

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity

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EDITORIAL

What Does The Bible Teach?

The Bible is the world's greatest book. It is the best seller each year. It has been translated in almost all major languages of the world. The greatness of this book lies in the fact that it contains the Word of God to man. The word "Bible" means a book. Bible is the book of God. There are sixty-six books found in the Bible, written over a period of sixteen hundred years, by over forty writers, in various places, whom God inspired to write in it what He wanted them to write. The sixty-six books of the Bible are divided into two major sections, namely The Old Testament, which consists of 39 books; and the New Testament, in which there are twenty-seven books. The word Testament means a will or a covenant. The Old Testament or the old will of God was given to people who lived before the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross as the propitiation for the sins of the World. And the Bible describes the Old Testament as the "tutor" or a "school teacher" who brought people unto Christ that we might be justified by faith in Him, and it says that after that faith has been produced then we are no longer under a tutor. (Galatians 3:24, 25). Today God's new testament, His new will applies to us, that is, we must obey what the New Testament teaches what we must do to be saved from our sins; how we should worship God; and how we should live acceptable lives to God. The Old Testament of the Bible, however, is also very, very important for us to read and study and to learn from it: how in the beginning God created the world and mankind; how God dealt with man under the Old dispensation; what it says about

the coming of Christ and what He would do for the world. The Old Testament provides us the history of the beginning of man; how sin entered the world; and how God promised to send the Saviour of the world. One of the writers of the New Testament of the Bible, in Romans 15:4 wrote concerning the things written in the Old Testament, "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." We cannot understand the writings of the New Testament fully without reading from the Old Testament, because many many times the writers of the New Testament, and Jesus Christ in His teachings, pointed out that which was written in the Old Testament.

Christ said, at Matthew 5:17, to the people who were living then under the Old Testament law: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." He fulfilled the Law by perfectly obeying it. He fulfilled its prophecies. And, He achieved its intended purpose. (Galatians 3:19, 24, 25). According to Colossians 2:14-16, in the New Testament, Christ took the Law out of the way, and yet He did so, not by violating it, but by fulfilling it. The writer of the book of Hebrews, in the New Testament, wrote thus about the two covenants of God: "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second . . . In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away." (Hebrews 8:7 & 13). Well, someone might want to ask the question, as to why did God not give a perfect law to begin with; why did He not give just one law; what was the necessity of giving two laws or wills or covenants in two different periods of time? The answer is, we don't start our children 'education by sending them to college, but we first send them to school! Similarly, when our children are born we don't start dressing them in men's and women's clothings! People in the Old Testament age were taught that there is a God whom they ought to fear; He is their Creator; they must worship Him alone; that all were under the curse of sin; and because of sin they were all separated from their Creator; that God was going to send a Saviour from heaven who would save them from their sins and would reconcile them with their Creator God. Thus, when Christ came and died on the cross for the sins of the world then His New Testament law or will became effective, under which will we all live today. (Hebrews 9:15-17).

Contrasting the Old Testament with the New Testament, Christ taught: "You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. *But I*

say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart Furthermore it has been said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery Again, you have heard that it was said to those of Old, you shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord. But I say to you, do not swear at all You have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek turn the other also You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." (Matthew 5:21-44).

According to the New Testament of the Bible, all who want to be reconciled with God and wish to go to heaven to live with Him throughout eternity, must believe in Christ that He is the Son of God who died for the propitiation of our sins; must repent of sins or change their minds from sins; must be baptized (immersed in water) for the forgiveness of sins. At this point one becomes a follower of Christ, whom God has appointed our leader or captain of our salvation. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38;41; Colossians 3:1-3; Hebrews 12:1-3). At this point one also becomes a member of the church that Christ Himself had established (Matthew 16:18) by being added to the church by the Lord Himself. (Acts 2:47). This is the beginning of the Christian life. And, as we continue to read and study God's word and do those things that He required of us, then we live each day of our life trusting in the Lord and in His promises; which bring contentment and rejoicing in our lives, and the hope of everlasting life in heaven. The Bible is God's book. It contains God's will for man; the things that God has revealed for us; for our good. We must study the Bible and do what it says. If you want to know more about the Bible you can request for a Bible Correspondence Course, which is available free of cost. Write at our address today.

Don't Ever Make Fun Of The Church

J.C. CHOATE

There are many in the religious world who attempt to reduce the church to nothing more than a man-made organisation which is of no importance. They will tell you that it is not necessary to even be a member of it to go to heaven. Since there are many denominational churches then we often hear the statement that "one church is just as good as another." To justify all of these denominations, some explain that by putting all of them together then you end up with the church that we can read about in the Bible. Others go to John 15 and say that Christ is the vine and that the branches of that vine are the different denominational churches.

