THE BIBLE TEACHER

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Will All Good People be Saved?

In talking to various believers in Christ, they often ask if all the denominational people will not be saved? I have even had some members of the church to ask if the denominational people in years gone by will not be saved because they were at least ignorant of the church of Christ. Others ask if all of the good moral people will not be saved. Those who ask such questions, some way, some how, want to find a way for all of these people to go to heaven. Of course, I am not their judge. Next, they are in the hands of God and he will judge them righteously. But we are living today and I know what the Bible says when it comes to you and me and all people who are living.

In the first place, the Bible teaches that all are in sin and are therefore lost. That is, all accountable beings, all who know right from wrong and have reached the age of accountability, are classified as sinners. Paul said that all have sinned. (Romans 3:23). John said. "...the whole world lieth in wickedness." This being true, then how could man be saved in his sin? Even a good moral life would not be enough. If so, why was the gospel taken to

Cornelius and his household? (Acts 10). They were already good people, but they were lost as they were. Being religious was not enough. Most of those converted in the Book of Acts were already religious, but they were still lost.

In the second, place, it was necessary for man to have a saviour if he was to be saved from his sins. Therefore, Christ came into the world to save sinners. Paul said that he died for our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:3). John wrote concerning Christ, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2). We read in John 3:16, 17, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Speaking of Christ, Paul wrote, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of God and our Father." (Galatians 1:4). Again he said, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans 5:6-9). But why did Christ come into this world? According to the verses we have just read, and many more that could be given, he came to die for us and to make it possible for us to be saved. Now if good moral people are going to be saved, and people in different religious bodies that do not even belong to the Lord, and perhaps those who are ignorant of the Lord and his church, then why was it necessary for Christ to come into the world and to die for the sins of the world? If one could be saved without him, then all could, and so that would mean that he died in vain. Do you believe that? I don't. I believe what the scriptures say and they say that Christ died for us that we might be saved, not because we were already saved.

In the third place, Christ commanded that the gospel be taken into all the world and preached to every creature. Jesus himself

said, "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). Again, he said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20). Not only was this commanded of the Apostles and their converts, but according to Colossians 1:23 they were successful in doing it. Likewise that command has been passed on down to the Lord's people of our day. We therefore are to do even as they did in the first century, that is, we are to take the gospel to every creature under heaven. But why did the Lord give this command in the first place if it was possible under different circumstances for one to be saved without Christ and the gospel?

In the fourth place, we must obey the gospel of Christ in order to be saved. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16). If you will read through the Book of Acts you will read of the various cases of conversion listed there and the sum total was this: they all heard the gospel preached, they all believed it, they all repented of their sins, they all confessed Christ as the Son of God, and they were all baptized, and therefore they were all saved. But what about those who do not obey the gospel? Paul says, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). You will observe that he mentions two classes of people that will be punished of the Lord on his return and of course this would cover all people except for those who belong to him. First, he says that the Lord will come back to take vengeance on those who know him not. But why? How could ignorant people be held accountable for their sins? There are some who believe that all of those who live in far away and distant places who are ignorant of God and his will, will be saved because of their ignorance. If that be true then we should not take the Lord's will to them because they might reject it and then they would be lost. If they are saved as they are then they should not be bothered. But such people are not saved. Ignorance is no excuse. (Acts 17:30). They are responsible for their sins because there is no reason for anyone today to have to remain in ignorance of God. Even his creation would tell him that there is a creator. (Romans 1). And if there is a creator, and one recognizes that; then that should lead him to want to know more about that creator, and with such initiative then that would surely lead him to the Bible and a knowledge of God's will so that he might be able to obey God. Now if one is content to continue in his ignorance then he will have to answer for that. Second, the Lord is coming back to take vengeance on those who obey not the gospel. If one has had the opportunity to hear the gospel, and to obey it, but has neglected or refused to do so, then he will be lost. The Lord said, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Also, Peter said, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17). Would you answer that question, please?

