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EDITORIAL

"How To Be Born Again"

In the mail I have just received a little tract with the caption: HOW TO BE BORN AGAIN. Further it states: *Make this prayer your own.* "Dear heavenly Father, I come to you in your only Son's name Jesus, and ask you to forgive my sins. You say that you will never refuse anyone who comes to you. So I ask you, Jesus, to come into my heart and life. You say that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. I am calling on your name, Lord Jesus. Amen."

Now, those who are not concerned what does the Bible teach about being born again, for them this will make a very nice, attractive and soothing proposition. However, sad to say, this is not what the Bible teaches one must do to be born again. According to God's Bible everyone must be "born of water and the Spirit" to enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3, 5). How sad indeed it is that people, who claim to be Christians and preachers of Christ's gospel, are teaching people in the name of the Bible things which are not at all mentioned in the Bible anywhere. It is of such men our Lord had told: "These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:8, 9). Again, the Lord said of such people: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?" (Matthew 7:22). In other words, the Lord said that on the day of judgment many preachers will stand before Him

and will claim entrance into His eternal kingdom on the basis of what they had supposedly done IN HIS NAME! But listen to the Lord, what He will say to them on that day, "And then I will declare to them I never knew you, depart from me, you who practice lawlessness." (Matthew 7:23). What did they claim before the Lord that they had done? Prophesied, preached, performed healings, and wonders IN HIS NAME! But what did the Lord say? "depart from me you who practice lawlessness." How did they practice lawlessness? In not teaching, not preaching, not doing things which the Lord has revealed in His book, His will. Because, "Not everyone," said the Lord, "who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21).

The only way to know assuredly that we have done what the Lord has commanded us to do is to go directly to the Book, the Bible, read or hear from it and then make certain by doing those things which are written in it. Almost two thousand years ago the apostle John had given this warning, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets (or preachers) have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1). The Bible is God's testing instrument. Use it to make it sure, that it is God's word that you are hearing or reading or obeying. And, if it is not then treat it as trash!

Again, what does the Bible teach? Let's go to Acts chapter two. There after the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, Peter and the other apostles had preached the gospel or good news of Christ to a great multitude of people; and they also told them that "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21) But they never told them to pray to God for salvation or forgiveness of sins, because they knew "that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and DOES HIS WILL. He hears him." (John 9:31). So when those people became believers in Christ after hearing about Him, and wanted to know from His apostles as to what they ought to do to receive the forgiveness of their sins, thus calling on the name of Jesus that he should forgive them their sins. The apostle Peter told them: "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37, 38). Next, we read that they were baptized, and the Lord saved them from their sins, and He added them to His church, to the number of His saved people. (Acts 2:41, 47).

The apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit; that is, what they spoke to those people, and whatever they wrote in the Bible for us, what we read today, are Words of the Holy Spirit of God. (John 14:25, 26;

16:12-14; Acts 2:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21). Thus when we heed the words of the Spirit and do what the Spirit says to us, through or by the written word of God, as is revealed in His Bible, "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," then we are "born of water and the Spirit," as the Lord desires. It is interesting to note that the apostle Paul, at Romans 6:4 says that one begin to walk in the newness of life after one comes out of the water of baptism.

No one would have ever thought about the necessity of being born again, if Jesus Christ had not taught, at John 3:3, *"unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* But He also taught in the same place how one must be born again; "of water and the Spirit."

Woman's Role In The Church

J.C. CHOATE

In today's world there is a lot of emphasis on Women's rights. There is a call for equality with men in the work force, on the pay scale, and in the social, political, and religious fields. Most are familiar with the "Women's Liberation Movement" in the U.S.A and other western countries. This has spilled over into the rest of the world in a milder form.

It is true that many of the women of the world still live in subservient societies where they are little more than objects and servants, they have very few rights, they are kept in the background, and even out of sight. While this is wrong and needs to be corrected, many women in the western world are not seeking equality but superiority. Their emphasis is so strong that they have made man and woman to become enemies, to compete with each other, and to even change positions with woman becoming the dominant character in the world. How sad that these things are happening. Why can't we respect each other, recognizing that both have their strengths and weaknesses, and both have their different roles and individual needs. Why can't they learn to live together and work together without either one trying to suppress the other and ending up pressuring one or the other to assume unnatural roles?

Even in the religious world the role of the woman has changed considerably in recent years. While some religious groups have long

accepted women preachers and used them in numerous other positions that once were reserved for men, other church bodies have more recently opened their organizations for women to be appointed as bishops, priests, and to other similar posts. In spite of the many who have objected to this—and even causing division—still those in authority have gone on to appoint female members to these posts.

