

The cover features a central teal circle with the title 'THE BIBLE TEACHER' in red. This is surrounded by a white scalloped border with a red geometric pattern. The background is teal with white radial lines.

THE BIBLE TEACHER

ALMOST FREE!

Excellent Christian Literature

YOU can receive 40 books (english), worth three hundred rupees for rupees thirty-five only. Good for preachers, teachers and students of the Bible.

Also available are 20 books in Hindi just for rupees fifteen only.

All books are mailed free of charge. Your M.O. should be addressed to:

THE BIBLE TEACHER

C-22 N.D.S.E. 2

New Delhi-110049

Kindly Note :

If you are receiving more than one copy of the Bible Teacher, You are requested to let us know Your Mailing Number(s) written on your address label. This will help us check duplication of addresses.

Thank You.

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :

J. C. CHOATE

Associate Editor :

SUNNY DAVID

Published by Church of Christ, Box 3815,
New Delhi-110049

Pleading For The Restoration Of Pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 17

June 1986

No. 2

EDITORIAL



Why do Christians Fall Away

It is so thrilling to see people obey God. Those who do are richly rewarded with the forgiveness of their sins. As they become children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, they have the Lord's promise that He will be with them and bless them and care for them. These rewards and blessings, however, do not come without responsibilities. The Lord gives, but He expects something in return. For instance, He expects His people to be faithful, loyal, and obedient to Him. This is very little in comparison to all that He gives and does for those who love Him.

When one knows what the Bible teaches about salvation, and all of the blessings that God bestows on His people, it is hard to believe that there would be those who would deny the Lord and return to the ways of the world, but some actually do this. Why would a Christian ever do such a thing? Let's examine this matter and see what we can come up with. We would hope that in doing so, we might keep one or more from making such a tragic mistake.

1. Some fall away because they were never sufficiently taught God's word. It is difficult to believe in Christ without knowing who He was, His purpose in coming, and what He requires of one. Paul said that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10 :17). The Hebrew writer declared, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him : for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11 : 6). In giving the parable of the sower, Christ said that some of the seed "fell upon stony place where they had not much earth : and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth : And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away." (Matthew 13 : 5, 6). In explaining that, he said, "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he no root in himself, but dureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matthew 13 : 20, 21). Christ was saying that there are those who hear his word, but do not come to fully understand it and to believe it. They therefore do not count the cost and are not willing to pay the price when the time comes that they must give up something or must suffer some for Christ. To them, then, the only alternative is to quit.

2. Others fall away when they are left alone in some place, isolated from the church, or when they are a part of some small congregation that does not give them enough help and encouragement to carry on. These are usually young Christians who have not grown and developed and matured to the point where they are strong enough to remain faithful. This reminds us again of our need for one another, of our need to meet each week to read and study God's word, to pray together and to pray for one another. We need this fellowship so that we can encourage one another and to involve ourselves in good works that will help us to grow personally and will help the church to grow in numbers. After the church was established in Jerusalem, the record says, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2 : 42).

3. Many Christians fall away because they are influenced by the world. Those who are not Christians or those who are doing those things that are wrong will try to persuade God's children to join them. They may try to do this in different ways. Some may mock and ridicule those who are following Christ. Others may tempt them to join them in their worldly practices. Sad to say, some are not strong enough to withstand such attacks. In the parable of the sower, Christ said that the seed that fell among the thorns represented those who hear the word, obey it, but allow the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word, and to be unfruitful. (Matthew 13 : 22).

4. Some brethren are deceived and led away into error. Besides all of the traditional religious errors that exists, there are constantly those who are rising up with some new teaching. That is why the scriptures warn again and again that we be not deceived. For example, Paul wrote his brethren at Ephesus, "Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 5 : 6).

5. Finally, there are those who quit because of envy, jealousy, and not being able to have their way about something. We would probably be surprized to know of the ones who fit into this category. These are the little petty things that brethren get involved in that can be deadly and destructive. Paul wrote of the spirit that Christians should have toward one another. He said, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." (Romans 12 : 15, 16).

There are many other causes why a percentage of the Lord's people fall away. None of them are justified. Those who leave Him are very unwise. They not only give up their relationship with the Lord, and all of the good things that He can provide. but in their departure they are also giving up their hope for the future. It is possible that they may return to God through repenting of their sins, confessing their faults, and asking both their Lord and their brethren for forgiveness (James 5 : 16), but it is not likely that many will do so.

What these erring members do not realize is the fact that if they quit the church they also reject the Lord. Christ and his church are inseparable. (Ephesians 5 : 23; 1 Corinthians 12 : 27). To accept one is to accept the other; but also to reject the one is to reject the other. Be careful what you do. You may go to the point of no return.

If you are a Christian, we would like to urge you to be faithful to your Saviour. Don't just claim to be a Christian; don't be a nominal Christian, if such a thing is possible, but be a faithful child of God. Sincerely strive to serve the Lord, be loyal to Him in all that He may ask you to do. If you are an erring Christian, please think about what you are doing to yourself, to your family, and above all, what you are doing to Christ. We would encourage you to return to Lord while you can and to be determined that you are going to be faithful to Him unto death. If you will, you will never regret it.