In the fifth place, Christ is the saviour of the body or the church and therefore one must be a member of it to be saved. Christ not only built the church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2), but he also died for it (Ephesians 5:25), and shed his blood to purchase it. (Acts 20:28). This would not have been done had it not been necessary. Then we read in Ephesians 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." The body here is the spiritual body of Christ, the church, according to Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22, 23. That means then that if Christ is the saviour of the church that you and I, and all others, must be members of that church if we are to be saved. Salvation is in the church, not outside of it. The church is not the saviour, since the church is composed of the saved (Acts 2:47), but Christ is the saviour, and he is the saviour of the church, and that means then that we must be members of it to be saved. If this be true, then good moral people, those in other religious bodies, those in far away places who

are ignorant of God's will, will be lost unless they become members of the Lord's church. As of now, they are lost, and they will remain lost, and will be lost in eternity, if they fail to obey God and therefore fail to become members of the Lord's church. If this be not the case, then Christ built the church, died for it, and shed his blood for it in vain. Surely if one knows what the Bible teaches on this subject then he could never come to the conclusion that Christ and his church are in vain.

In the sixth place, the scriptures teach that those who obey the Lord, and are added to his church, must worship God faithfully each first day of the week and must live the faithful Christian life to go to heaven. Christ said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). With the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost, the record says concerning those first Christians, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42). Most of the New Testament is directed to the Christian, exhorting him to abstain from the very appearance of evil, and to ever walk in the steps of Christ, (1 Thessalonians 5:22; 1 Peter 2:21). When one goes through these scriptures, he will find that there are many things that a Christian cannot do and there are many things that he must do. This is all summed up in statements like these: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10). "Blesssed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14). Now, if one could be saved without doing all of this, then why would the Lord have made heaven dependent on doing these things? Again, would the Lord expect some to do these things, while excusing others? My friends, all we have to go by is what is stated in the scriptures, and based on that then we must conclude that not only must one obey the Lord to become a Christian, but he must remain faithful unto death if he expects to go to heaven the service of the servi

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thinking that the Lord will finally save all people whether they obey him or not. Neither should you be led to believe that the

Lord will save some on the basis of their ignorance or good moral living. The whole Bible would oppose such ideas. The Lord wants all people to know his will and to obey it so they can be saved. We as Christians have a great responsibility in that the Lord has commanded us to take the gospel into all the world and to preach it to every creature.

Have you obeyed the Lord? Are you a member of the church of Christ? If not, you are lost. I want to urge you to obey the Lord so you can be saved and be added to the church. You can't be saved until you do. If you are a Christian, a member of the church of Christ, I want to urge you to be faithful. If you will, the Lord one day will bless you with a home in heaven. There is no other way you can go.



Not Every One

The Apostle John in 1 John 4:8 wrote "God is love." This sounds wonderful. However, many from this have concluded that God will save every one, because He is love, forgetting that not only God is love but he is also a just God, and a holy and righteous God. Certainly God wants to save all the world and the Bible says, He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9). God's word, by His power, became flesh, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and he gave himself a sacrifice on the cross, thus becoming the propitiation for the sins of the world. (John 1:1, 2, 14; 3:16; 1 John 2:2). But hear what Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is

the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Matthew 7:13, 14, 21; Luke 13:24).

Evidently then not every one will be saved. Those who are on the broad way will not be saved. To be saved one must be in the narrow way, which means one must abide in the teachings of Christ. (2 John 9). Those on the broad way would compromise and go with any thing. To them there is nothing in a name, one church is as good as another. Their Christianity is not what the Bible say, but they follow traditions and commandments of men. In the words of Jesus, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:8, 9).

Jesus said, those who are not doing the will of God will not be saved. To some Christianity means wearing a metal cross as an ornament, occasionally saying a prayer or reading from the scriptures, and attending a few church services, maybe just two times in a year. This is not more than calling Jesus, Lord, Lord. One must do the will of his Father which is in heaven to be saved, said Jesus. Most are following the will, on the contrary, of a "Father" or "Pastor" or "Padri" which is in a church. We can't do the will of the Father which is in heaven if we do not read and study His word, the Bible.

Many just desire to enter into the kingdom of heaven, they just seek to enter. But Jesus said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." There is a difference in these two words, to strive and to seek. We seek in a casual manner, but strive in emergency, Those who contend for a prize do not just seek half hearted, but they put forth their utmost effort to win. It takes all that one can do to enter heaven. The Apostle Peter at 1 Peter 2:21 said, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us,

leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps." Christ is our example. Speaking about Christ, the Bible again says, "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8, 9). The lesson is that even though Christ was the Son of God he had to strive to become a perfect man and the author of our salvation. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and likewise those who will obey him will be saved. Not every one.