With these things taking place in the world, what position should the church hold in these matters? Shall we go along with the world and the religious world and allow the ladies to publically preach, lead prayers, direct singing, and wait on the Lord's Table in the presence of mixed audiences? Shall we appoint them to be elders and deacons? In such questions, it is not a matter of what the world is doing, or even what the religious world is doing, but our concern should be that we comply with God's will. If we are unwilling to do that, why bother with religion at all?

We do not have an earthly head in the church to decide such matters. Neither can a preacher or even the elders make a decision for the entire church. Where can we go, then, to know what God's will is on this question? There is just one place: we must go to God's word. Keep in mind that God has spoken and He has revealed His will to us. He tells us what he wants and what he doesn't want, then it is up to us to either accept His will or reject it. Even God will not force us to accept His will but we must do so if we want to please Him and to be acceptable to Him.

Please remember that God made man and woman—male and female—in the beginning. Each is incomplete without the other; each needs the other. Furthermore, God Himself made man head over the woman, and He made the woman to be the helper to man. This does not mean that man is to be a dictator or that he can be mean and cruel to his wife. It does mean, however, that man is the stronger vessel and woman is the weaker vessel, that man is to be the head of the woman and head of the family. The woman is to respect her husband and to recognize him as the head or leader of the family. That was God's plan in the beginning and it has continued to be his plan on up till now.

Keep in mind that God has a Son and He saw fit for Him to come into this world by being born of the Virgin Mary. When Christ began to choose a group to carry on His work, He chose 12 men to be apostles. Not one was a woman. Why not? Because God made man and gave him certain duties and responsibilities, and then He made woman and likewise he gave her certain duties and responsibilities. It has always

been God's plan for man to be the head and to give leadership to the family, for the woman to bear the children and to take care of the family and the home. In that position she has great power, as she molds the children and trains them to fill their proper rolls and to influence the world.

But continuing, it was to the apostles—*men*—that Christ gave the command to take the gospel into all the world. Later when the apostles were selecting a group to assist them in their work, 7 *men* were chosen. As the church grew and it came time for elders and deacons to be appointed to give leadership to the local congregations, according to 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, *men* were the ones to be chosen to fill these offices.

So the question is, "Why were no women appointed to be apostles, preachers, and the elders and deacons of the church under the direction of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Apostles? Were women inferior and less important, or did they not have the ability to do these things? Not so—but we must remember that it was God who so directed all of this and He had good reasons for His rules.

In order to understand God's rules, we must remember that God made woman, just as He made man. But He made them differently, and He designated man as the head over the woman.

Why did God give man this responsibility? Because, as the Scriptures say in 1 Timothy 2:13, 14, "Adam was formed first; then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." These are two reasons given by God for man's authority over woman and his position as head over the family. So man was made responsible for leadership to his wife and children. Between a husband and wife, there may be discussion about different matters, but some one must make the final decision. Unless authority is accepted of the husband there will be problems. It is not a matter of man forcing his way upon the woman or the woman trying to out-do the man, but they must love one another and respect each other and work together. When this is the case, there is not problem at home. But when woman is told that she should compete with her husband for jobs, for pay, for position, for roles in the home, then there will be conflicts. There are no problems when both man and woman submit to God's order of doing things.

Likewise in the church, God has given man the public leadership role. But what about woman's role? She is there to support her husband, to work with the other women, to teach women, to teach children, to do personal work, and to do the many other things she can

do as a woman.

But you can watch it in the religious world. When God's order is rejected and the woman gets involved in a public way by doing those things reserved in scripture for man, then eventually woman will completely take over. That is because man retreats from the position God has given him, and thus God's order is reversed to both man and woman's hurt.

The question is, why are people never satisfied? They always want to do the other person's work, but not their own. They feel that unless they are allowed to switch roles, they are being deprived, and that something is wrong. Look at young women today who are wanting to do all kind of professional jobs that are normally done by men, to challenge all male institutions for entrance, to take on professional sports that have always been male dominated in the past, and so on. Actually, if man would do his work and woman would do her work, both would have more than enough responsibilities. Those who respect God and His wisdom will accept that. Those who do not will end up opposing God.

Paul spoke on the subject of women having a leadership role in mixed assemblies of the church. He said that women are to remain silent, in the sense that they are not to usurp authority over the men. (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11, 12). Sometimes when these verses are noted, there are those who speak of Paul as being "down on women" or they say he was a "woman hater." Those who make such negative statements have evidently forgotten the fact that Paul was being directed by the Holy Spirit when he wrote the scriptures. No, Paul was not a woman hater. He was simply saying what God's word had said all along, and he was teaching what the Holy Spirit instructed him to say: that God made man the head of the woman, and this truth is to be reflected in the home as well as in the church. If we are wise we will leave matters as God left them.