Sad to say, but some even make fun of the church, belittle it, ridicule it, and attempt to reduce it to absurdity. They find great fault with those who would teach that there is but one church, that the church is made up of the saved, and that one must be in the church to go to heaven.

The religious world is filled with churches established by all kinds of people, in different parts of the world, with most of them being less than 200 years old. Some of these churches wear the names of their founders, some are named for the day on which they worship, or because of some particular belief or practice that is peculiar to them. These churches have all kinds of terms for membership, worship in different ways, some of which are very odd and different, and just about everything imaginable is taught and practiced by them. And the amazing thing is that all of this is done in the name of Christ with each one expecting the Lord to give his approval to all of these kind of things.

How sad for the so-called Christian world to be so divided and mixed up when all of this is but mockery of the Lord and his way, making fun of his teaching and belittling his sacrifice for the church itself. On the other hand, it amounts to nothing more than a big joke with the way man has changed things and turned them around. It would be a joke if it wasn't so serious. It is not funny when you realize that all of these kind of people will be lost because they have added to God's word or subtracted from it (Revelation 22:18,19) and will cause worlds of others to be lost because they have been deceived by such people and their false teaching. (Matthew 7:21-23).

Let me plead with you never to make fun of the church, belittle it, or say that the church is not important. Read and study the Bible and learn about the church. It is true that the church is not the saviour, since it is made up of human people who have obeyed the Lord to be saved and to be added to it, but Christ is saviour of it (Ephesians 5:23), and if he is the saviour of the church, then that means we must be in the church to be saved and to go to heaven, and of course I am speaking of the Lord's church, the one and only church that you can read about in the Bible.

How dare any man to say that the church is not important or to make other similar statements. Christ built the church. (Matthew 16:18). Did he build something that is not important, something that was not necessary. Christ died on the cross for the church. (Ephesians 5:25). He shed his blood to purchase the church. (Acts 20:28). Did he die in vain? Did he shed his blood unnecessarily? My friends, think about that. Think about the church that we read about in the Bible, who the head is (Colossians 1:18), the name it wears (Romans 16:16), and how many Christ built. (Ephesians 4:4-6). If you will think about such matters, as well as many other facts about it, then surely you will see the church as being more than a man-made organisation, more than an unimportant body that has nothing to do with one's salvation.

We need to love the Lord, his way, his teaching, his church, his name, and respect any and everything that the scriptures teach about salvation, worship, the Christian life, and the promises of God pertaining to salvation and the hope of eternal life. All of this is very serious because it has to do with our salvation and where we will be in eternity. Those who would find fault with the Lord and his church and anything that he teaches will live to regret it, and there is nothing funny about that.

Especially for Women

The Foundation For Building

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

Women who devote themselves to being wives, mothers, and homemakers have undertaken some of the most important work in the world, for the home was the first institution developed by God, and it is on the solidarity of the home that everything else in the human

relationship rests.

A young mother, looking down at the small infant in her arms, and then looking out at the dangerous world in which her child must learn to live, may feel frightened by the responsibility that is hers: to prepare that child to take its place in society; to enable it to live safely and happily in a world filled with evil and danger.

How can she *prepare* him for what he must face? How can she *equip* him? How can she *protect* him?

Prior to our answer must be the re-statement of the fact that in God's order of matters, the husband is the head of the family: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:22-24) So the family is guided first by God, through His word, and then by the husband, who is the God-ordained head of the household and the one held responsible by God for the behavior and welfare of the family.

But within that framework, the mother who stays at home to rear her children is the one responsible for them, day after day. She will be with them more than anyone else, and she will have the greatest influence on their development. It is therefore imperative, with such a grave responsibility, that she be aware of what she must do and how best to do it.

The Bible says, "God is *love* . . ." (1 John 4:16) Matthew 22:37-39 teaches, "Jesus said to him, 'You shall *love* the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, 'You shall *love* your neighbor as yourself.'" *The basis of our very existence is love. God is the essence of love; we are made in His image. Love is not only the best of humanity; it is the one element which all humans must have if they are to be healthy and normal, emotionally.*

So the foundation need of a child is love, both physical and emotional love. The mother's approach to her every dealing with her baby should be one of love.

A baby can be demanding, because it knows nothing but to cry when it is uncomfortable or sick. Mothers become weary with work, and they often lack the rest their bodies need. How easy it is to develop resentment for that wail in the night, or for the persistent cries when there is a stomach ache or teeth are being cut. How easy it might be to speak harshly to the baby who seems to be too young to comprehend the impatience. How tempted the tired mother might be to deal roughly,

or even to hit the baby in anger and frustration.