The Highway Of The Upright

Robert R. Taylor

The inspired penman of Proverbs offers these words of sage counsel to every traveler down life's pathway, "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul" (Prov. 16:17). Though these words have a general application for all ages, we think especially of their tremendous value if embraced by our precious young people. It is with them particularly in mind that we pen this message. Youth lives in a world that abounds with evil. Choices must be made early in life as future direction beckons. Will your future master be sin or the Saviour? Will you build your life on the Book of God or the books of men? Will you live faithfully the Christian life or turn aside from the highway of the upright? Who will be your life's companion? What type of home will you establish in the course of time? Who will be your chief companions? Eternal life and the second death hang in the balances when choices such as the foregoing are made.

Upright youth will seek to make a permanent departure from the multitude of evils running rampantly in our land. Refusal to collect and read trashy stories and immoral novels will be one of these early decisions. God's youth recognizes that what we read with relish is what we will think about with pleasure. What we constantly think about molds our reharacter. As one has well stated, "isown as thought and near an aet; sow an act and paper habit; sown a habit, and reap an character. Sow a character and reap; a destiny," And preacher acquaintance, of, mine has told young people on many occasions, "You are not what, you think you are, you are what you think!!" This is so true and the older you get the wiser will be this statement's import, and deep meaning. One of the saddest confessions ever made to me, was from an elderly gentlemen who said he had, literally, ruined his mind when young by reading trashy novels. There is too much worthwhile material for reading to fill one's mind with cheap and soul-destructive themes such as dot pornographic productions today.

Youth for Christ will depart from the present evils that destroy the body. Tobacco certainly belongs in this category. (Now before any of you smoking parents become offended at this counsels please remember that I, as a non-smoker, can say some things to your sons and daughters that you cannot say Your actions speak too loudly for your words of warning to effective). I hereby go on record, as I have done again and again, that young people get injured very deeply by smoking I therefore encourage all our youthful readers to stay far removed from the slavish habit. I have yet to meet a person who regretted a decision to be a nonsmoker through life. I shall always appreciate a godly mother's influence in keeping me from entering the smoking circle. I have met many who regretted they made the decision to smoke. The use of alcohol and addiction to deadly drugs strictly will be off limits to all young people who love God, value their souls and delight to be clean in body and mind. Wise indeed is every No said to all invitations to enter any or all of these unholy habits.

Christian youth treading the upright highway will depart from evil companionships which corrupt good morals or manners (I Cor. 15:33). Close friends of the same sex need to be chosen because they will enrich us spiritually and move us to higher moral standards. We desperately need friends today as Jonathan was to David—associates who will strengthen our hands in God (I Sam. 23:16). A socalled friend who would weaken our hand in God is

not a friend at all but a dangerous enemy! Above all we need to choose the good and pure in our choice of dates and an'ultimate companion. J.H. Halbrook, after concluding his service in the War Between the State, met and married a girl "who had nothing but a pure heart and a good stock of religion." Through her godly influence she led him to the truth and he later became a great gospel preacher. Some years back a young man was contemplating marriage. He told me in a letter something like this, "I want to marry this girl because I believe she will help me go home to heaven in the next world." Such an important ingredient is quite foreign to present day motives that prompt young people to seek a marital partner for life. Beauty of face and figure is important than beauty of spirit and quality of character. Does he have much money made or the prospect of making plenty? Frequently, this is preferred among young women in husband over whether he has morals and character or not. Riches never have been a proper substitute for righteousness. Will your choice for a lifetime companion help or hinder your going home to heaven in yonder's world?

Upright youth will not only walk the highway of purity by departing from evil and pursuing the good but will be an inspiration and example for others to follow in their footsteps. Preservation of youthful souls will be the end result. Young people, real success in adequate preparation for life now and life eternal in heaven is paved before you in this sacred text. Your responsibility is crystal clear in this momentous matter.

Premillennialism

Jeremiah Jones

No man can believe the theories of Premillennialism and believe the word of God at the same time. If man believes premillennialism, he does not believe the gospel of Christ, If man believes the Word of God, he does not believe premillennialism. It is just that simple!

DENIES REIGN OF CHRIST

Let us note some consequences of premillennialism. This doctrine denies that Christ is reigning now. I shall never forget a statement that brother H.A. Dixon said in class on Premillennialism. He said, "There are two chapters in the New Testament that refute the 1000 years reign upon earth. They are Acts 2 and I Corinthians 15." This is true! Jesus Christ is now reigning.