In conclusion, we of the Lord's church must abide by God's teaching on this subject, as well as on all other matters. Regardless of what the secular world says, or what the religious world does, we must go on as was ordained from the beginning. That does not put us behind, but ahead. We would do well to remember the words of Isaiah, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8, 9).

Teaching Children Values

PART 2

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

“... When Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority. . .” (Matthew 7:28, 29).

Peter was reading to Anthony, James, and Aseema from Jesus' sermon which he gave on the mountain to the great multitude of people. “In this sermon are so many wonderful truths which can shape our lives in a good way,” he explained. “Most of the people on this earth don't know what Jesus really taught, so many bad things come into their lives because of the choices they make and the way they live. Your mother and I want to teach you what Jesus taught, so that you will have the very best lives.

“But sometimes people say it's hard to be a Christian,” Anthony said. “Why would they think that?”

“Maybe because Jesus taught that we must do *God's will*—not our own—if we are to please Him. Not everybody is ready to listen to God and to obey Him. So, because they don't *want* to obey God's commands, they find that it is a hard thing to be a Christian. But actually the life Jesus wants us to live is the best one possible in this world.

“God put inside every person a conscience—like a watchman. When our consciences have been taught by God's word what is right and what is wrong, then it makes us feel good when we do the right things, and it bothers us when we do something we know is wrong.

“The important thing, though, is that we train our consciences by God's standard. Do you remember that last night we were studying the laws that say, ‘Don't kill, don't steal, don't tell lies, don't worship any other god’. Those are some of God's laws—His value system—but Jesus taught many other things that help us to live safe, happy lives if we listen to Him.

“Here in this sermon, Jesus said that meek and humble people are

blessed—and if you think of the way proud, haughty people act, you will know that isn't the attitude Jesus expects His children to have. He wants us to be like He was in this world—willing to serve others, and to help those who need our help.

"Jesus was merciful, too, and He asks us to have that kind of heart. He says we are to be peacemakers—not out looking for a fight. In fact He asks us to love our enemies and to pray for those who would hurt us. By doing good instead of evil, even to people who don't like us, we can make them ashamed, and sometimes they will change their bad ways.

"So even though people may say it is hard to be a Christian, if we learn to live by Jesus' laws, we will make the world a much better place, and we'll be able to help others learn to live better lives, too."

Jesus taught (and His followers wrote, through the direction of the Holy Spirit), according to 2 Timothy 3:16, 17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be *complete, thoroughly equipped* for every good work." So in the Bible Jesus has spoken about everything pertaining to our relationship with God, with friends, relatives, enemies, with husbands and wives and children—everything about our lives in this world. That is why it is so very important that Christians study the Scriptures so that we ourselves can be guided in our daily lives by God's standards, and so we can also teach our children these all-important truths.

Jesus taught:

- A man is to have one wife, and God hates divorce. (Matthew 19:3-9)
- We are to be faithful to our mates, not even allowing ourselves to lust in our hearts. (Matthew 5:28, 1 Corinthians 6:18)
- We are to be examples of righteousness. (Matthew 5:16)
- We are not to hold anger and hatred in our hearts. (Matthew 5:22)
- We are to keep our promises. (Ecclesiastes 5:4; Deuteronomy 23:21-23)
- We are to be willing to "go the second mile," doing more than is expected of us. (Matthew 5:38-42)
- We are to do good even to those who would do harm to us. (V. 43-48)
- We are not to be hypocritical and showy about the good things we do. (Matthew 6:1, 5)

- We are to be forgiving. (V. 14, 15)
- We are not to be concerned about storing up wealth. (V. 19-21)
- We are not to worry about physical things, but are to seek spiritual things first. (V. 25, 34)
- We are not to be judgmental toward others, but rather to seek to clear the problems from our own lives first. (Matthew 7:1-5)
- We are to treat others the same way we would want them to treat us. (V. 12)
- We are to restrict ourselves to the narrow and strait way of truth in our lives. (V. 13, 14)
- We are to do God's will and not our own. (V. 21-23)

If we follow these and the many other directives given in God's word, we will be a blessing to ourselves, our families, and to the world. These values are inherently right, and they carry inherent blessings for all those who live by them. These are the valuable truths we as parents must instill within our children, so that their lives be safe-guarded from all the evil influences and wrong thinking of their worldly peers.

The Bible Speaks ***The Church In Prophecy And Fulfillment Of Prophecy***

BILL BROWN

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem". (Isa. 2:2, 3).