But a young mother needs to cultivate *an attitude of love and compassion* toward her child. She needs to *talk gently and soothingly* to him. Her *touch needs to be gentle and loving*. She needs to *spend time holding her baby close to her heart*. Through these forms of verbal and physical communication, even the youngest baby develops a sense of security and of bonding with those who love it. This sense of well-being is being most strongly formed during the first year of a child's life. Opposite signals will teach insecurity and rejection which may permanently scar him.

Without the strong and sure foundation of love in the child's heart, the other building blocks of his character will not be properly developed. The necessity for love cannot be over-stressed. The mother—the parents—who give the gift of secure love to their children are making the first step toward providing the essential things they must have to cope in this world and to safely live through the dangers and evils they will face.

When The Fire Goes Out

STEVE HALE

INTRODUCTION

Why do some Christians struggle so with their faith (Rom. 7:22-25)? Why does doubt, fear, and apathy arise? Why can't everyone maintain the fire they had when they obeyed the gospel (Col. 2:6, 7)?

The dropout rate among modern churches of Christ is appalling and shocking. Estimates range from 45 to 65%. No one really knows the exact percentage, except it is far too high.

If this is not discouraging enough, some brethren really struggle. Just attending services becomes labour and drudgery!

The divine ideal is far from this. It pictures grateful Christians excited about sharing their faith (Acts 8:1-4), studious (1 Tim. 4:16), and growing (Acts 4:4).

So why does "the fire go out?" This article attempts to examine this important subject.

REASONS WHY

The following is not an exhaustive list. It does touch on some biblical reasons as to why some lose their zeal and enthusiasm in their walk with God:

1. Religious orthodoxy (Rev. 2:1-7).
2. Legalism (Matt. 15:1-7).
3. Liberalism (Deut. 4:2).
4. Worldliness (II Tim. 4:10).
5. No exercise (Heb. 5:12-14).
6. Lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6).
7. Strife (Rom. 1:29).
8. Factions (1 Cor. 1-4).
9. No fellowship (II Thess. 3:6).
10. Selfishness (Tit. 1:9).
11. Hand-me-down Christianity (I Cor. 1:21ff.).
12. Jealousy (Rom. 12:9ff.).
13. Shallowness (Matt. 13:18ff.).
14. No encouragement (Acts 4:36).
15. Misdirection (Jn. 14:6).
16. Vain deceits and philosophies (Acts 22:1; Phil. 1:16, 17).
17. No joy (Phil. 4:4ff.).
18. Materialism (I Tim. 6:10ff.).
19. Immorality (I Cor. 5:1-11).
20. Wrong priorities (Matt. 6:33).
21. Bad examples (III Jn. 9ff.).
22. Lack of love (Mk. 12:29-31).
23. Not keeping faith and a good conscience (I Tim. 1:19-20).
24. False doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
25. Being mistreated (2 Cor. 11:23-33).

Obviously, we cannot exhaust even these reasons. Perhaps we can focus in on a few to get us started.

RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY

The preaching is scriptural. The singing is scriptural. The Bible classes are scriptural. No false teacher would be allowed! Those who would compromise scripture would be marked and disciplined!

Such a church was at Ephesus when John wrote Revelation

(2:1-7). Everything sounds great!

However, Jesus tells them: "But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love" (Rev. 2:4).

Why? Everything sounds so strong, sound, and solid!

The facade does look good! However, the inside is rotten, dried-up, and ritualistic! It is not enough to give the Lord just lip service! He demands religion that is heartfelt!

We must love God with all that is within us (Mk. 12:29-31). This love will cause our worship to go beyond mere ritualism. Jesus said:

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. God is Spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23, 24).

MATERIALISM

More, more, more. Overtime. Rat race. Bigger houses, More luxurious cars. Greed. Even dishonesty!

We live in a society which loves money! There is nothing wrong with money, or being rich. However, to love money more than the Lord or the service that can be rendered to Him, is sinful and stifling.

Paul said:

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and some by longing for it, have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:10).

The most valuable possession we have is our souls. Jesus said:

"For what will a man be profited if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26).

Perhaps Paul clears-up a Christian's attitude toward materialism more than anyone else, save our Lord. He was a Roman citizen, from a prominent family and a prominent city, Tarsus of Cilicia. He was a Hebrew of Hebrews, descended from the tribe of Benjamin!

Yet, when compared to the glorious privilege of being a Christian, he said:

"... I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

It is not intrinsically evil to be rich. Abraham was rich! Job was rich! King Josiah was rich! Yet, these three were faithful to God. These men were willing to use their wealth to God's glory, and not be self-centered. Materialism, the love of money, makes one selfish and self-centered (1 Jn. 3:16-18; 2 Cor. 9:7).

