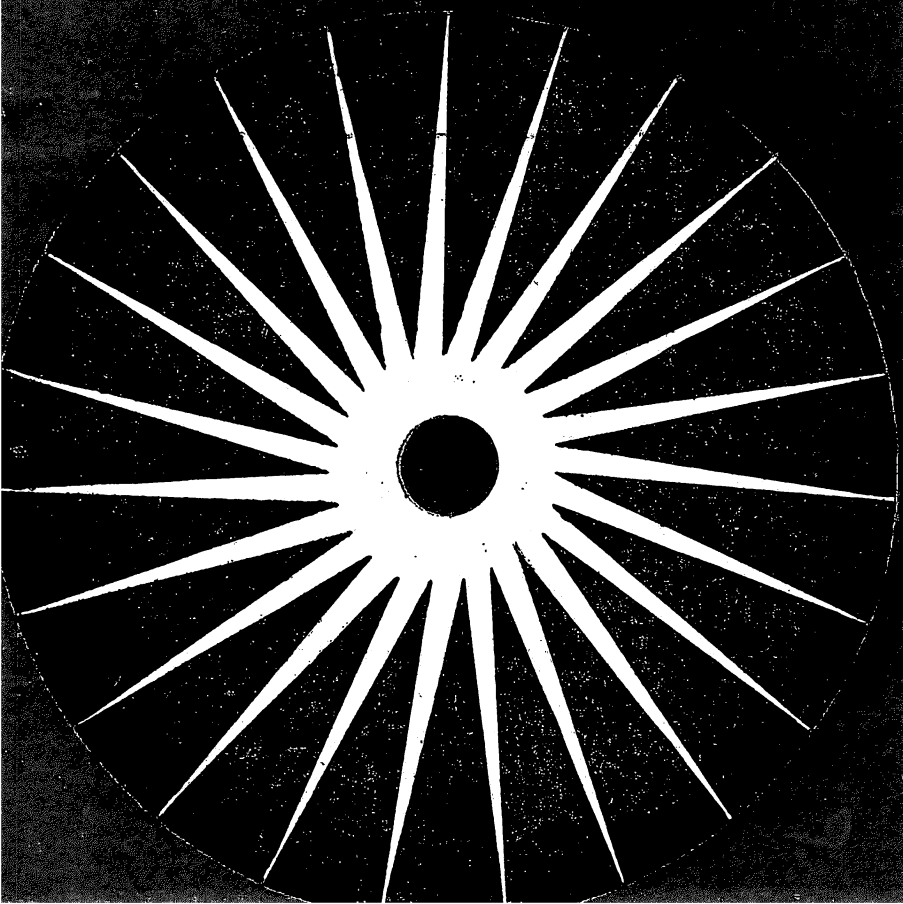


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# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Editor :*

**J. C. CHOATE**

*Associate Editor :*

**SUNNY DAVID**

*Staff Writers :*

**Vipul Rai, K. Mathew, F. David, Nehemiah Gootam,  
Jaikumar Gootam, P.R. Swamy.**

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## EDITORIAL



### **The Laws Of God**

Law is defined: "A rule of conduct or action established by custom or laid down and enforced by a governing authority; the whole body of such rules; the control brought about by enforcing rules." In the Bible "the law" is often used to speak of the law of Moses. (John 1:17). The New Testament is said to be the perfect law of liberty. (James 1:25). But regardless of what law is under consideration, law itself originated with God and all subsequent laws, even the secular law of various villages, cities, and countries around the world, are generally based on God's law.

From the beginning it was necessary for God to give man some rules by which he should be governed. On breaking his law, God imposed additional rules and regulations as well as

to stipulate the consequences for failing to abide by them. With the passing of time and with the growth of the human race, God's laws for man increased in number. These laws were for man's own good, dealing both with his moral relationships with his fellowman and his spiritual relationship with God.

In the Old Testament there are two major laws revealed. The first one was known as the Patriarchal Law. A patriarch was the father or head of a family or household and in this particular arrangement God spoke to the patriarchs and in turn they spoke to their family members concerning God's will for them. Some of the well known patriarchs were Adam, Noas, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. This law had its beginning with Adam and continued up to the time the law was given to Moses and therefore lasted approximately twenty five hundred years. The Hebrew writer refers to it when he says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets..." (Hebrews 1:1).