MAKES GOD A LIAR

Premillennialism makes God a liar. Can anyone believe that premillennialism is a harmless doctrine? It is rotten to the core! Listen to these words in Mark 1:14-15, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled and kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Jesus said the time was at hand to establish the kingdom. Either it was, or it was not. Jesus said it was. Premillennialism says it was not, therefore the kingdom was postponed. The Bible teaches that it is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). Note the words of brother Foy E. Wallace on this subject: "If God did not know that the kingdom was going to be postponed it denies the omniscience of God. If he didn't know it—yet had it announced anyhow, it destroys the integrity of God, and impeaches the veracity of Jesus Christ. That is premillennialism. Is such a theory harmless?"

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Premillennialism belittles the church of our Lord. Premillennialists makes the church a complete accident. The apostle Paul shows how important the church is in Ephesians 3. Paul tells us that the church is "according to the eternal purpose of God." Does this sound like the church is just an accident? The church cost the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). Jesus loved the church enough to give His life for it (Eph. 5:25). Would Jesus give His life for something that just turned out to be an accident? Believe it if you can! The Bible teaches that the church has always been in the mind of God. Listen to the words of brother Wallace again:

"The Scofield Bible is the chief promoter of premillennialism. It is named right, Scofield Bible—it is not God's. The Scofield Bible is a text-book on premillennialism, disguised as a Bible, arranged to accommodate the theory of seven dispensational periods, culminating in the millennial age. Nothing could belittle the church more than to make it a substitute for a kingdom that failed to arrive, or a vestibule to the kingdom, yet to come, or, an unexpected phase of the kingdom, as the Scofield Bible features it.

Salvation

Dean Buchanan

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The Bible speaks of the "great salvation." "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:3). Why was this salvation necessary? The Bible gives the account of man.

God created man and placed him in the ideal environment. Man was created in innocence, that is, without sing But God created man with freedom of will. He gave man instructions concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that he (man) should not eat of that tree. He also told man what would happen if he did eat of that forbidden fruit. But God did not physically prevent man from access to that tree.

So man fell. Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and brought sin into the world. Now sin is the transgression of God's law. (I John 3:4). When man went

contrary to God's law he sinned. Because of this sin, man was separated from God (Isa. 59: 1, 2). So the need for a means of reconciliation of way of salvation.

The Bible teaches that all have sinned. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rome 3:23). The Bible also teaches the wages of sin is death. "For the wages of sin is death," but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Hence, all are in need of salvation. (Of course this contemplates all people who can be held accountable to God. Children not yet old enough to understand the gospel, people with brain damage and any others who, through no fault of their own, cannot understand the gospel are not accountable to God).

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Since man could not save himself, Christ had to come and die on the cross in order that man might be saved. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). No sweeter words were ever spoken to man than the promise of God's Son for his salvation. The Bible is the account of the salvation God offers to man. From Genesis, the first book in the Bible, through Revelation, the last book in the Bible, this plan of salvation is gradually unfolded to man.

Before anyone can be saved they must realize they are lost. Ignorace of the existence of God and the Sonship of Christ is no excuse. God has revealed Himself to man and man can come to a knowledge of God if he is willing to seek Him (Heb. 11:6). Therefore, man is without excuse concerning his knowledge of God. (Acts 17: 30).

When Christ came and died on the cross, He made it possible for all men to be saved. But each person's salvation is up to the individual himself. God will not force man to accept His salvation, but through His grace it is offered to all. However, there are things man must do to receive the grace of God.

First let me emphasize that salvation is by grace, "For by

grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2: 8, 9, 10). If man could have earned his salvation, Christ would not have had to die.

But the fact salvation is by grace does not imply the universal salvation of all men simply on the basis of that fact with no indication on their part they are willing to receive that salvation. The Bible says, "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2: 12). The apostle is not here suggesting that by works a man may earn his salvation. But rather he is saying that each must hear and obey the will of God concerning his salvation. Obedience does not exclude grace.

That a person cannot be saved without believing Christ to be the Son of God is clear from such passages as Hebrews 11:6. It is also clear one must confess that faith in Christ as the Son of God (Ram. 10:10; John 8:28). Repentance of one's sins is also required (Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3, 5). But baptism, following the things already mentioned, is the final step that puts one in Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3). The Bible does not mention any other way through which one can get into Christ.