WORLDLINESS

Sometimes, the fire goes out because of simple worldliness. John warned us not to love the world, nor the things in the world (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

The world bombards us with sexual promiscuity, alcohol, vulgarity, and rebellion. Many convenience stores sell soft-core pornography.

The news has scores of reports on sexual abuse, murder, racism, and fraud. The world is sick: sin sick! Some brethren have the "fire go out" because they simply become worldly.

CONCLUSION

You cannot name one thing worth being lost. Not one! Our Lord, His love and sacrifice are worthy of your loyalty.

We close this study with the words of Jesus, which we hope will move you to return to Him: "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev. 3:19).

What A Blind Man Saw

DAVID THURMAN

Imagine having your life all figured out. You have dreamed of a certain career all your life (such as being a lawyer). You never wavered in your dream, and all your efforts since you first decided to go into law have moved you in the direction of becoming an attorney. You work hard at it and advance faster and further than your friends and contemporaries. Then, in your early 30's, on the brink of achieving your

goals, you give it all up. You just walk away. You act as if none of it mattered any more.

This scenario may be hard to imagine, but it actually took place about 1900 years ago. *"Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And it came about that as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him; and he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' And he said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting, but rise and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do.' And the men who traveled with him stood speechless,, hearing the voice, but seeing no one. And Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank."* (Acts 9:1-9, NASB). Saul steps right out of the scenario described above. Saul had worked hard to achieve his status among the Jews. He had spent his life with one goal in mind: to become influential in Jerusalem among the leaders of the Jews. When Christianity appeared, Saul saw an opportunity to serve God (by stopping the blasphemers) and to further his own career (by making a name for himself among the Jews). But it all changed on the road to Damascus, when Saul was struck blind. While blind, he saw his life and his ambitions clearly. While blind, he saw as never before.

HE SAW JESUS WAS THE CHRIST

"I am Jesus whom you persecute" is what Jesus said to Him. Saul had worked so hard to stop the spread of this new religion. He just couldn't accept the idea of this Jesus being the long anticipated Messiah. But on that day Saul realized that Jesus was the Christ after all. We can only imagine how shocked Saul was at the moment he understood this. He saw the direction of his life was wrong. He saw that all his efforts to persecute the church were sinful. He saw that his concept of the Messiah was in error. Saul saw clearly that Jesus was the Christ when he was blind.

Many would be shocked today to realize that Jesus is who He claims to be. There is much talk about Jesus. There are many books written about Him. Many use His name to curse or swear. I think many

of these people (like Saul) would be shocked to know Jesus was not an imposter, but is actually the Son of God. Like Saul these modern day skeptics might be dumbfounded to know that the Jesus they take for granted is the Christ. The Jesus they speak of so casually is risen from the dead. The Jesus they seldom take time to consider is the Son of the Living God.

HE SAW JESUS AND THE CHURCH ARE ONE

Saul was out to get the church. He had letters authorizing him to arrest both men and women. Yet, when Jesus spoke to Saul he said, "*I am Jesus, whom you persecute*". Saul realized that in persecuting the people of Jesus, he was persecuting Jesus Himself. He saw that Jesus and the church are one. What Saul did to the church he did to Jesus, what he did to Jesus he did to the church.

Again, today this realization might surprise people. So many want Jesus and His saving grace. Yet, those same people often act and speak as if the church were unimportant or of no value. "*And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23). Jesus is head of the church. The church is His body. The church is the fulness of Christ. Some ridicule the church, calling it an institution corrupted by man's influence. These sorts of people want God, but no institution. But Saul would tell them that the church and Jesus are one. To reject the church of Jesus Christ is to reject the Christ.

Others accept the need for the church, but treat it with indifference or neglect. They seldom attend a worship service. They seldom give to support the church. They fail to get involved with any of its ministries. They want to be married in the church, buried in the church, even want their children immersed in the church. They want all the trappings of a religious relationship with Jesus, but they reject the Christ by rejecting His people, the body of Jesus, His church.

Still others are active in the church. In their zeal to serve the cause of the kingdom, these people take strong stands, label other brothers and sisters, even attack those with whom they disagree. Like Saul they often go to other places and churches in order to continue to disrupt what they dislike or that with which they disagree. But again, they fail to realize that in attacking the people of God (even one individual) they are attacking the Christ. Saul could not eat or drink for three days. His guilt must have been enormous. Many today would lose their appetites if

they could only see what Saul saw when he was blind. When we hurt the people of Jesus, we hurt Jesus.