**associate
editorial**

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

Most preachers shrunk from preaching on this subject from the pulpit because they are afraid of making some people mad. Because not all folks accept the teaching of God's book on this vital subject. Especially in the case where there are such members involved in unscriptural divorce and remarriage who are financially or otherwise helping the church, preachers are very reluctant to say any thing from the Bible because they do not want to loose such giving and helping members of the church.

They are afraid that if they will say something from the Bible it will hurt the member involved, and not only he would stop coming to the services but he might also take away some weak members of the church with him. But regardless of what takes place, if we are going to preach the word of God and if we are going to please God rather than men then we must preach on this subject what Christ taught.

In Matthew chapter 19 we read, "Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there. The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?' And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.' They said to Him, 'why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?' He said to them, 'Moses because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.'" (Matthew 19 : 1-9).

Here in this setting we find the Pharisees, among other people, before Christ, and they wanted to know from Jesus if it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife. Answering their question Christ brought to their attention several things. First, He said, God in the beginning made one male (Adam) and one female (Eve) and he put them together to be husband and wife, and they two became one flesh in their coming together. Hence, when a man and a woman come together in marriage, then God has joined them together. And Christ said that let not man separate them whom God has joined together. It does not matter of what nationality, colour or race they might be, whether they believe in Christ or not, or whether their marriage ceremony was

conducted in a church building or in a legal court house or at any other place. What matters is the fact that if a man and a woman, who have never been married before, come together in marriage then they become one flesh and God joins them together, therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate. A husband is not allowed by God to separate himself from his wife, and a wife is not allowed to separate herself from husband. And no other person should cause this. Because that would be breaking and separating some thing that God has put together. It is a sin against God.

Next, the Pharisees wanted to know from the Lord, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce and to put her away?" In reply, Jesus told them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." Of what beginning, Christ was talking about? When God in the beginning had made Adam and Eve, the first couple on earth. Some have contended that what Christ was teaching about divorce and remarriage in Matthew 19 does not apply to Christians but that it was applicable to the Jews only. Were Adam and Eve Jews or Christians? They were none. What Jesus has taught here in Matthew 19 is applicable to all men and women regardless of their race and religion. Christ here was talking about God's law of marriage that He has established in the beginning, in the garden of Eden, when He had made Adam and Eve and had put them together in one place. And He said that from the beginning it was God's will that a man and a woman should come together in marriage and live together without separation. Moses, not God, notice, allowed them at that time to give a certificate of divorce. But from the beginning it was not so, the Lord pointed out.

"And I say to you," Christ further taught, "Whoever divorces his wife except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery: and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." The same would be true in the case where a woman divorces her husband and marries another man and another woman marries her husband. When one marries a spouse who has been divorced then whoever marries that person commits adultery. Hear Jesus, He said. If a man, any man, Christian or

non-Christian, divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality or adultery, and marries another woman then he commits adultery and whoever marries that woman who has been divorced, then the one marrying her also commits adultery with her. Because in God's account and under His law she still is the wife of the man who divorced him. He committed sin in divorcing her without the scriptural cause, in the first place, and then when he married another woman he sinned again. And the one who marries his divorced wife also commits the sin of adultery with her because she is not his wife in God's account, in fact.

The only ground allowed by Christ for divorce and remarriage is sexual immorality or adultery. That is, the guilty person, a wife or a husband, who has been found living in adultery, may be divorced by the right party and then he or she, who is not guilty of adultery, has the right to remarry again. But one must make sure who he marries. In this case, one should not marry a person who has been divorced, because that would be living in sin. In such a case, one should either marry a single, one who has never been married before, or a person whose spouse died.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "For a woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man." (Romans 7 : 1, 2). Again, he said, "A wife is bound by the law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 7 : 39). Here the apostle has written to Christians, and he said, if a Christian woman's husband dies then she has the right to marry again, if she want, but she must make it sure that the man she is going to marry is in the Lord, that is, he is a Christian. The same would be true in the case of a Christian man whose wife dies. Christians are warned, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6 : 14).

The Wonderful God

Gary McDade

A line in a children's prayer which has taught many at a tender age about the wonderful God of heaven goes, "God is great, God is good." Throughout a person's life the beautiful meaning of this sentiment should remain indelible. The Psalmist was impressed with the greatness of God. He wrote, "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things : thou art God alone." (Psa. 86 : 9, 10.) Again it is said, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness." (Psa. 48 : 1.) Men and women, boys and girls need to know this wonderful God. The Psalms give many reasons why God is great and good.

First, God is great in power. It is written, "Great is our Lord, and of great power : his understanding is infinite." (Psa. 147 : 5.) His power is seen in his knowledge or understanding : "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names." (v. 4.) God's Power is known by the way he sustains life on earth : "Who covereth the heaven with clouds, prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. . . and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat." (v. 8, 9, 14.) God is great in power to heal "the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." (v. 3.) "The Lord lifteth up the meek : he casteth the wicked to the ground." (v.6.) God delights not in the strength of horse nor man, but the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." (v. 11.) The works and knowledge of God are expressions of his great power. So the writer of Psalms, "O Lord, how great are thy works ! and thy thoughts are very deep." (Psa. 92 : 5.) God is wonderful because of His power.