All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:7). There are no spiritual blessings one can receive outside of Christ. Salvation is one spiritual blessing in Christ. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10).

Now, if all spiritual blessings are in Christ, and one can get into Christ only by being baptized into him, then we are forced to the conclusion that baptism is necessary to salvation, as are all the other things already mentioned.

Surely, the salvation of one's soul is the most important thing to be considered in this life. Everything else stands small in comparison to this subject. How important it is then, that every human being consider his relationship to God in view of eternity.

The Sabbath or Sunday?

Terry Lee Preston

Almost every religious group feels that the Scriptures instruct us to set aside one day per week in which we are to worship God in a special way. Some differ with others regarding which day of the week is designated for the Christian age, however. Most religious groups assemble upon the first day of the week, but others meet upon the seventh day. Which is the proper day—Saturday (the seventh day), or Sunday (the first day)?

EXAMINATION OF HISTORY

That the seventh day of the week was set aside as a holy day at one point in history cannot be denied. God instructed the Jews: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20: 8-11).

Equally undeniable is the fact that the disciples of Christ, following the establishment of the church met and worshipped upon the first day of the week. Their practice was to come together "into one place". (I Cor. 11: 20) as the church (I Cor. 11: 18) for the purpose of eating the Lord's Super (I Cor. 11: 20-29), on the first day of the week (Acts 20: 7). As a result of this established practice Paul commanded the church at Corinth, as well as those of Galatia: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store" (I Cor. 16: 2). The force of the verb form (present, for repeated action) implies every first day of the week (just as "Remember the sabbath day" meant every sabbath), hence Christians were to give every Sunday. Moreover, Ignatius, in his Ad Magnesios (A.D. 110—117), said that Christians

did not keep the sabbath, but rather "The Lord's Day, on which also our Light arose" (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, III, 1919). The Scriptures bear out that Christ arose on the first day of the week, or the day after the sabbath (John 20:1; Mark 16: 1-8). One historian even exclaims "We keep the eighth day with gladness" (Ibid). Hence, the early Christians met on Sunday.

It is clear, then, that at different points in history both the seventh and first days of the week have had special significance. Observance of the seventh day was commanded in the Old Testament to Israel, while the first day of the week is authorised by the New Testament as the special day of worship for Christians. But which is to be the special day of worship for us today?

THE TWO COVENANTS

The Scriptures divide themselves into two distinct and separate parts commonly called the Old Testament and the New Testament. Both testaments were given by God (2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 3:15, 16; 2 Tim. 3:16), but each for a different period of history and for different purposes.

The Old Testament Scriptures deal with an old covenant, that God made with the Israelites. This covenant sprang from a promise made to Abraham—that he would be the father of a great nation, that this nation would be given the land of Canaan, and that through his seed all the nations of the world would be blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3, 15:8, 22:18). These Scriptures teach that God kept his promise to Abraham concerning the nation (Ex. 19:1-6) and the land (Josh. 21:43), and that he would bless all the world through a saviour, a descendant of Abraham, at a later time (Deut. 18:18; Isa. 9:6, 7). This old covenant was made with the children of Israel only (Ex. 34:37, 28; Deut. 5:1-3; 9:8-12) and looked forward to a day when a new covenant would be given (Jer. 31:31), a covenant that would also include Gentiles (Joel 2:32; Amos 9:11, 12). The old covenant was to last only until Christ, the seed of Abraham, should come (Gal. 3:16, 19) and was given only to bring man to Christ (Gal. 3:23-25). The commandment to "Remember the sabbath day" was a part of the old covenant

made with Israel, before Christ (Ex. 20: 8-11) which he was a read to a

The New Testament Scriptures tell us of the new covenant better than the old, established upon better promises (Heb. 8:6)—a covenant which makes the first covenant old and decayed (Heb. 8:13). This new covenant has Christ as mediator (Heb. 8:6; 9:15) and priest (Heb. 2:17), and takes the place of the old covenant (Heb. 10:9, 10; 7:11, 12, 18, 19). It offers salvation to all men everywhere, making no distinction between Jew and Gentile (Rom. 3:22; 10:12, 13). Under this covenant the disciples met upon the first day of the week, the day that Christ arose (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1, 2).