HE SAW HE WAS A SINNER

As Saul pursued his dream of rising in the ranks of the Jews he was convinced he was right with God. He worked to hurt the cause of Christ believing he was doing what God wanted. When he saw Jesus on that dusty road, he realized that he had been wrong all along. Saul fell to the ground, blinded and unable to eat or drink, no doubt because his guilt was overwhelming. For a man who had spent his life content that his walk with God was righteous, discovering he was actually a sinner out of step with God must have been crippling. For the first time in his life Saul was sure he did not know God and it floored him.

Many people are like this. They go through life thinking they are pretty good people. They believe in a loving God who would not condemn anyone, at least not anyone as nice as they are. But that attitude fails to understand the depth and nature of sin. *"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:23). All of us have sinned. All of us, no matter what we think of our lives, have disappointed God. When we see Jesus as the Son of God, we realize that we are sinners. We are out of step with God, we are lost. This realization stunned Saul. It may stun you. While he was blind Saul saw himself clearly, for the first time in his life.

HE SAW HE NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING

Jesus told Saul to go into Damascus and await instructions as to what to do. Saul got up, was led into the city, and later a man named Ananias came to him. Ananias said, *"The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear an utterance from His mouth, for you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name"* (Acts 22:14-16). Saul had seen Jesus personally. Saul had *"heard an utterance from His mouth"* while on the road. Yet, there was more for him to do to be saved. Three days later a preacher comes to him, tells him of God's plans for him, and then commands him to be baptized. Saul saw he needed to do something to be saved.

Many today believe there is nothing to salvation except a personal experience with Jesus. But that did not work for Saul. Saul had the talk

with Jesus. Saul realized who Jesus was. Saul saw his need for salvation. But, he still needed to have his sins washed away. Just because people come to believe in the Saviour does not mean they are saved. Like Saul, they need to be told what to do. They also need to *"arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins"*. Saul was blind, but he saw that he needed more than his faith in Jesus to save him. He needed to be immersed.

DON'T WAIT TO BE BLIND

The account of Saul's conversion reminds us of the need to be open to the message of God. No matter who we are, or how long we have served God, we must accept that we can learn more, know more and perhaps (like Saul) need to surrender to God as never before. Saul didn't see any of this until he was blind. In his blindness he saw things he had never seen before. He saw Jesus as God's son. He saw the church as one with Jesus. He saw himself as a sinner. He saw he needed to do something to be saved. But in your life, don't wait to be blinded to see so clearly. Do what God commands today.

"I Glorified Thee On The Earth"

CLEM THURMAN

Jesus, praying to the Father just before His betrayal and arrest, said, *"I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do"* (John 17:14). By contrast, when the apostle Paul listed the sins of the Gentiles, he first showed, *"Knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks"* (Rom. 1:21). Jesus knew what was expected of Him, and He did it. The Gentiles also had knowledge of God, but refused to glorify Him: *"Their senseless heart was darkened, Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things . . . Who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them who practice them"* (Rom. 1:22-23,32).

The sins that make one *"worthy of death"* bring one under the just wrath of God. The apostle John tells us. *"This is the second death, even the lake of fire"* (Rev. 20:14). Surely, then, we do not want to suffer that

death which results from sin: *"The wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23). Those Gentiles were doomed to spiritual death, eternal separation from God in the lake of fire, for not glorifying God. Jesus, on the other hand, did glorify God. He is our pattern.

JESUS GLORIFIED GOD BY HIS LIFE

Jesus constantly showed His purpose in coming to the earth: *"I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me"* (John 6:38). When His disciples talked about food with Him, Jesus replied, *"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work"* (John 4:34). When He came to the close of His life, Jesus prayed, *"Father, not my will, but thine, be done"* (Luke 22:42). He could pray that because He lived it. He came from heaven, where He was *"on equality with God,"* and took the form of man in order to die for our sins (Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 2:14-15). Everything He did, His entire life, was then pointed toward Calvary—to fulfill the purpose for which the Father had sent Him to this world. He lived in perfect obedience. *"Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin"* (Heb. 4:15), setting an example for us (1 Pet. 2:21). But His primary purpose was to offer Himself on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. He kept that purpose in mind, and glorified God by fulfilling it.

God has a purpose for our lives, *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: 'Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man'"* (Eccle. 12:13). If Jesus glorified God by accomplishing the work God gave Him, then most assuredly we glorify God when we fulfill the purpose God designed for us. *"He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again"* (2 Cor. 5:15). If we fail to live for Him, then we become like those whom Paul condemned in Rom. 1:21. If an automobile malfunctions, it hardly is a credit to its manufacturer. On the other hand, if it does what it is designed to do, an automobile reflects glory and credit to the ones who made it. That is precisely the way it is with us. When we fulfill the purpose for which God created us, we bring glory and honor to Him.