A second reason the psalms share for considering God to be wonderful is his great mercy. Mercy may be defined as God's divine favor and forbearance. A Psalm of David reads, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. . . . For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is

his mercy toward them that fear him." (Psa. 103 : 8, 11.) Psalm 136 extols God for his great mercy. Every verse ends in the refrain, "For his mercy endureth for ever." The mercy and truth of God go hand in hand. (Psa. 85 : 10.) In fact, "all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth." (Psa. 25 : 10.) Just as justice and judgment are the habitation or establishment of God's throne, even so mercy and truth are constantly before him. (Psa. 89 : 14.) Trust in God encircles a person with the mercy of God. (Psa. 32 : 10). God is wonderful because his "mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds." (Psa. 57 : 10; 108 : 4.)

And then, a third reason for considering God wonderful is the great peace he affords his people. The most lengthy Psalm includes the verse, "Great peace have they which love thy law : and nothing shall offend them [or make them stumble]." (Psa. 119 : 165.) Those who love God's law are his people. They are directed by, God's Word. To them David wrote, "The Lord will give strength unto his people the Lord will bless his people with peace." (Psa. 29 : 11). It would be wonderful if all people of the earth both young and old could exclaim with the Psalmist, "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust thee before the sons of men !" (Psa. 31 : 19).

"By What Authority Doest Thou These Things ?"

Ben F. Vick

When Jesus had cleansed the temple of its thieves and had healed the blind and the lame which came to him, the chief priests and elders came to him as he was teaching and asked, "By what authority doest thou these things ? and who gave thee this authority ?" (Matt. 21 : 23.) Jesus answered their question with a question by asking, "The baptism of John, whence was it ? from heaven, or of men ?" (Matt. 21 : 25.) Though the question asked by the enemies of the Lord was not from pure motives, it is still a good question for all today.

The question of authority is fundamental in religion. "Authority" means "the power or a right to command, act, enforce obedience, or make final decisions; Jurisdiction." In all realms of life (including religion) there must be authority or utter chaos will be the results. All that is taught or practiced in religion must be authorized.

The question which Jesus put to his inquirers places the source of authority in one of only two areas. Either John's baptism was "from heaven," i.e., authorized by God, or "of men," i.e., a commandment from men. All teaching and practice in religion falls into the category of either being authorized by God or commanded by men.

If the right to command certain teaching and practices be from heaven, i.e., from God, then all are duty bound to obey or suffer the consequences. Jesus said, "All power (authority, ASV) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28 : 18-20.) Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5 : 9.) Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates of the city." (Rev. 22 : 14).

If the source of authority for what one teaches or practices is of men, then it is not only useless, but is a rejection of God's commands. Jesus said, "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Mk. 7 : 7.) those who cling to the traditions of men lay aside commandment of God (Mk. 7:8). Again, the Lord said, "Full well ye rejected the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." (Mk. 7 : 9.) Those who cling to that which is authorized by men and not God make the word of God of none effect. (Mk. 7 : 13.)

Paul exhorted the brethren at Colosse, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Col. 3 : 17.) "In the name

of the Lord Jesus" means by the authority of the Lord Jesus. If a Policeman comes to my door and says, "Open up in the name of the law," he means to open up by the authority of the law invested in him as a policeman. This command by Paul is going unheeded in too many places in the religious world and in the Lord's church today.

Of our religious friends we ask, "By what authority doest thou these things?" Where in the Bible is the authority for the name by which you are called? Where does the Bible authorize the "baptizing" of infants? Where does the New Testament authorize sprinkling or pouring instead of immersion in water? By what authority does one partake of the "Lord's supper" monthly, quarterly or annually? The raising of funds for the church by rummage sales, pie sales, the selling of strawberries—all by the church is authorized where? from heaven, or of men?

By what authority is the Lord's church called the church of Christ? (Matt. 16 : 18; Rom. 16 : 16.) By what authority is baptism to the penitent believer for the remission of sins? (Acts 2 : 38). By what right or command are men to be immersed in water? (Rom. 6 : 3,4.) The practice of partaking of the Lord's supper upon the first day of the week, is it from heaven? or of men? (Lk. 22 : 19; Acts 20 : 7.) Where is Bible authority for raising church funds only by volunteer offerings of its members? (I Cor. 16 : 1-2).

Another Practice in the Lord's church needs to be put to this same test. Where is Bible authority for the church's building a playground in order that the members' children might have a place to play after services? Recently, a congregation which I know announced the above project as part of their plans in the future. Their good support in the mission field does not offset the unauthorized project. (Jas. 2 : 10.) The playground for the children and the instrument in worship stand or fall together. If the church can build a playground, it can also, by the same "reasoning," justify the instrument. It is my prayer that the leaders of the above-mentioned congregation and any others practicing the same will abandon such a course before it is too late.