The last days has reference to the last period of time on earth "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. Hath *in these last days* spoken unto us by his Son. . ." (Heb. 1:1-2).

The prophets used the words kingdom and church interchangeably-referring to one and the same thing. When Jesus came,

following the forerunner John, he preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Christ said to the multitudes: "There be many that stand here who shall not taste of death, until ye see the kingdom come with power". (Mark 9:1). Jesus said to his disciples: "Upon this Rock, I will build my church. . . and I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom". (Matt. 16:18-19). "And, behold, I send the promise of Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high". (Luke 24:49). "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues (languages) as the Spirit gave them utterance". (Acts 2:1-4). Then in verse 16 the apostle Peter said as he was being guided by the Holy Spirit, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel". "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls". (Acts 2:41). ". . . and the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved". (verse 47) Thus, the beginning of the church (kingdom) as was prophesied in Isa. 2:2-3. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the *house of God*, which is the church of the living God, the *pillar and ground of the truth*". (I Tim. 3:15). Remember that Isaiah said that "the *Lord's house* would be established in the top of the mountains. . ." Isa 2:2. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:13). So, it is very clearly shown that the kingdom (church) began on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 33.

In God We Trust—Or So We?

JIM FAUGHN

Some who are older grew up during a time when they could depend upon both our government and religious institutions to promote certain things. In a "Christian nation," we could expect many, if not all, of God's principles of morality, decency, integrity, etc. to be upheld. At the same time, those things which were inherently evil were condemned by the churches and punished by the government.

We've come a long way—and it is not all in the right direction! The following article appeared in the May, 1994 issue of *Current Thoughts & Trends*. It is one indication of how *little we* can now depend upon those institutions to which we used to look for direction—

In Austin TX, Planned Parenthood recently opened a new facility in a United Methodist church building. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders spoke at the dedication and said that the church is an appropriate place to promote abortions.

I don't know what your first reaction to that information is. I know what mine was. I thought immediately of the following passage of scripture:

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isaiah 5:20)

I wonder what would be promoted if we were not a "Christian nation"???

God's Picture Of A Preacher

WADE LEE WEBSTER

As one carefully studies the book of Jude, he is introduced to a great gospel preacher—Jude. Although Jude is not as well known as other New Testament preachers, he is, nevertheless, a picture of the preacher that God wants all preachers to be.

First, Jude realized his position as a preacher (Jude 1). He understood that he was a servant of Jesus Christ. He counted it a great honor to be a servant of "the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15). He wanted to be like His Savior who came to earth "not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matthew 20:28).

Second, Jude preached the needed truth. Jude had planned to write a letter about "the common salvation" that they enjoyed as Christian (Jude 3). However, through inspiration, he learned that false teachers had "crept in unawares" (Jude 4). Therefore, Jude wrote to exhort the brethren "to earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3). Jude was the type of preacher that Paul told Timothy to be. We read, "Preach

the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). Jude realized that a man could preach the truth all of his life and still be lost, if he did not preach the needed truth.

Third, Jude stood up against the false doctrines of his day. False teachers were "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). His attitude was that of the apostle Paul when he wrote concerning the false teachers, "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Galatians 2:4-5).

Fourth, Jude put the brethren in remembrance of some things they had always known (Jude 5). Jude realized that preaching requires much repetition. He understood that brethren often forget "the first principles of the oracles of God" (Hebrews 5:12). According to what Paul told Timothy, Jude was a "good minister of Jesus Christ." He wrote, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (I Timothy 4:6).

Fifth, Jude preached in plain and simple words. Jude described the false teachers in words that all could comprehend (Jude 8-16). He realized that in preaching you have to get your message down to where the people can understand and apply it. Jesus did this as he taught the people. Mark records concerning Jesus that "the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37). It is reported that brother N.B. Hardeman in training young preachers told them to "put it down where the calves could get it."

Sixth, Jude used Bible examples to illustrate his points. Notice that in warning of the possibility of apostasy he used the examples of the Israelites, the angels that left their first estate, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 5-7). Also, in describing the false teachers he used the examples of Cain, Balaam, and Core (Jude 11). He pointed men to the word of God throughout his sermon.

Seventh, Jude applied the message to those to whom he preached. He told them to "remember the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 17). He encouraged them to build themselves up "in the most holy faith" (Jude 20), and to keep themselves "in the love of God" (Jude 21). Jude realized that many listeners will not get the point unless you apply it.

Eighth, Jude gave God the glory. Jude concluded this inspired letter by writing, "To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty,

dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 25). Jude realized that the power was not in him but, rather, in the gospel (Romans 1:16).