WE GLORIFY GOD BY OUR OBEDIENCE

Just as Jesus glorified God by doing His will, so do we. The Lord said, *"Ye are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is*

in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16). Not only will our obedient lives glorify God, but such lives will cause others to glorify God, also. We are to be "*children of obedience*" (1 Pet. 1:14), as we follow in the steps of Jesus. The Scriptures say of Him, "*Though he was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation*" (Heb. 5:8-9). Just as we are "*made free from sin*" by obedience (Rom. 6:18), so the Bible says, "*Ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth*" (1 Pet. 1:22). There is just no substitute for doing what God tells us. We cannot glorify God while ignoring what he wants us to do!

The so-called golden text of the Bible states, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life*" (John 3:16). Paul writes later, "*God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Rom. 5:8). That love demands a response from us: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*" (Mark 12:30). Our lives should reflect God's love, as we seek to glorify Him. In fact, the life that glorifies God is based on, "*Faith working through love*" (Gal. 5:6). The Lord chose apostles to preach His gospel to the world, and they wrote many letters to help us know God and our duty to Him. But Paul wrote, "*Ye are our epistle, known and read of all men, being manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ*" (2 Cor. 3:2). Others are watching us, "reading" the way we speak and act. Many times Christians are the only "Bible" an unbelieving world will read. When we live as God directs, we convince the world and bring glory to God.

WE GLORIFY GOD IN THE NAME WE WEAR

"If any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Pet. 4:16). The apostles, beaten and threatened with worse if they continued to preach Christ, rejoiced that they were "*counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name*" (Acts 5:41). Some 700 years before Christ, the prophet wrote, "*I will give to those within my house and within my walls, a name better than of sons and daughters . . . The nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name . . . Ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and shall call his servants by another name*" (Isa. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15). In Acts 10 we read of the conversion of the first Gentiles, then in Acts 11, "*The disciples were*

called Christians first at Antioch" (v. 26). As the prophet had foretold, the "mouth of the Lord" gave this name.

God made a promise to Abraham, renewed to Isaac and then to Jacob. When Jacob wrestled with the angel of God, his name was changed to "Israel" (Gen. 32:24-28). "Isra" in Hebrew means "Prince." "El" in Hebrew means "God." Hence, Israel means "Prince of God." Jacob's descendants became a great people, a great nation, and were chosen by God to be His special people. But they were never known as "Jacobites." They were "Israelites." As God said, *"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee"* (Deut. 28:10). They wore a name that identified them as God's people, and in that name they glorified God. Under the New Testament, also, God has given a name for His people to wear: *"Christian . . . let him glorify God in this name"* (1 Pet. 4:16).

WE GLORIFY GOD IN THE CHURCH

We live in a time when it is popular to belittle the value of the church. But read the Scripture: *"Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever"* (Eph. 3:21). I will readily agree that we cannot glorify God in a denomination, but we can and must glorify God in the church we read about in the Bible. If Christians are to glorify God *"In the church and in Christ Jesus,"* would you not take it to be the church of Jesus Christ? He promised, *"I will build my church"* (Matt. 16:18). Notice that Jesus called it, *"My church."* It is not my church, it is not Martin Luther's church, it is not John the Baptist's church. It is the church of Christ. He is the builder and head of His church.

Not only did Christ build the church, He bought it. To the elders of the church in Ephesus, Paul said, *"Feed the church of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood"* (Acts 20:28). The Lord Jesus is the only Saviour (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). But what happens when He saves people? *"They that received his word were baptized, and there were added to them in that day about three thousand souls . . . The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved"* (Acts 2:41,47). The same Lord who saved those people added them to His church. He never added them to a denomination, but to the church which He built and bought and in which we are to glorify God. When people became Christians, they also became members of the church which Jesus built. It is as Christians, in that church, that we glorify God. What a shame that so many try to glorify God, while they reject the church in which God

wants them.

As Jesus prayed, *"I have glorified thee"* (John 17:4). He continued, *"Now glorify thou me with thine own self, which glory I had with thee before the world was"* (John 17:5). Again He said, *"Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him"* (John 13:31). Jesus was crowned with glory and honor when he was received into heaven and sat down on the right hand of the Father (Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:9). Just as Jesus was glorified, so shall we be, if we love and serve God in this life. *"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God . . . And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him"* (Rom. 8:14-17).

Let us learn to live in such a way that when this life comes to a close, we may be able to say with Jesus, *"I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self"* (John 17:4-5).

The Power Of The Lord's Word!