The old covenant involved the law given to Israel through Moses: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel ... And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments" (Ex. 34:27, 28). The fourth commandment was "Remember the sabbath day to keep" it holy" (Ex. 20:8). Paul later taught that this law had been set aside by Christ Jesus: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2:15); "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). In view of the fact that Christ nailed the Old Testament Law, (which contained the sabq bath commandment) to the cross, Paul concludes: "Let no main therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2 : 16, 17), to this so the same to yet brid out a second will be an experience. support (a time of the store) (3,50) and its (45). Still (5,50)

When Christ Jesus through the inspired apostles and prophets) (Eph. 3:5) gave the New Testament law. He included (though sometimes in other words) nine of the ten commandments. Which did He omit? "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it hely". It cannot be found in the New Testament, hence it is not part of the New Testament law, just as offering sacrifices and refraining from

pork is not. In the New Testament age the disciples came together upon the first day of the week, which is also called the "Lord's day" (Rev. 1: 10).

THE NEW ETERNAL

Of the two covenants, one has been removed—the one containing the sabbath commandment—and one remains. Is the New Testament applicable to us today? Yes! The Hebrew author makes it abundantly clear that Christ Jesus has been made High Priest forever (Heb. 5: 6; 10; 6: 20; 7: 17, 28). The New Testament, also called the gospel, is to be preached to all nations (Mk. 16:15, 16) and is said to endure forever (I Pet. 1:25). Paul reminds us that at the second coming of Christ those who "Know not God and obey not the gospel" shall be punished (2 Thes. 1:8, 9), and John adds that whosoever trangresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God" (2 John 9). These statements encompass all, including those alive today and tomorrow

Attitude

CONCLUSION

At one point in history the Jews were commanded to keep the sabbath day. Later, in the New Testament age, we find "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law (Heb. 7:12). The law which contained the sabbath commandment has been forever nailed to the cross of Christ, taken out of the way. God did not see fit to make sabbath observance a part of the New Testament, but rather He did authorize meeting upon the first day of the week—to partake of the Lord's supper, to "lay by in store" (give), to sing (Eph. 5:19), to pray (1 Tim. 2:8), and to hear preaching (Acts 20:7). The New Testament law is binding upon all men forever, and it teaches that keeping the sabbath (Saturday) is no longer required (Col. 2:6), but rather that Christians meet upon the first day of the week. Sunday is the proper day for assembling to worship. Let us all befaithful: state has table to a second out of the

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"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there we may be also? (Ino. 14:1-3). "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens....For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:1, 10). "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3: 2, 3).

As we journey to the end of life's little day, it is especially appropriate to examine the Christian's hope of heaven. The more interest we have in heaven the better our opportunity of reaching it. The more we know about heaven the greater our interest will become.

HEAVEN IS REAL

Heaven is not a mere fancy speculation. Christ has taught us that there is indeed such a place. He emphatically and definitely declared: "In my Father's house are many mansions." Jesus was truth, and He knew the truth. He came from heaven, and He tells us in fact that "In my Father's house are many beautiful dwelling places." He then added, "If it were not so, I would have told you." Being Truth He could not deceive. He says in effect: "If I had come to earth, and finding that you cherished a hope of life beyond the grave, a hope that never could be realized, I would not allow

you to go on in such deception: If it were not so I would have told you. I would not allow you to continue to be deceived. How much our Lord said in these few words, and how comforting they are! To live in heaven throughout enternity is a blessed privilege beyond description. "Thou shalt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Ps. 16:11) the sea that we are all the standards and the season and the season and the season are the season as a season and the season are the season as a season are season as a season are season.

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- have an interest in some things in this life that I cannot accomplish, but know that I can make heaven mine. I know that I can, for Jesus said that I could (Jno. 14:1-4).
- 2. I desire to go to heaven because of the type of place that it is. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:1-5). "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27), "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14). Heaven is more wonderful than our fondest dreams! ...<u>1</u> 3 (5250)

^{3.} I desire to go to heaven because heaven is eternal. Incorrup-

tible treasures are there. Jesus said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt. 6:19, 20). In heaven we shall receive an eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:16, 18). We shall obtain an eternal abode in heaven (II Cor. 5:1).