Some churches have built (or are building) "Family Life Cen-

tres" (euphemism for gymnasiums) for members and friends. The denominations have had gyms for years. Where is command, apostolic example, or necessary inference for such? Evidently many have no interest in Bible authority in matters spiritual.

If one counters by saying, "Well, this teaching or practice is in realm of expediency," this, too, is fallacious reasoning. Friends, every expedient must first be lawful. Paul wrote, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (I Cor. 6 : 12.) Paul, in this context, was dealing with the eating of meats. He was not saying that everything is lawful, but that all that is lawful is not necessarily expedient. Thus, we gather from this statement that expediencies must fall under the realm of things lawful. Let such practices as mentioned above first be proved lawful, then expedient. To attempt to prove a thing is expedient before showing it is lawful is to get the cart before the horse. Where is the command, apostolic example, or necessary inference from the New Testament which authorizes what is done?

If our teaching or practice be of men, let us give it up; but if it be of God, let us hold to it while teaching others.

Peace And Happiness

Lindell Mitchell

The Lord never promised that those who follow him would be free from suffering and pain. In fact, his life is a clear demonstration that one can be much loved by the Father and still suffer unjustly in this life. Jesus never promised perpetual good health or financial prosperity. To the contrary, Jesus said, "... If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16 : 24, 25).

Our task is to avoid the negative, despondent and destructive attitudes toward life that develop as a result of our reactions to

circumstances. That is, we must learn to live in peace and happiness despite life's disappointments.

I want to suggest four general rules for living that will help move us toward peace of mind and genuine happiness. First, each of us must learn to depend on God. God in heaven still rules in the affairs of men. The same God who notes the sparrow's fall, knows the number of hairs upon our heads. Hence we should seek his counsel. The prophet said, "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10 : 23). King David said, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." (Ps. 23 : 4).

A second rule for fulfillment and happiness is to accept your lot. I know this is difficult. It is difficult to accept poverty when those about us are wealthy. It is difficult to accept illness when those about us are healthy. However, it is possible if we accept God's values. Sometimes things are not as bad as they appear, and sometimes they are not as good as they appear.

By faith Moses, when he was grown up refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." (Heb. 11 : 24-26). On the surface Moses made a bad choice. He had it made and chose the slavery of Israel. However, Moses was governed by God's values. Therefore, righteousness was of more worth than the idolatry and sensuality of Egypt.

Third, learn to live in the present. Sir William Osler wrote : "If the load of tomorrow be added to that of yesterday and carried today, it will make the strongest falter." That is exactly what Jesus said in the sermon on the mount : "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow : for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Mt. 6 : 34).

Fourth, aim for a worthwhile goal. Paul said, "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold : but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to

the things which are before, I press on toward the goal upto the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3 : 13, 14). When you balance life's sorrows against it's joys, it is worth living!

"Let The Peace of God Rule!"

Dillard Thurman

While the loud and ominous sound of war and strife grates up our ears, the "Dove of Peace" floats on silent wings! Yet we must remember that it is not with a clarion call that God paints the beauty of the rainbow, or the glory of the sunset! The breathless splendor of the Aurora Borealis is not attended with the clanging of cymbals! Nor are the mighty works and powers of God heralded by pomp and circumstance as are the dramas which men advertize! God moves silently throughout the Universe without ostentation and fanfare. And as lights in the world, His saints are to perform their good deeds without sounding a trumpet to attract the attention of the world. (Mt. 5 : 14-16).

All too often the blustery sound of braggarts only portray weakness; not strength! The steam that blows the whistle doesn't move the train; it is the empty box-car that makes the noise; the squeaking wheel needs the grease; and the braying mule is seldom found in the harness! These and many other sayings inform us that it is foolish to spend valuable time and energy "sounding off" to attract attention to what we are doing!

The Attributes of God's Peace

Having the peace of God within will show to the world our character. *"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy, and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."* (Jas. 3 : 17-18). When you find that kind of person in the church, the Lord has a fruitful servant! Church growth is not attained by riot and confusion. We are instructed : *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body;*

and be ye thankful." (Col. 3 : 15). If peace reigns, then spiritual growth is well assured. Paul also wrote, *"To be spiritually minded is life and peace."* (Rom. 8 : 6). His summation was : *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* (Phil. 4 : 7).

Paul outlined paths that promoted peace and harmony for the people of God. He exhorted the Ephesians to be *"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* (Eph. 4 : 3). To the saints in Rome, he wrote : *"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify another."* (Rom. 14 : 19). He then brought it home in writing, *"And be at peace among yourselves."* (1 Thes. 5 : 13). If the church is not at peace within, it cannot have much influence on the world! If love and peace is shown among brethren, the world looks on in admiration!

Turning From the Gospel of Peace!

Luke spake of a bunch of rabble rousers of that day as *"lewd fellows of the baser sort,"* (Acts 17 : 5). He branded them for what they were! Yet today many people have turned away their ears from the truth, and been turned unto fables by such false teachers! It is amazing that many rational folk are led astray by religious racketeers whose egotistical claims of personal piety and power with God brand them as cheap hypocrites! Their constant panhandling tactics on radio and TV betray them; yet many ignore 2 Jno. 9-11, and become party to their devilry! Men who have prospered in business by following the principle, *"Investigate before you invest,"* have forsaken that path and blindly followed false prophets in religion! Such religious chicanery surely does not portray the peace of God!