In the book of Jude we see God's picture of a preacher. If every preacher today was like Jude, there would be no end to the good that we could accomplish in the service of our Lord.

How Did They Know?

MIKE BENSON

"How do you suppose Cain and Abel knew what kind of sacrifice they were to offer to God? I have been searching for the place in Genesis where God specifically commanded animal sacrifices and cannot find it. Could you please answer this in your column?"

This is an excellent question. I hope the following scriptures and comments will be helpful to you. Note:

1. God required specific sacrifice from both of the brothers. This is evident from the text. Notice, "... Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted. ...'" (Genesis 4:2b-7a).

2. Abel offered his sacrifice by obedient faith. The Hebrew writer wrote, "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks" (Hebrews 11:4). On another occasion Paul wrote, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). When these passages are considered together, it is apparent that God communicated with the two brothers as to specifically what kind of sacrifice He required.

3. God demands no less of His children today. Today many in the denominational community teach that almost any kind of worship

(sacrifice) is acceptable to God just as long as a person is religiously sincere. Cain was religious. Was his offering/sacrifice acceptable. . . ? We would all do well to learn from his example. Jesus said, "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

Not Under Bondage

GLENN COLLEY

One of the most frequently discussed passages concerning the marriage, divorce, and remarriage question, is I Corinthians 7. Great emphasis has been placed on verse 15 where Paul writes, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace."

I have never been able to believe that "Not under bondage" meant that the believing mate, now abandoned by the unbelieving mate, could divorce and remarry. Unless we broadly assume that the unbelieving mate *has taken* another and committed adultery, we are left with an apparent contradiction to what Jesus taught in Matthew 19:9: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. And whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Is Paul adding to or changing what Jesus said? I don't believe so.

When verse 15 is considered in light of the verse which follows, an interesting point emerges. Consider that there are two common schools of thought regarding "not under bondage." They are:

1. "Not under bondage" means the abandoned, believing mate is free to divorce and remarry.

2. "Not under bondage" means that if the unbelieving mate refuses to live with his believing mate, and demands that she choose between living the Christian life OR living with him, and threatens to depart from her if she chooses Christ, the believer is not obligated to obey his wishes in order to keep him. She remains unmarried and committed to Christ.

Now look at verse 16: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" Whatever is true about "Not under bondage"

(vs. 15), must fit with verse 16! Our explanation MUST harmonize with the believing mate, left behind, proceeding with the idea of *saving* the unbeliever. With that in mind, look again at the aforementioned two possibilities:

1. In this scenario, the abandoned believer completely severs the ties to the unbeliever by divorcing and remarrying another. This seems to me an unlikely possibility, since the believer's objective (verse 16) is to **SAVE** the unbelieving husband or wife. What connection could this action possibly have with saving the unbeliever?

2. In this scenario, the believer says to the unbeliever, "You may threaten to leave me if I do not agree to forsake my Christianity, but Christ means ~~too~~ much to me. I hope we can remain together, but if we can't, I must be faithful to my Lord."

Doesn't this harmonize better with verse 16? As Peter teaches in I Peter 3:1-6, when a believing wife is married to an unbelieving husband who won't listen to the preaching of the word, he may **STILL** be won by watching the godly, committed life of that Christian wife.

This interpretation also harmonizes with verse 12-14: "... If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. . ." No doubt one reason the believers in these verses are to remain with their mates is from verse 16 also: "For what knowest thou, o wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

She will not have a chance of saving him after becoming the wife of another man. She has severed her ties. However, if she remains married to him, devoted wholly and firmly to Christ, desiring reconciliation with her husband, she will demonstrate to her husband the consecrated life of a true disciple; and that's a strong influence.

Make My Mansion A Chateau!

CONNIE LEE KRUTE

Quebec City is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen. Referred to as "La Ville de Quebec" in French, it overlooks the mighty Saint Lawrence River, and it is the only walled city in North

America: Everywhere you look throughout this splendid Canadian municipality there are tributes to the past—in its monuments, museums, the battlefield park, and in its lovely old buildings.

Standing as a sort of centre-piece, towering over the wall, is a very imposing structure—the Chateau Frontenac—a grand hotel which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. Dignitaries from all over the world have enjoyed the gracious hospitality offered at this magnificent palace. Many appreciate it so much that they keep suites of rooms as permanent residences. I had the privilege of having tea in one of its elegant restaurants. Oh, to live in such a marvelous place!