Continuing, the second law spoken of in the Old Testament is the Law of Moses or the Mosaical Law. This law was the result of God speaking to Moses, as recorded in Exodus 20., giving him the ten commandments as well as many other laws pertaining to moral, physical, and spiritual laws. It was a written law, at first being written on tablets of stone, and then penned in book form, as well as being written upon the hearts of the people. It was directed only to the household of Israel or to the Jews, God's chosen people. It was a law of works with physical penalties being leveled on the disobedient. Given originally to Moses, it extended over to the death of Christ, which means that it lasted for a period of fifteen hundred years. John said of it: "For the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17). Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (Matthew 5:17, 18). And so it was fulfilled, as Christ said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that

all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." (Luke 24:44). You might also want to read 2 Corinthians 3; Colossians 2:14; Galatians 5:4, and so on.

In the New Testament we read of yet another law, which makes the third and final law found in God's book, the Bible. This law is the law of Christ. It was given by God through Christ and the Apostles and others as they were miraculously directed to write it down and it has come down to us in written form. This law came into force with the death of Christ and will remain binding until he comes again. It was given to all people everywhere when Christ said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). Going back to some of the verses that we have already referred to, the Hebrew writer, after talking about how God had spoken in the beginning to the fathers by the prophets, goes on to say "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." (Hebrews 1:2). God said at the transfiguration of Christ, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5). In John 1:17 the writer declares that the law was by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. In James 1:25 he says that this is the perfect law of liberty.

This is to say therefore that we of today are not living under the patriarchal law because that law was given to those who lived during the first twenty five hundred years of man's existence. Since we were not there, therefore, it was not given to us and neither has it been brought over to our time. Neither are we living under the law of Moses and therefore the law of Moses is not binding on us. It was binding on those who lived from the time of Moses up to the death of Christ, but since we were not there at that time then that did not include us. And since we cannot go back to that period, and neither are we permitted to bring that law over to this age then that law is not binding on us and neither can we keep it. That leaves us with only one law left and that is the law of Christ

as set forth in the New Testament. Now that law came into force at the death of Christ and will remain binding until Christ comes again. That means therefore that since we are living in between those two great events that that law is binding on you and me and on every human being living today. To be aware of what is expected of us then we need to study this law and then put forth every effort to abide by it. This is a law that is primarily spiritual but it also serves as a moral and physical law in the sense that when we obey God's spiritual law we will likewise live pure lives morally and physically and in doing this it also effects our relations both to God and our fellowman.

All of God's laws have been binding at the time that they were given and for the period that they covered. They were laws given to protect man, to benefit him, and to save him. Those who have kept his laws have been blessed but those who have broken God's statutes have been made to pay the penalty. How much better off man would be if he would learn the importance of staying within the framework of God's law rather than to transgress and go beyond. Furthermore, how sad it is that men in general have made it a practice to try to improve on God's laws but in so doing they have rejected God himself. Actually, God's laws are not to be tampered with. There are many warnings along this line. For instance, read Revelation 22:18,19 where the Lord warns that we should not add to his word or subtract from it.

But there is one other set of laws we want to notice. These are generally thought to be the laws of men, like city laws, laws made by a country to govern its people but actually these laws have been lifted from God's laws. For example, in all of God's laws he has said that man should not kill, steal, bear false witness, commit adultery, etc. What kind of laws does man have? The same. Why? Because they are basic laws that must be enforced if man is to survive. Even in those countries where some other religion dominates and controls the people, still it is God's law that governs them. This may be denied, but it is true nevertheless. God first gave law and having made man he knew from the beginning the

kind of laws that man needed and these laws, secularly, have been handed down from generation to generation, from country to country. Therefore, these are God's laws and God consequently rules those countries and the world itself through his laws.

How is man to look upon the law of the land? As he is expected to respect and obey God's spiritual laws, the same likewise holds true with the laws of man, that is, if they are his laws, and laws that are in keeping with his will. For instance, Paul writes, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." (Romans 13:1-7). Peter writes, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." (1 Peter 2:13-17). Paul said, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." (Titus 3:1).

What about the law here in India? Basically the laws of this country are of God. How should the Christian therefore

react to them? He should obey the laws of his country. He should be a good law abiding citizen. He should be an example for all others. He should not break the law. He should stop at the red lights on the streets even when others go on. He should pay his taxes. And on and on with all other laws that are in harmony with God's will. Law is necessary and it is also necessary that the law be enforced. Christians should never give any trouble, should never have to be fined, or have to go to jail.