Peace At Any Price Advocates

Attaching itself to the matter of peace is the scourge of destructive heresies opposing sound doctrine. If one "hews the line" while contending for a "Thus saith the Lord," and "Book, chapter and verse," he is often accused of "disturbing the peace of believers." These "peace at any price" advocates brand anyone who contends earnestly for the faith as "a modern Ishmaelite,

whose hand is against every man." But *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood"* while engaged in defending the faith! They who plead for extending fellowship to those out of Christ, seek to become "brotherhood regulators" and thus sow discord and destroy peace! *"For they speak peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land."* (Psa. 35 : 20). These troublesome headline hunters make a great display of their avid pursuit of peace: but do their fruits signify this? *"They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace: when there is no peace,"* (Jer. 6 : 14; 8 : 11). Yes, friends, we are told, *"If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men."* (Rom. 12 : 18). But that still doesn't call for "peace at any price." There comes the time when you must make a choice of standing with the Lord, or courting popularity with men. Then "Peace with God" must be the primary consideration!

Which Side of an Issue is Chosen?

In the last forty or fifty years, there have been divisive issues confronting the church. During this time, a preacher who showed a charitable attitude toward one who differed in matters of opinion was marked by "keepers of orthodoxy" who sought to "drive him into the opposing camp!" The moderate, conservative, "middle of the road" position often held was said to be untenable! However, I had held the same position (and so had the church,) for twenty years! That was accepted before those "present disturbances" were known, and many saw no reason to change! I believe extreme, intolerant views on HOW to do things shows little regard for the Lord's church. I find He told us WHAT to do; but the HOW was left up to us!

How Can We Solve Such Problems?

Where churches are being mutilated and torn asunder by internal problems, peace and harmony can be restored with one good revival meeting, and an ingathering of lost souls! When a baby is born into a family, brothers and sisters almost instantly overcome selfishness and petty strife as they vie with one another to care for the baby, and wait on the mother! And in the same way, the church becomes united when souls are born into the

family of God! Members rejoice over these babies in Christ, and extend to them their love and care. Members are drawn closer together by such new additions! Brotherly love and understanding becomes easier as we work together to serve the family of God! We may not fully agree with each brother as to HOW he is serving; but forbearance and tolerance makes us rejoice in his accomplishments in Christ, and we aid in the work to avoid the death throes of intestine strife stemming from hatred and jealousy. Peace is restored and preserved when faith works by love! *"Wherefore, brethren, . . . be diligent that ye may be found in him in peace, without spot, and blameless."* (2 Pet. 3 : 14).

How Can We Promote Peace?

Peace and harmony will permeate the whole body of Christ when we become engrossed in the task of saving lost souls! When saints accept the common challenge facing all, and join together to save lost men, our differences will fade away! The vision of going before God with the world unsaved, when we had the word of salvation, should unite our hearts and minds! Yet multitudes may face His judgment never having heard the gospel because the church was embroiled in selfish strife! Our difference can be more easily reconciled when we seriously consider the grave responsibility we share! Too, we must all face God's judgment to give an account of our stewardship of His word!

Those who have known me through my writings for the past forty years will not read into this statement an advocacy of compromise on principles of faith. We would not condone any breach of God's word. But if a matter rests upon human judgment as to ways and means, then why stigmatize the church of God by contending for selfish personal views? Too often the loud, bombastic, vociferous buffoon who "railroads" through his pet church project does very little else! But all the while, true, worthy saints of God, in peace, quietness and humility, go about doing the work the loud braggart only talks about! Any member who would factionalize the body of Christ by fighting for his personal project doesn't love the Lord!

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." (2 Thes. 3 : 16).

Lack of Honor Destroys Relationship

David Johnson

The word "honor" is used often, and in many different ways. In the Bible, the word translated "honor" has behind it the idea of "something of inestimable value." Sometimes the word is translated "precious" to describe the blood of Christ. "Honor" alone means "to glorify" and it is translated as such several times. Therefore, "honor" is the act or acts we render to glorify something or someone we hold to be of inestimable value—precious. But I want us to think about how a lack of honor can destroy relationships.

HUSBAND/WIFE RELATIONSHIP

Honor toward husbands and wives is commanded by God in such passages as 1 Peter 3 : 7; Ephesians 5 : 22-23; Proverbs 31 : 28, 30, where he says "honor your wives" and "respect or reverence your husbands." What happens when honor is missing from this relationship, can be seen in the Old Testament story of David and his wife, Michal. (2 Samuel 6 : 12-23).

In this story David is returning to Jerusalem after great battlefield triumphs. It seems the whole city turned out to welcome him. People were literally "jumping for joy" and David joined with them in their rejoicing. After being with and blessing the people, David went to his home expecting to continue this joyous celebration. But upon entering his house he was met by his wife's sarcastic, cutting, shaming remarks. Michal was jealous of the attention David was receiving and giving. Instead of honoring him she despised him.