Sometimes when pondering the loveliness of heaven and the many mansions located there as described in John 14, I think back to my brief visit to Chateau Frontenac. Then I let my imagination contemplate the following questions:

What if the size of each person's heavenly mansion was based on the number of souls they have influenced over the years so they would have room to entertain them all. And if this were the case, would I be given an extra small efficiency apartment only big enough for me, or would I be placed in a mansion the size of Chateau Frontenac?

When I get to that point I become very aware of the fact that there are a lot of souls out there that I have yet to touch. Perhaps this is just a theory, but it wouldn't hurt to let as many people as possible know that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) and that no one comes to the Father except through Him.

I love people and as far as I am concerned "the more the merrier" is the number of souls I want to see in heaven. So if I have anything to do with it, make my mansion a chateau.

"For Example"

WINFRED CLARK

You have heard speakers use this term time and again. Such is done by those who seek to illustrate a point or proposition. But you will also find this method used by inspired men time after time. "For example," there is a discussion by James on the subject of patience. He tells his readers, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Here is the command to be patient but he does not leave it at that

point. Notice: "Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain" (James 5:7). He used an example to emphasize the truth taught.

We know there are occasions when people will refer to something as an example when such is not the case. How many times have you heard someone refer to the thief on the cross beside Jesus and then say that such is an example of conversion under the gospel? That man cannot be used as an example for such. However, he could be used as an example of one who was able to see the truth about Christ even while others would put him to death.

"FOR EXAMPLE" OF PATIENCE

We are not left in doubt concerning this very important matter. James said, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" (James 5:10). He then goes on to speak of the patience of Job (James 5:11). So, when we come to study the subject of patience, we have no doubt about its meaning. We are able to see it in the lives of the prophets who faced difficulty. Surely we find it in the life of Jeremiah. He is one who prophesied for years and years without any seeming success. But he did not falter from the task that was before him. Think of all the trials and difficulties of Job, yet he served God. He did not give up. These are great examples. They should be of great help to all of us. These are examples that will help us to be sure that what we call patience is really patience.

"FOR EXAMPLE" OF CONVICTION

The writer of the Hebrew letter saw the great need for conviction. Only those who had strong convictions would be able to withstand the onslaught against their faith. Yes, some have taken "joyfully the spoiling of their goods" (Hebrews 10:34). But there were others whose hands were hanging down and their knees had become weak (Hebrews 12:12). There were those who faced the possibility of failing the grace of God. (Hebrews 12:15). So what is the word of exhortation to these? Listen carefully to what he has to say: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Hebrews 13:12-13). You know the price our Lord had to pay for his

convictions. You know what it cost him to face those who did not agree with him. You know that Jesus would not sacrifice his convictions. We are therefore told to imitate his example by doing the same thing in principle. We cannot afford to allow our convictions to waver. If he was willing to die on the cross because of his convictions, then surely we are not paying too high a price by suffering the kind of persecution we might have to face. He faced the "contradiction of sinners against himself" (Hebrews 12:3). But even that did not cause him to alter his convictions about the truth of God for one moment. You still find him hanging on the cross and making a statement so that the scriptures might be fulfilled (John 19:28).

"FOR EXAMPLE" OF HOLINESS

In a world that has lost its way and is wallowing in the mire of sin, there is surely the need for an example of holiness and purity. There can be no doubt at all in the mind of the honest student of the Bible that God has set before us the example of holiness. Listen: "Because it is written, Be ye holy for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). The immediate context of this is found in verse 15 of the same chapter. Notice, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Peter 1:15). You will see that we have set before us the example of holiness. God is holy and pure. He is the supreme example and we are thus left without excuse.

What would following this example of holiness do for this world in which we live? It would surely eliminate the conflicts that are so rampant all around us. We have this within families, and between husbands and wives.

"FOR EXAMPLE" OF LOVE

There are numerous passages that tell us to love one another, and then there is the phrase "as I have loved you." Christ or God never asked us to do anything that they were not willing to do themselves. Notice, "A new commandment I give unto you; That ye love one another: as I have loved you" (John 13:34). Jesus knew that he was dealing with a difficult topic among those men. There had been some quarrels among them as to who would be the greatest and that could surely be a test of their love for one another. They had been together for about three years and they had come to know many things about one another. They were aware of the weaknesses and strengths of one

another. They knew the short-comings. But in spite of that, our Lord told them that they were to love one another. But he did not just leave it at that point. He said, "as I have loved you." That is the example that they were to follow. They could not say that it could not be done, for Jesus told them that he loved all of them. So, in spite of the shortcomings and weaknesses, he still loved them.

There is another side to this matter also. He loved them and he knew more about them than they knew about one another. He knew that Peter would deny him and that the rest of them would flee, with the exception of John. Yet, he still loved them. That is the example.