DILLARD THURMAN

Majestically, the Book of Hebrews begins with, *"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, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds"* (Heb. 1:1-2). How great to know that God has spoken, for thereby salvation has been extended to man! It was God who spoke when the heavens and earth sprang into being, materializing out of nothing! This is denied only by atheists, *"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"* (Psa. 14:1). It was God who spake when light appeared to roll back darkness as a black scroll: *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light"* (Gen. 1:3).

The sun, moon and stars were fixed by His Word, and He spoke when waters ran into one place and dry land appeared; *"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so"* (Gen. 1:9). It was God who spoke and thereby arranged our universal system of life forms, even to animal and plant life, each *"after its own kind."* And it was God who

spoke to the insensible clod when the nobility of man was born! *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"* (Gen. 2:7).

OUR LORD SPEAKS WITH ALMIGHTY POWER!

All creation must listen to the voice of God when He speaks, for He speaks truth and right; and without Him nothing is right in all creation! *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made"* (John 1:1-3). This mighty power still rules the world, and is its sustaining force: *"Upholding all things by the word of his power"* (Heb. 1:3). Each sunrise and sunset, the summer and winter, all the days and seasons attest to His mighty power in our universe! *"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"* (2 Pet. 3:7). Men never goes beyond the reach of that voice: *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard"* (Psa. 19:1-3). This reminds us that God's voice is unavoidable; and man must listen carefully!

God's wrath is revealed in prophecy: *"This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us"* (Isa. 30:9-11). This foretold the departure of a fallen, degenerate nation!

THE LORD'S WORD IS SURE AND CERTAIN!

Once God has spoken, those things must come to pass, *"in which it was impossible for God to lie"* (Heb. 6:18). When God speaks, the matter is irrevocably fixed! *"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true"* (Jno. 3:33). Every promise God has made will be kept faithfully: *"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"* (Rom. 11:29). We need never doubt the promises God has made: *"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he*

spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

We may question false teachers who try to twist and wrest God's word, but does this impugn God's truthfulness? *"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar"* (Rom. 3:4). Notice how Paul's preaching reflected trust in God: *"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God"* (1 Cor. 2:4-5). The Psalmist showed proper respect for God's word: *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee"* (Psa. 119:11). And yet again, *"For thy law is my delight"* (Psa. 119:77). Because it is **GOD'S WORD**, we ought to give it the more reverent, attention, and especially the gospel of our salvation!

THE POWER OF HIS WORD IN OUR CONVERSION!

We could exclaim with the Psalmist, *"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"* (Psa. 19:7). The soul of man must be changed by conversion which only God's word can effect. James recognized this power in writing. *"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls"* (Jas. 1:21). Paul plainly states the gospel he preached was the saving power. *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have 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 Cor. 15:1-2).

Knowing the power of the gospel he preached, Paul wrote: *"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"* (1 Cor. 9:16). He also knew it was the universal message of salvation, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"* (Rom. 1:16). Peter preached Christ to the Gentiles, and later faced the church in Jerusalem to defend his actions, saying that God *"put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith"* (Acts 15:9).

THE LORD SPEAKS ACCURATELY OF SALVATION!

In setting forth the great commission, Jesus stated the terms of

salvation: *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:15-16). Salvation was predicated on faith (absolute trust) in the Son of God, Jesus Christ! For He was speaking for God, and said: *"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak"* (John 12:48-49).

All those who try to discount the words of Jesus Christ in Mark 16:16 will eventually stand before Him in Judgment to answer to God: *"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"* (Acts 17:31). You just cannot defy the voice of the Lord!

THE POWER OF HIS WORD IN THE SEED

Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of a new birth: *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* (John 3:5-6). These two elements, water and Spirit, combine with the word in effecting the New Birth, combine *"the washing of water by the word"* (Eph. 5:26). Any birth must begin with the begetting, and Paul said, *"For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel"* (1 Cor. 4:15).

It is clearly revealed that the Word of God is the vital germ of spiritual life in God's spiritual family. Jesus said simply, *"The seed is the word of God"* (Luke 8:11). Without the Bible, we would not have that seed, nor could we know the mind and will of God concerning salvation! Truly, we are saved by faith; but we must remember how faith comes: *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom 10:17). He also said, *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (Jno. 8:32); but clarified this with: *"Thy word is truth"* (John 17:17).

GOD SENT FORTH THE WORD OF SALVATION!

When Paul and Barnabas came to the city of Antioch in Pisidia to

proclaim the gospel, Paul said: *"Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent"* (Acts 13:26). The word of salvation was offered to all who feared (respected) God! The apostle Paul also was carrying out the orders of Christ who decreed, *"That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"* (Luke 24:47).