What was the result of this ? Verse 23 states, "Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death." In other words, David had nothing to do with her ever again. Their relationship was destroyed.

Many husband/wife relationships are being destroyed today because of a lack of honor. Ask yourself the following questions :

1. Do I do things for my spouse to honor him or her, and to show how priceless he or she is to me ?

2. Do I feel like "do I have to ?" when an opportunity arises to honor my spouse ?

3. It is a drudgery to me to honor my spouse ?

Without honor your relationship to your spouse is on the skids and headed for certain destruction unless there is a change. Work on treating your spouse as the very special person he or she is.

Here are some suggestions for ways to honor each other :

1. Be a good listener and talker. Communication is the cornerstone of marriage.

2. Show in every tangible way that your companionship is desired. Take time to be together, alone.

3. Let your sexual relationship be the outcome of a close spiritual relationship.

4. Practice patience and understanding. You can't possibly always be right. Be ready to work on your faults.

5. Be affectionate and loving.

PARENT/CHILD RELATIONSHIP

God commands that parents and children honor each other. Such passages as Exodus 20 : 12 and Ephesians 6 : 2, 4, declare, "honor your father and mother," "bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

What happens when honor is missing from this relationship ? We read in Genesis of Esau, son of Isaac and Rebekah, taking to himself two wives, who were Hittites. Chapter 26 verse 43 says they "were a grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah." When it comes times for Jacob, their other son, to search for a wife, "Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth : if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me ?"

In taking these Hittite women as wives, Esau had broken the

law of God and had undoubtedly gone against the wishes of his parents. (Notice Genesis 24 : 3). Because of his lack of honor for his parents there was a rift between them and him.

In Micah 7 : 6 we find that one of the sins that destroyed the nation of Israel was a lack of honor in the parent/child relationship. Children displayed their lack of honor for their parents by disobeying them. Parents displayed their lack of honor for their children by refusing to discipline them.

One thing that keeps parents and children from having the close relationship God would have them to have is the "Do I have to ?" attitude. Parents, do you eagerly do things for your children to honor them, to show them how priceless they are to you ? What about you, children ? Do you do things for your parents to honor them to show them how priceless they are to you? Here are some suggestions as to ways honor can be shown in the Parent/Child relationship.

Children can show honor to their parents through :

1. Obedience. There can be obedience without honor, but there can be no honor without obedience.

2. Common Courtesies. Offer to help around the house. Ask permission to go places, don't tell them that you are going somewhere !

3. Communication. In all relationships this is indispensable. Your parents want to hear from you.

4. Remembrances. Do little things on special days to let them know how much you appreciate them.

How is Your Heart

Margie Overton

"A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance : but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." (Proverbs 15 : 13).

A joyous heart or a broken spirit certainly are two extremes.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine. . . ." (Proverbs 17 : 22).

"...he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." (Proverbs 15 : 15).

"But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." The burden may be greater than we can bear, the heart is simply overwhelmed: all hope has died out, all gladness and joy are gone, the heart is broken.

This is when we must cast our cares on the Lord.

"Casting all your cares upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Peter 5 : 7).

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." (Psalm 55 : 22).

We are to submit our whole cause to God. If we have heavy trials; if we have arduous and responsible duties to perform, and feel our inadequacies, and that we do not have sufficient strength to carry on, then we must look to him for grace and strength to help us. We should believe assuredly that he will enable us to sustain all that is laid upon us. He will help us to bear what we thought we could never have done.

Our burdens will then be light. Yes, light, because God is helping us bear them.

Let us cultivate a joyous heart. I encourage this, because the more we have a cheerful heart, the less we will have a broken heart.

The condition of the heart is of utmost importance.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Proverbs 4 : 23).

The first essential of one whose life has been wrong is the creation of "a clean heart."

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." (Proverbs 23 : 7).

The outer life is brightened by joy of the heart. One may

smile when the heart is breaking. It is not intended by Providence that our faces should be a mask to hide the soul. In the long run the set expression of the countenance will correspond to the condition within.

The sad heart will be revealed by a clouded countenance, the heart of care by the fretted lines of a worn face, the peaceful heart by a serene expression, and the glad heart by hearty smiles. Thus we spread gloom or we spread sunshine by our very presence.

The cheerful expression of a Christian is a winning invitation to other to follow Christ. It lets those about us know that we are happy to be Christians.

How is your heart ? Does it need improving ?

Procrastination Leads To Failure

CHARLES L. BROWN

In Matthew chapter twenty-five we have the Parable of the Ten Virgins, five of whom were wise and five were foolish. It is a parable of great sadness! Young women are ever anxious to attend weddings and wedding celebrations. None of them wanted to miss the activities. A young man often deliberately plans to miss a wedding; a young lady does not want to be absent.

LACK OF PREPARATION

The failure of the five foolish virgins to attend was due to their lack of preparation. When the door was opened the five wise virgins were prepared to enter, but the five foolish were not prepared and they could not enter. Preparation does make a difference between success and failure.