"FOR EXAMPLE" OF GIVING

Paul said, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Corinthians 8:9). Do any of us have any doubts about what Jesus gave for our benefit? This verse tells us that he left heaven with all that it had to offer for our benefit. We know, though that much more than this was at stake. We know that he came and gave his life. He gave his all. He withheld nothing that was needed for man's redemption. We are told that he moved from rich to poor for our benefit. Does that tell me anything about my giving? Does that give me an example that I should seek to imitate? How does what I give compare with the example that I have for giving? Remember that these are not given just to fill space in the Bible. They are there to help me to learn. I hope I may.

Finding Truth By Instinct

DAN JENKINS

Though the book of Jude is one of the shortest books in the Bible, it is filled with treasures. While Jude's first intent was to write about the common salvation, the entrance of false teachers among the church forced him to modify his epistle. His descriptions of such men help us understand why many do not find the truth.

False teachers do not understand the source of truth. Jude says, "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves"

(Jude 10). The New American Standard Version translates this more graphically. "But these men revile the things which they do not understand: and the things which they know by instinct, as unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed." Truth has always been objective, it cannot be known subjectively. It comes from revelation, not intuition. Yet the false teachers of the first century thought they could find truth by following their instinct.

Paul shows that without revelation man cannot know truth. He contrasts knowledge of God's will by inspiration with that of "truth" which one might claim to get by natural means. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

In our day two kinds of individuals seek God, but they are vastly different. Both have a Bible in their hands, but their hearts are not the same. One comes to the Bible seeking to make his own will subject to the will of God. The other comes seeking to make God's will subject to his. One comes seeking to discover only what God says. The other comes seeking to discover how he can make what God says, mean what he wants God to say. One comes willing to accept the results of God's teachings, the other only to accept it if it seems right to him. One discusses truth by saying, "I think. . . I don't see how God could. . . it just doesn't seem right to me . . . Many scholars say. . ." Are you living by inspiration, or by instinct? It makes a difference!

The Answer To Our Soul's Needs Are The Things Of God

ELWOOD HOLT

We should rise up from our beds with God uppermost in our hearts. We should take Him with us as we go to our respective jobs. I verily believe that the Lord will bless those who put their trust in Him. The Bible teaches us that he will, and by faith we are to do our part, then trust in Him for the promises.

A Sunday-school teacher, after telling the story of the rich man and Lazarus to a class of boys, asked this question "Boys which would you rather be, the rich man or Lazarus?" One boy promptly replied, "I would

be the rich man while I live, and Lazarus when I die." This, my friends, is the choice that millions make, or think they can make, but nothing could be more impossible. We cannot have the things of this world while we live and the things of God when we die. Oh, I do not mean that we cannot enjoy this world. We can. It is a beautiful world and we all love it. We love the clouds, the breezes, the green meadows, the hills, the lakes, we love the birds, our friends. There are places we like to go and things we like to do and the Bible does not teach that we have to give up all these in order to serve our God.

When John says, "Love not the world," (1 John 2:15) he does not mean the world I have just described. He means the sinful world. Of course there are places and things to which I cannot go or do, but the psalmist exclaimed once, "No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly." I believe this with all of my heart. God will not take the good things of this life from us. He made them for us. He wants us to enjoy them. But, there are things that people claim they enjoy that God forbids. Really, they do not enjoy them. They think they do but when the later years come they find out that they ate the husk which the swine refused when they could have been feasting all the while on the good grain supplied by the Father.

There are too many who want the sinful things of this life while they live, then they want the divine approbation of the loving Father when they die. It just cannot be. Heaven is a place that we will enjoy only if we prepare for it.

There is a poem entitled: "Homesick in Heaven." People who are not prepared for that wonderful land would be homesick if they were to go there. They would not be prepared for it. They would not enjoy it. A person cannot live for the devil all his life, and then suddenly accept everything of the opposite nature and be happy and content with it. No, if we enjoy the Glory Land it will be because we are prepared for it. Can you sing, "I'll be no stranger there?" Unless you can, I fear you will not be there. We will not be strangers if we are prepared to stand before God. Are you?

We cannot live like the rich man in this life and enjoy the fellowship which Lazarus enjoyed when he died. You can read of these characters in Luke 16. Check the story before you forget it. One had everything in life but nothing in death. The other had nothing in life but everything in death. The rich man had his friends, his banquets, his parties, and his power in this life. He had nothing when he died. The beggar had not a friend, save the dogs that licked his sores, and no food sufficient for his

satisfaction, for he cried for the crumbs from the rich man's table. But, in death which was a blessed relief, he had the joys that are unspeakable. Which of the two do you prefer to be?