The law of the country is for our good and the good of others. What would happen if there were no laws? We would all be frightened and our very lives would be in danger. So we should thank God for the laws, for those who strive to enforce them, and we should help them in every way possible and pray for them. But above all, God's divine law is for our good and the good of the world. The Lord asks us to repent or to turn away from all bad and evil things and to obey him. Then as Christians we are to live pure, holy, and godly lives. All good citizens of this country have not obeyed God, but you can be sure that all who have obeyed God are good citizens.

What is your attitude toward the laws of God and the laws of the land? Are you keeping these laws? Are you a good citizen of both Lord's kingdom and that of your country? They go together,



**associate  
editorial**

## **Unscriptural Names And Titles**

As a preacher of the gospel of Jesus, I am often called by different people by various distinct titles such as Reverend,



Pastor, and Padri. And often I have to plead with people, like Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14: 15), not to call me by such phrases which are due to God only. However, in the religious world, today most preachers exalt themselves with such titles and phrases. They feel proud when people call them reverend so and so or pastor or padri so and so. They have, in most cases, printed these titles on their stationaries and calling cards. I know of some who would be greatly displeased if people did not use these special titles before their names. Friend, perhaps you may be the one who owns such a title before your individual name. Or you may have been calling a preacher by such titles. But have you ever thought whether such titles and phrases are scriptural? Is it right to call a man by such titles? Now is the time to take a look at the scriptures and see what the Bible has to say on this matter:

**Reverend:** The only place, and nowhere else, in our English Bibles where the word reverend has appeared is in the 9th verse of Psalms 111. Here the Psalmist was praising God and he said, "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and REVEREND IS HIS NAME." Can the scripture make it more clearer than this? Surely any person can see this. Remember, God's name is reverend. The word *Reverend* literally means most fearful or highly exalted with awe and respect. And it is thus rightly translated in Hindi and Urdu versions of the Bible and likewise in most other languages too. Nowhere in the scripture is a man or a preacher ever called reverend. Calling a man reverend is therefore as unscriptural and as sinful as calling a man god. And those who wear this title are saying that they are equal to Almighty God whose name is reverend.

**Pastor:** This phrase is also used very loosely in the religious world today and usually the preacher is referred to as pastor. The word pastor literally means shepherd or overseer. In the Bible, however, many different terms are used for pastor such as elder or overseer (Acts 20 : 17), and bishop (Titus 1 : 7). In other words, these are used in the Bible

interchangeably. All of these words suggest the same kind of work, i. e., to watch over the flock or to oversee. But a notable thing is that just any preacher cannot be called pastor because any Christian can preach and teach the Bible on the basis of his study and knowledge of the Bible but all Christian preachers cannot meet the special qualifications to qualify to do the work of a pastor as written in the Bible. See 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1 : 5-9. Please read these scriptures in your Bible.

Today in the religious world the word pastor is used in terms of degrees, that is, any person who passes a so-called seminary course, or has a B. D. or Phd. degree is called a pastor. This is a misuse of this divine term. One cannot become a pastor on the basis of any degrees or knowledge of the Bible. But one must meet all of the qualifications as set forth in the scriptures to be selected to do this responsible work in a congregation. It is interesting to note that in the Bible we read of many preachers or evangelists such as Philip, Timothy, Barnabas, Paul and others and of a few pastors. But today it seems that there are more pastors than preachers! Yes, a pastor can also preach and teach but on the other hand a preacher cannot do the work of a pastor, just because he preaches. Just as a cook can also eat but just any person who eats cannot do the work of a cook. Also, remember that even though a person may possess all of the qualifications to do the work of a pastor, he must be chosen and appointed in a congregation with other pastors or elders. (Titus 1 : 5). Also note that the word pastor is not a degree but it indicates a certain job or work. As when we say mason we mean one who works on buildings. It is not his name or title but it indicates the kind of work he does. Now, if I have a friend, who works as a mason, when I introduce him to my other friends, I wouldn't introduce him as mason so and so. Then why should a man be introduced as pastor so and so? This within itself shows that people have chosen this title to exalt themselves over others.

**Father :** Not many comments are necessary against this

title because Christ himself said, "And call no *man* your Father upon the earth : for one is your Father, which is in heaven." (Matthew 23 :9). There were people in Christ's time, as in our day, who call their religious leaders father. But Christ said that we should not give honour and respect to a mere man which belongs to God only. He said for ONE is your Father *which is in heaven*. Thus, when people call other men father they do not only violate the command of Christ but they also make men equal with God.