- 4. I desire to go to heaven because it is a place of comfort. Job said: "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest" (Job 3:17).
- 5. I desire to go to heaven because it is a place of sweet associations. Christ said, "Where I am, there ye may be also" (Jno. 14:3). In addition to Christ, the Father, the Holy Spirit and all of the angels, all who have done the will of God from the beginning of time until the end of the same will be there. Jesus affirmed this: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 7:21). In heaven we shall see loved ones of former days. "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." 2 Samuel 12:23.
- 6. I desire to go to heaven because it is a place of great rewards. Great is our reward in heaven (Mt. 5:11, 12). Heaven is an incorruptible inheritance (I Pet. 1:4). As we near our journey's end we should be able to stay with Paul: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:8).

CONCLUSION

Heaven is real, there is such a place! The decade of the 70's has passed, and we are now in the decade of the 80's. For many of us this decade will determine whether we shall be in heaven or in hell throughout eternity. This year of 1982 could determine

it, and conceivably this day or hour could determine it. There is no doubt, dear reader, that you are at the crossroads of life. To become a Christian, the alien sinner must hear and believe the gospel (Acts 15:7-9; Heb. 11:6); repent of sins (Lk. 13:3); Confess Christ before men (Mt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10); and the final step for the alien sinner is to be baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27). The unfaithful child of God must repent, confess his sins, and pray to God for forgiveness (Acts 8:22).

God invites us to a great feast, and there we shall know each other (Lk. 13:29). God has not invited to this feast those who could not know each other. Each person should ask himself the question: "Am I nearer to heaven today than I was a year ago?" Let us remember: "Heaven will surely be worth it all."

Who Are The Children Of God?

God has always been very specific in His dealing with man. His identity and will was clearly made known to Adam and Eve in Eden; to Noah concerning the ark; to Israel as to how they would march and camp in the forty years of wilderness wanderings. God named the place and time for the beginning of His church: "in the last days," i.e. Pentecost, 33 A.D.; and in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion (Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:2,3; 28:16; Zech. 1:16).

God is very specific in knowing and locating His children: "the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19). God, it is certain, knows who His children are. We should seek knowledge of God that we too might know that we are His children. The children of God are those who have:

PASSED FROM DEATH TO LIFE

"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). The pronouncement of God to Adam was, "sin is death," "The wages of sin is death—the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Rom. 6:23; Ezek 18:4). "And you, being dead in your sins—

you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins? (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:1).

Death is separation, Physical death is the separation of the spirit of life from the fleshly body (James 2:26). Spiritual death is the separation of man from God. Sin is that which causes that separation. It separated Adam from God; "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden.....so he drove out the man" (Gen. 3:23,24).

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Then, there is a sense in which repentance toward sin is a death. Repentance, the determination to for sake the way of sin and serve Satan no longer is to die, or be separated, from the wilful service to sin. Paul speaks of his former relationship to sin (the old Saul of Tarsus, enemy of Christ) and his death to sin; "knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed—I am crucified with Christ" (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20). That which is dead is fit to be buried, One dead in sin; that one being dead to sin, is one fit to be buried also. The Apostle speaks of his burial in Romans six, in verse three;" "know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death....." The sinner, dead in sin, is in the act of baptism buried as one dead. From that grave of water the sinner is raised to "walk in newess of life," or to walk as a new creature, born again unto everlasting life. (Rom. 6:4).

In the act of baptism, one who believes Christ to be the Son of God, repenting of his sins, passes from death unto spiritual life as a born again child of God.

FREE FROM BONDAGE, SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Man serves one master or another. There are only two masters man may serve; either "sin unto death (Satan), or of obedience unto righteousness" (Rom. 6:16). Man wilfully submits his service unto one or the other, he cannot serve both (Matt. 6:24).

The child of God is one who, having been the servant of sin.

has "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine.....Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17,18). The word form carries the idea of a cast, a mold. That which is in the mold, or form, takes the image of the mold, The "form of doctrine" is basically "that Christ died for our sins.....was buried, and rose again." This is the gospel that was preached, received by the hearers, that on which they stood, and that by which they were saved from their sin. (I Cor. 15:1-4). It is not that they merely believed this doctrine, but they had "obeyed that form of doctrine" and in so doing had freed themselves of sin and become servants of righteousness, or children of God.

Baptism is the "form of doctrine" that was obeyed. Baptism cast one in the mold of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Again, Romans 6:3,4, "were baptized into his death.....buried with him by baptism.....raised up from the dead...walk in newness of life."

In baptism one passes from death into life; from bondage to Satan unto service to God. These are known to God as His born again children. These are the children of God.

How May I Be A Christian?

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Romans 10:14-18—"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? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world."