The rich can be saved only if they trust in God and not in their riches. Then they are rich in the true riches, not in perishable ones. we must live here just like we expect to live in heaven. This is the proving ground. How many of us will prove our worth?

The ornaments of this world cannot warm us when we are cold. The answer to our soul's needs is found in the things of God. Have you tried them?

It is wonderful to live for the Lord. It is more wonderful to die in Him!

"Evil Men And Seducers Shall Wax Worse And Worse"

CECIL CORKREN

Paul writes to Timothy that these "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13). Many things are bad morally in our world, but we have not seen the worst yet! Evil men are not content to stop until they destroy themselves as well as others. Paul's warning concerning men that deceive is that they themselves are deceived. Peter says, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption" (II Peter 2:19-22). Peter, in application, describes some of the elected officers in our governments in minute detail. This is but a prelude and a reminder of what is forthcoming in the future.

Jude is very vocal on sounding the alarm of the kind of people that would deceive. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God in lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). There are lawmakers in governments who would legalize homosexuality and provide legal protection under the law for sodomites. They would pass laws giving men who marry men the same rights as a husband and wife. "Gay" couples would have the right to adopt children, and schools could be forced to teach that homosexuality is a civil right. Evil men have begun to think like the

antediluvians in the Genesis account "And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Yes, men today are thinking the unthinkable, and pursue the unimaginable in our world! There ought to be an outpouring of public protest at every level, and from every citizen.

There Must Be Water

MIKE BENSON

Because of the extreme heat and lack of water where I live, I have neglected to mow the grass in my yard for nearly a month. My motivation for such disregard has been fueled by a concern that after cutting an already parched lawn, in combination with the scorching heat my yard would soon die.

Recently I was walking around my house surveying the damage that the heat and lack of moisture had visited on my flowers and lawn. As I turned in one corner of my house, I noticed that the grass nearest the air conditioner was green, lush, and healthy (in contrast to the rest of my yard which was yellow, dry, and withered). The difference between the two was striking. As it turned out, the water dripping from the air conditioner had sustained a small two-foot section of grass, while the remainder of the yard minus the same moisture, was virtually barren.

As I stood there studying the phenomenon, a simple and yet profound thought occurred to me, "Where there is water, there is life." This is not only true in the physical realm, but it is also true of the spiritual. Just as the grass in my yard must have water in order to live, a penitent believer must come in contact with the water of baptism in order to be saved. The Bible teaches:

- "He who believes and IS BAPTIZED (WATER) will be saved (LIFE)..." (Mark 16:16).
- "...Repent, and let every one of you BE BAPTIZED (WATER) in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (LIFE)..." (Acts 2:38).
- "And now why are you waiting? Arise and BE BAPTIZED, (WATER) and wash away your sins (LIFE)..." (Acts 22:16).
- "For as many of you as were BAPTIZED (WATER) into Christ have put on Christ (LIFE)" (Galatians 3:27)/

- "There is also an antitype which now saves us, (LIFE) namely BAPTISM (WATER) (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21).

Oftentimes my denominational friends will read such statements and incorrectly accuse me of teaching "water salvation." Their assertions are simply without merit. The Scriptures do not teach, nor do I affirm that it is water which saves. Certainly water plays a *role* in salvation, just as it did in the saving of Noah and his family during the flood (Genesis 7; 1 Peter 3:20, 21) and as it did in the saving of the Israelites during their Red Sea crossing (Exodus 14), but it does not save. Instead, the water of "baptism is the last act before salvation. It is the borderline to the kingdom of God. It is the last step before entrance into Christ (Galatians 3:27). Before one is baptized, he is out of Christ. After one is baptized, he is in Christ. Faith in God moves one to be baptized. This is not water salvation. The water in baptism has no power to cleanse from sin. The blood of Jesus is the only power to remove sin (Revelation 1:5).

Baptism is the **TIME** that the blood of Jesus washes away the sins of man (Romans 6:3).

Water baptism is the **PLACE** God has appointed where man shall be saved.

It is the **POINT** at which man is cleansed of his sins.

This is **WHEN** faith saves. There is no inherent good or evil in the water of baptism to test the faith of man. It is merely an instrument and not a power in itself."

Friends, without water the yard is dry and lifeless—dead. Likewise, a penitent believer without coming in contact with the water of baptism is without life—*dead in his trespasses and sins* (Ephesians 2:1, 5 Colossians 2:12).

Please don't leave water out of God's plan for you. There must be water (John 3:5; Romans 6:17, 18; 3, 4).