In the classic novel, JANE EYRE, by Charlotte Bronte, the heroine comes to an estate to be the governess of a little girl. Upon arrival, and for a considerable time after that, she does not meet her employer who is away on business. But she does notice that everything is kept neat and clean, particularly the master's

private sitting room. "Do you expect your master soon?" she inquired of the housekeeper. "This room looks as if it were ready for his arrival at any moment." The housekeeper with a shake of the head replied "No, I have no idea when the master will return. He might come at any time; and when he does, I want everything in readiness for him!"

WHAT CAUSED THEIR FAILURE ?

Such diligence and preparation would have kept the five foolish virgins from their great disappointment. Evidently their failure to prepare was not due to a lack of KNOWLEDGE. They knew that lamps must have oil to burn. They knew that one must plan ahead in order to have that oil. At times I have allowed my automobile to run out of gasoline, and it was never because I did not know that the automobile needed gasoline to run.

The five foolish virgins knew the necessity of oil !

Their failure to obtain oil was not due to a lack of OPPORTUNITY. It is obvious they had the same knowledge and the same opportunities the five wise virgins had. Their problem was a failure to use their opportunities.

Their failure to be ready was obviously not due to lack of TIME in which to prepare. Again, it is safe to say they had just as much time to prepare as the five wise virgins. However, instead of using their time wisely they used it to slumber and sleep. Thus they ended with wasted knowledge, wasted opportunities and wasted time.

Procastination is the key word for their failure. They failed to prepare because they had procrastinated too long. In 1957 a group of people formed The Procrastinators Club. I understand the club now has 80 or more members and none of them pay their dues on time. The club claims to be "devoted to putting off just about everything until tommorow—or even later. 'We feel that anything worth doing is worth putting off.'" Now, I feel confident the five foolish virgins were not members of The Procrastinators Club, but they were afflicted with the same problem.

TOO LATE !

Shortly after World War II, General Douglas MacArthur wrote : "The history of failure in war can be summed up in two words, 'too late' Too late in realizing the moral danger, too late in preparedness, too late in uniting all possible forces for resistance, and too late in standing with one's friends." In the words of the Bard of Avon : "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty face from day to day, Till all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death !" In common language : "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

"... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6 : 2.) "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." (Jeremiah 8 : 20). "Watch therefore for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matthew 24 : 42).

A True Disciple

G.F. Raines

A true disciple is one who continues (remains steadfast) in the word (gospel) of Christ.

Jesus says : "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." (John 8 : 31.)

John says : "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)

Paul said to the Corinthians : "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." (1 Corinthians 15 : 1, 2).

The gospel of Christ, "the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1 : 16), tells us what we must do to be saved in Mark 16 : 16; John 3 : 5; Acts 2 : 38; 22 : 16; 2 Peter 1 : 5-11; Revelation 2 : 10. Please read these passages in your own Bible.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Hebrews 10 : 23), because our Lord has plainly said, "and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake : but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10 : 22).

"No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9 : 62).

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2 : 10).

Only those who "by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality" will receive eternal life. (Romans 2 : 7).

Giving is Life's Greatest Privilege

Edsel Burleson

An anonymous poet wrote these interesting lines :

Oh, happy day, I'm paying my way

To heaven, the home of the meek;

It takes a price, but I sacrifice,

In fact, . . . a dollar a week !

In prosperous days the Lord I praise;

I have no stingy streak.

To show my love for Him above,

I give . . . a dollar a week !

The church to me will always be

A towering, mighty peak;

To help her live I always give,

In fact . . . a dollar a week !

There's an urgent need the poor to feed,

And orphans our help do seek;
Their helpless cry I never deny,
In fact . . . a dollar a week !
With greatest of ease the Lord I please.
How sweet my actions speak;
I'm paying my way, and cheap, I'd say,
It's just . . . a dollar a week !

Someone once wrote, "Giving is life's greatest privilege ! It is also an acid test of real maturity. God, the truly perfect personality, set the eternal example of giving with his many gifts to us including, of course, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. God has given to us because he loves us. And here is the key to the privilege of giving. Love is always the motivation and mainspring of giving. Giving is a privilege because it involves love. We shower our children with presents, we express our love to God by giving - not merely our money, but our time, talents and energies. The conclusion, therefore, is obvious : if giving for you is not a privilege, it reflects not only upon your spiritual maturity, but upon the genuineness of your love for God, for giving is life's greatest privilege."

Paul said, "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20 : 35.) He told the Christians at Corinth, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him, give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9 : 7.)

I recently came across this thought provoking article that should prompt each of us to take another close look at our attitude toward giving.

"We have decided to stop making requests for money to meet our budget ! Beginning next week, there will be no mention made of money from the pulpit, in the classes, in the bulletin, nor in announcements ! We will not even embarrass folks by passing the collection plates on Sunday. From now on; no more of this talk about money.

"Oh, yes, another thing . . . starting next week please try to

bring your own chair to sit on because we are going to sell the pews to save money on furniture wax. You might also better bring an extra coat or fan in case the weather gets too hot or too cold. We are going to save on the heat and air-conditioning bills. Try to pick up a song book somewhere, and a candle if you come on Sunday night, so we can save on electricity.