None knew the effects of the word of the Lord more than Paul, who wrote, *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"* (1 Cor. 1:21). He knew his preaching that word was vital to the saving of the lost: *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"* (Rom. 10:14). We have failed all lost men if we have not preached unto them the gospel of salvation! How will we stand in Judgment?

Some Very Popular "Lies"

W.A. HOLLEY

God "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2). In fact, it is "impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18). All men are warned, "Glory not and lie not against the truth" (James 3:14; John 8:32; 17:17). "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not Practice the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we made him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:6-10).

We want our readers to understand that the foregoing quotation was addressed to children of God—Christians—not to alien sinners (Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 16:15—16; Acts 2:36-38, 41-42, 47).

Contrary to many, a lie can be believed (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). An old prophet's lie was responsible for the unfortunate death of "a man of God" (1 Kings 13:1-18). Actually, the truth of God can be turned into a lie (Romans 1:25). It is possible for one to lie, even unto God (Acts 5:4).

The father of lies is none other than Satan himself (John 8:44).

What are some of the more popular lies? We shall discuss this question under two categories—

THE FIRST CATEGORY

(A) "Join the church of your choice." Does Jesus Christ have no church? and no choice? We suggest that the following scriptures be read: Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4-6; 5:23-32; Acts 2:47. According to your Bible, no one ever "joined" the Lord's church!!

(B) "One is saved the moment he believes." Where does your Bible so teach? Sinners are saved by a faith that obeys God's commands (John 3:16, 36; James 2:14-26; Acts 10:34-35). Thus FAITH is classified as "a work of God" (John 6:28-29).

(C) "Let the Lord speak peace to your soul and take the Lord as your personal Saviour." These are very popular statements, coming from the lips of many preachers; but, where does your Bible make any such statements?? If you know where the Bible so teaches, please send us the scripture references. (Please read Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-4, 17-18).

(D) "Sprinkling and pouring are acceptable 'modes' of baptism." Many honest and sincere people believe this statement; but where does your Bible so teach? Baptism is an immersion in water (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12).

(E) "One should be baptized because one is already saved." According to the New Testament, baptism, as commanded by Jesus, is necessary to be saved (Mark 16:16) Acts 2:38 teaches that baptism is in order to be saved, "unto" (eis) or "for the remission of sins." Bible baptism is never administered "because of remission of sins." according to Holy Writ.

(F) It is asserted, "A piano or an organ is not so bad when used in the Lord's assembly." But, where does the Lord command its use? One pianist, when asked why the piano was used in their worship, replied, saying, "Because we like it." But does the LORD like it? He never authorized its use in Christian worship. (Cf. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:15).

THE SECOND CATEGORY

(A) Many excuses are really lies; we simply do not wish to face

duty's demands, and so we offer excuses (Luke 14:15-24). One church member who had gone fishing on Sunday morning, when reminded that he should be in worship at that very hour, said "Well, if I were at home I could not attend services, because my dear wife is ill and I couldn't leave her!" It does not require much effort to manufacture excuses—they are ever available!

(B) Another, say, "I know I drink; but that's not so bad; everybody else does it too." One can rationalize almost any situation. Many try to find Biblical support for social drinking; but, if there were no social drinkers, there would be no alcoholics. Social drinking is a sin before God, and one reason is because it encourages others to drink. No Christian can afford to set a poor example before others (Revelation 21:8; Galatians 5:19-21; Proverbs 23:29-35). It is just as sinful to entice one to drink as it is to entice one to commit adultery.

(C) "Falsehood concerning absenteeism isn't so bad; it doesn't hurt anyone!" one tells himself. Satan often deceives thousands with such thoughts. Remember, God has something to say with regard to such action (Hebrews 10:25; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10). One sure way to destroy your interest and enthusiasm in the Lord's Cause is to simply stay away.

(D) Many contend that they "have the right to live as they please." They "can choose their own lifestyle," they aver. This includes marrying and divorcing as many times as they please. Such an attitude destroys the moral foundation laid down in God's book. One famous woman was expressing her concern for the future of the home; but, at that very moment, she had been married to four men, and the one with whom she was then living, she had never married. What a bad example to set before others!! We suggest that Genesis 2:24-26; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12, be carefully read and applied to your life.

(E) What about those church members who try to soothe their conscience, claiming they "are unable to give to support the work of the Lord's church?" (Acts 5:1-11). There are three New Testament words which regulate giving: Ability, prosperity, and purpose (Acts 11:29; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7). Many can purchase the most expensive house, the biggest car, wear the finest clothes, and eat at the most expensive restaurants—but make token contributions to the Lord.

SHAME !!