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John 20:31—"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Acts 16:31—"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Hebrews 11:6—"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

REPENT OF PAST SINS

Luke 13:3—"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Acts 2:38—"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 17:30—"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

CONFESS FAITH IN CHRIST

Matthew 10:32—"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Acts 8:37—"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

BE BAPTIZED (IMMERSED) INTO CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS

Mark 16:16—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Acts 2:38—

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Also read Acts 8:36-38. Romans 6:3,4—"Know, ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." I Peter 3:21—"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Our Responsibility To Truth

Grady Miller

Many years ago a scholar by the name of George Campbell wrote, "Truth has been in all my inquiries, and still is my great aim. To her I am ready to sacrifice every personal consideration; but am determined not, knowingly, to sacrifice her to anything." Certainly, truth is precious; the discovery of truth will be fitting reward for the search.

While all truth is precious, it must be emphasized that the truth of the word of God knows no equal. We read in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Jesus declared in John 8:31, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Truly, "blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance" (Psalm 89:15).

Consider for a moment our responsibility concerning God's truth. What must we do with it? What do we owe it? To begin with, we must believe the truth. Paul warned the Thessalonians that some would be lost in the hereafter because they would receive a "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all

might be damned who believed not the truth....." (2 Thess. 2:11,12). On the other hand, the saved are "chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (Verse 13).

Next, we must also obey the truth. It is not just a matter of believing the truth in order to be saved; we must also keep the truth and walk in it. Jesus said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. (Luke 11:28). In Galatia some disciples had been bewitched by false teachers to the extent that they would not "obey the truth" (Gal. 3:1); the apostle Paul affirmed that these were "fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4). The aged apostle John declared, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth". (III John 4). We may be assured today that, if we walk in this truth also, we may walk in the glory of our Lord.

Furthermore, we are commanded to proclaim the truth. Paul exhorted the Christians in Ephesus to "speak the truth in love". (Ephesians 4:15). We have neither the commission nor the authority to preach the commandments of men. No one has the right to bind the theories, opinions and dogmas of mammon upon us. Instead, we must declare the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

And then, finally, we are duty bound to defend the truth. Too many have the attitude that we should preach the truth as we know it and let everyone else preach what they will. Several fine and sincere people believe that we ought not argue about the Bible. We contend, however, that we ought to imitate the preaching of Jesus, Paul, Peter, James and a host of other Spirit-filled men of God; they argued about the truth of God's word! Hear Paul in Galatians 2:5, "......false brethren unawares (were) brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." No sir! Paul would not be intimidated by those who opposed his ministry. Instead, he made a stand and fought for the truth of the gospel! Today, we too must

"earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3).

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proclaim the truth, and defend the truth against her enemies. Would to God all mankind could rise up and declare with the Psalmist, "I have chosen the way of truth: THY JUDGMENTS HAVE I laid before me" (Psalm 119:30).

Self—Examination

Roger Shiflet

One important duty of each Christian is constant self examination spiritually. Paul said, "But let a man examine himself....." (I. Corinthians 11:28).

Self-examination helps us have the right attitude toward other people. One time the Pharisees (a Jewish religious sect) brought to Jesus a woman who had been taken in the act of adultery. The Pharisees wanted to see what Jesus' judgment of her would be. But their main purpose was to test Jesus so they could accuse him. The Old Testament had demanded that such a woman be put to death. Jesus, however, said, "He that is without sin among you. let him first cast astone at her" (John 8:7). He was telling them that, instead of concentrating their concern on the sins of other people, they should first examine themselves. When they did this, they saw their own sinfulness and were ashamed of their lack of compassion for the sinful woman.

Furthermore, a person should examine himself to make sure that he is living as God wants him to live. In 11 Corinthians 13:5, the Bible says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; proye [test] your own selves." God wants us to live lives of soberness, and godliness. Sometimes, though, the lure of sin is very strong, and we do what is wrong. If we examine ourselves every day, that will help us to put away sin from our lives and to embrace righteousness.

When a person examines himself, he should compare himself with the standard which God has set forth in the Bible. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved but whom the Lord commendeth" (11 Corinthians 10:18).

Christian, when was the last time you took a good look at yourself spiritually? Are your thoughts, actions, attitudes, and words under Christ's control? Are your priorities in the right place? Now would be a good time to "examine yourself" to make sure Christ is still first in your life.

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!

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