"Some of you be sure to prepare a few sermons, some wedding ceremonies, and some funeral talks so we can give the preacher a long unpaid vacation. Every one bring a bucket of water in case of fire or baptism, as we have turned off our water meter. Let's make one more drive before Sunday, to pay the return fare on all our missionaries, then we'll not bother you again.

What would you think if this really happened ? Remember this the next time you feel inclined to complain about budgets or exhortations to meet the needs of the congregation.

It is said that preacher John A. Brodus did a most unusual thing one Sunday morning. When the men were about to take up the collection, he followed one of them. He looked at every offering that was put in the basket. One can imagine how some of the people felt. Some were confused. Others were ashamed. All were surprised.

When the collecting had been taken, he walked to the pulpit and said, "If you take it to heart that I have seen your offerings this day and know just what sacrifices you have made, remember that the Son of God, your Saviour, goes about these aisles every Sunday and sees with His omniscient eye every cent given."

Heed the poet's admonition :

Give as you would if an angel awaited your gift at the door.

Give as you would if tomorrow found your giving here all o'er.

Give as you would to the Master if you met His loving look,

Give as you would of your substance

If His hand the offering took.

The Possibility of Fatal Apostasy

Any child of God *may* so apostatize as to be finally and eternally lost. So teaches the Word of God. Proof of that asseveration is abundant.

Adam and Eve apostatized, forfeiting the Edenic Home to which they had been undisputed heirs. They were driven out forever—disinherited. Proof of that apostasy is confirmed in every *death*. There is not the slightest hint that they were ever pardoned.

Cain was disinherited—driven from “the presence of Jehovah” into a land of Wandering (Gen. 4 : 14, 16), because of his apostasy. No forgiveness hinted.

The ante-deluvian world forfeited their right to occupy the earth, and perished in the Flood—disinherited because of apostasy—from that inheritance. Every evidence of the Flood is proof of that.

The family of Noah apostatized, necessitating the confusion of human speech. Every one of the *tongues* of earth's nations is abiding proof of that.

Of the 3,263,000 (the number estimated by Adam Clarke) Israelites delivered from Pharoah by their baptism unto Moses in the Sea, *all but TWO* perished in the wilderness—*disinherited* because of apostasy; for God made them *heirs* of Canaan, then swore that they should *not inherit* that land.

This case of apostasy is emphasized in the New Testament in several places, as a solemn warning to Christians. Jude says (verse 5) : “Now I desire to put you in remembrance, . . . that the Lord, having *saved* a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward *destroyed* them that believed not” (all but 2 out of 3,263,000). Why do we need to remember *that* ? Simply because we may “*fall after the same example of disobedience,*” says Paul. (Heb. 4 : 11.) That same example is given as a warning to Christians, in 1 Cor. 10.

SPECIAL OFFER!

POWERFUL sermons by J.C. Choate on Cassette Tapes are available for just fifteen rupees! There are seven tapes, and every cassette has four sermons recorded on it. One Cassette Tape for Rs. 15.00 only! All Cassettes will be mailed **FREE** of charge by Registered post. Write your full address on the M.O. form. Send to : The Bible Teacher, C-22, N.D.S.E. 2, New Delhi 110049. Following Cassette Tapes can be had :

- Tape I** : 1. Man Needs God. 2. Christ is Man's Saviour.
3. The Bible is God's word. 4. What Sin Does.
- Tape II** : 1. The Soul of Man. 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. The Faith That Saves. 4. The Need for Repentance.
- Tape III** : 1. Why Baptism Saves. 2. The importance of Obedience. 3. Justified by the Blood of Christ. 4. What it Means to be in Christ.
- Tape IV** : 1. The church that Jesus Built. 2. Salvation in the Name of Christ. 3. Unity of God's People.
4. God Seeks True Worshipers.
- Tape V** : 1. The Lord's Day. 2. Remembering Christ.
3. What prayer can do. 4. Living the Christian Life.
- Tape VI** : 1. The Faithfulness of God's people. 2. Living With One Another. 3. Working with God.
4. Bearing Good Fruit.
- Tape VII** : 1. Why We Are Here?
2. Preparing to Meet God. And Christian Hymns.

NOTE :

- Cassette Tapes of Hindi sermons are also available.
- Money should be sent by M.O. only.
- Print your address clearly in the space provided on the M.O. form for communication. And state the No. of the tape you require.

Licence to Post without Prepayment of Postage No. U/SE-25/85
Posted at New Delhi PSO on 10/11 June 1986.

Postal Regn. No. D (SE) 059

Regd. No. 26921/71

You are Cordially Invited

To Attend
Worship Services of the church of Christ

Every Sunday :

Bible Study 10 : 00 A.M.

Worship 10 : 30 A.M.

Meeting place :

E-10 Defence Colony, Ring Road
(Near Andrews Ganj Bus Stop)
New Delhi.

TO:

From :

The Bible Teacher

Post Box No. 3815
New Delhi-110049