with confidence and ease. It will not only aid him throughout his life in conversations about his faith, but will also further solidify in his young heart that the existence of God is true and obvious.

The "Design, Designer" argument is simply this: For every intelligent design, there must be an intelligent designer. Our bodies and our world clearly have intelligent designs, therefore we did not come from nothing. We are not a freakish accident of non-living matter. We humans have a design, the intelligence of which is proven every day in science. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psa. 139:14).

The Psalmist David beautifully described and espoused the "Design, Designer" principle when by inspiration he wrote, "The

heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*" (Psalm 19:16). There is a sermon being preached every day in the sky! Granted, there are many things we cannot know about God by looking into the calculated governing of the planets and stars, and the beautiful colors and cloud configurations, but we can observe that there IS A GOD. How? Because it is an obvious impossibility to have such a design without a great Designer.

Let your children see this principle with a wrist-watch. A quartz time piece can be accurate within seconds per month. Amazing really. Did someone design that watch, or did it come together, metal, leather, plastic, battery and all, through some accidental evolution? We all stand on the side of a designer. We didn't see him do it. We don't know his name or where he lives where he learned how to do this, but we know beyond any doubt that there was one. Our bodies and our world, the beautiful and undeniable designs, so much greater than a simple wristwatch, prove we were designed by a great and powerful Designer.

Incidentally, there are but two choices with reference to our origin. Either we came from nothing, as the disbelieving evolutionist believes, or God created us as the Bible affirms. One or the other.

Teach the children. Let's keep them unspotted from the world.

"Bringing Them Up . . . Right"

M. FLOYD BAILEY, JR.

Raising a child is no doubt a great challenge, but it is also one of the greatest privileges one can have, as well as one of life's richest blessings. The Psalmist wrote: *"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them"* (Psalm 127:3-5). Even though we realize the blessings of parenting, it is at

times frustrating and can even be overwhelming.

God's word has not left the Christian parent without counsel. The following points will help parents to make it through the tough times and will encourage steadfastness. As Christian parents we must:

1. Point Our Kids In The Right Direction

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Despite attempts to detract from the meaning of this verse it must be recognized as a general truth. Our kids are going to go in the direction they are pointed.

Sometimes we point our kids without even knowing it. When we "skip" services on vacation, we are pointing our kids toward a worldly view of church attendance. When we watch corrupt television at home, we point our kids toward hypocrisy. When we speak evil of the elders and preacher or other church members, we point our kids toward gossip and backbiting. When we elevate school education and never consider our child's Bible school studies, we point our kids toward mediocrity and failure in the course that we will give them eternal life.

We must be careful to point our kids in the right direction so that they will see the proper destination. This means being pointed in the right direction ourselves.

2. Don't Provoke Our Children To Wrath

Ephesians 6:4 advises fathers *"... provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* This verse has nothing to do with our kids getting upset when they are punished. In fact, it is even the opposite. Remember that Verse 1 of the same chapter commands the children to "obey the parents." the NIV translates this verse *"... do not exasperate your children. ..."* In this we get the idea.

■ A parent who is inconsistent with punishment will exasperate the child. Today they are punished for doing the same thing they got away with yesterday and they will get away with it again tomorrow.

■ Sometimes unjust punishments are given and can exasperate a kid. "If you tell me a lie you will get a lecture, if you

change the channel while I am watching the news you get a spanking," this type of misplaced values are very confusing to a child and will cause our children great frustration. "The punishment should fit the crime."

■ Punishment that is anger driven rather than loving and nurture based will exasperate your kids. If you feel like blowing your stack take a deep breath, send your child to the other room, collect yourself and then go and administer discipline. The ten minutes you spend collecting your thoughts and regaining control will mean a life time of security for your child, and their respect for you will soar.

3. "Bring Them Up. . ."

In the literal sense this means to raise them through the years of their life, but there is also a metaphorical meaning to these words found in Ephesians 6:4. We must boost our children spiritually, emotionally and socially. The following are some ways to boost our children.

■ Let our kids know how much we love them, both in word and in deed.

■ Take an interest in the daily activities of our children by asking about how their day was and what went on in school or at play.

■ Know our children's friends and be ready and willing to give counsel when a friend or relationship is inappropriate or having difficulty. Set relationship guidelines and NEVER MAKE EXCEPTIONS.

■ Tell our children how proud we are of them and give them honor when honor is due.

■ Don't expect our kids to be mature enough to make adult decisions; this will only frustrate the child and disappoint us.

In these things we will give our kids the confidence they need to be spiritually, emotionally and socially capable of learning what they need to know. I know it's tough to keep everything in proper perspective when we're faced with the daily grind, but don't despair; mistakes are only permanent if we refuse to admit our wrong and do right. Let's raise up our kids right!

Satan Is Alive And Well!

JIM GILLASPIE

We see it everywhere - crime, filth, meanness, corruption. Why do we humans do the things we do to one another? Just a few evenings ago a criminologist stated on television that the disturbing trend of violent crime (including murder) among teenagers is likely to get much worse. With each passing year we grow more distant and unattached from our fellow man. Long gone are the days when neighbors pitched in to rebuild a barn that had burned. These days, neighbors are more likely to litigate than help. There are still a few bright spots, such as the national response to the Oklahoma City bombing, but very often, when trouble strikes our neighborhood, we are too busy or too wrapped up in our private worlds to notice. The concept of the "brotherhood of man" lies dying on the operating table of avarice and lucre. So why do we find ourselves living in this kind of world? How did it happen? Allow the apostle Peter to supply the answer; "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). It appears that as people, we haven't been too vigilant. Satan is alive and well in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Surely the church is a safe haven from this satanic affront. Surely the institution that was to be known by its love (John 13:34-35) has found a way to insulate itself against the influence of the world (Jas. 4:4). But as we take a long and painful look inward, we realize that such is not the case. We too, as Christians, may become too busy to be concerned with the difficulties of others (Gal. 6:1-2, 10). We, too, may allow Satan to wreck havoc on our relationship, by introducing the attitudes and perspective of the world among brethren. God meant for the church to be something better, something purer; "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not he unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor 6:17-18). We are to develop new attitudes, new ways of thinking (Rom 12:2). We are to care more

(Luke 10:30-37), love more (1 Joh 4:20-21), and do more (Matt 5:44-48) than the world. Satan is alive and well, but we must never give him a foothold in the church (Eph. 4:27). What can we do to safeguard the church against the veil of darkness that engulfs the world? We can start by focusing on pure things (Phil 4:8). We can get serious about putting God first (Matt 6:33). We can quit looking for the boundary line when it comes to sin ("how far can I go"?) and start keeping our distance from "all appearance of evil" (1 Thes. 5:22). Here's the best part while the world continues to decay without, we can become better and stronger within, for the God we serve is far more powerful than the god of this world. "Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

A Reason To Smile

Now folks, we need every verse of the Bible. We need the ones which rebuke and correct us, and we need those which exhort and encourage us. Some time sit down and look up verses in the Bible which have to do with the joy of following Christ:

James 1:2

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. (KJV)

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. (KJV)

James 1:9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted. (KJV)

1 Peter 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. (KJV)

Christians should be the happiest people in the world. The expression of Christianity is not a sigh, but a song.

For today, remember that a smile is a light in the window of your face that shows your heart is at home.