**Padri :** In our Hindustani language all preachers are described by the people as *padri*. However, this word cannot be traced anywhere in the pages of the Bible. *Padri* is a word that comes from *Pidar* and literally means father. Therefore, it is as sinful as the other.

**Pope :** There is a man in Rome who is called pope. This word likewise is completely foreign to the Bible. The word *pope* is from old english or late latin and means *papa*, and in other words, father. And again Christ said, "Call no man your father". (Matthew 23 : 9).

As you can readily see, all these titles were chosen to exalt men above other people. But as we turn to the New Testament we see how they are in contradiction with Christ and his Apostles. For instance, when a certain man called Jesus "Good Master", we see Christ would not even accept that title of Good, and he said. "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, that is, God." (Luke 18 : 19). What an excellent example of humility! This is the kind of attitude that a preacher must have. Thus, when he is called as Reverend, Father, or *Padri*, etc., he should reply immediately, "Why callest thou me so?" The scriptures says that even though Christ was in the form of God but yet he made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant. (Philippians 2 : 7,8).

Often we receive letters from so-called preachers who introduce themselves on their stationary as Reverend or Pastor so and so. But as we open the inspired letters of the Apostles

of Jesus Christ we find them introducing themselves as "Paul a servant of Jesus." (Romans 1 : 17). And again, "Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1 : 1). Then again, "James a *servant* of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." (James 1 : 1). And again, "Simon Peter, a *servant* and an apostle of Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1 : 1). And yet again, "Jude the *servant* of Jesus Christ." (Jude 1). All of this shows their humility, unlike today's preachers who exalt themselves as doctors, pastors, reverend and right reverend. and with many other such unscriptural terms. Christ said, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." (Matthew 23 : 12).

## Reasons For Marital Failure

(3)

Mark H. Nunley

(4) WE ARE TOLD THAT SOME MARRIAGES FAIL BECAUSE OF A LACK OF CHARACTER IN THE MARRIAGE PARTNERS—

Some people find difficulty in being married because of the disposition of their mate. Some people are not happy and are not satisfied in any situation they find themselves in, whether single or married, and they are extremely difficult to live with. Let's notice some passages of Scripture that bear this out. Prov. 21:9 "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house." Prov. 27:15 "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." Prov. 22:24-25 "Make no friendship with an angry man: and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a share to thy soul."

Both men and women at times are brawling and contentious. Noting and no one seems to suite them. Nothing is just right. When you live in the same house with a grouch and a sore-head, needless to say, the marriage is going to have problems. It behooves both husbands and wives to have some character, to

learn to be patient and understanding and loving and kind at all times with their mate. A bad disposition is out of place in marriage, as well as being out of place at all time in the life of a Christian. When harsh words are spoken, people need to be able to swallow their pride and to say, "Darling, I'm sorry." "I was wrong." Or whatever else is appropriate for the situation. If people could learn to ask for forgiveness and could learn to forgive, a great many marriages would be saved.

#### (5) OTHER MARRIAGES ARE FAILURES BECAUSE OF FINANCIAL PROBLEMS—

We are told by the experts that difficulty over money is a very important factor in the problems and break up of many homes. It's like the old boy used to say, "If you ain't got nothin', and she ain't got nothin', then don't hurry to be wed. Because nothin' and nothin' still make nothin', and nothin', don't chew like bread." If a couple does not have a sufficient income to buy the groceries, to pay the bills, to buy the clothes, to provide housing, and everything else that they will need when they are on their own, then they had better wait until they find a better job or save enough money or something.

But let me hasten to say that usually the amount of money or size of the income is not really the problem. Some families who are the poorest are happiest, and some families who are the richest are the most miserable. It is not how much money we make: it is our attitude towards money that creates the problems (unless of course people get married without enough money to live on). If you have a mate in marriage that is not satisfied with anything but continually demands more and more that is too much materially minded, they will not be satisfied no matter how large the income. If you have people that are content to live within their income, that are not materially minded, but recognize the true values in life, then they'll be happy on a very small income. The attitude that people have towards money and things makes a big difference in whether or not a marriage is happy.

The Bible sets forth God's plan which will save us from the problems people have over money in just two verses. Phil. 4:11 "Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, there with to be content." Matt. 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." When people learn to live on and to be content with their income, and they place their priorities on spiritual values, the financial problem that so many have is going to disappear.

(6) THE FRAGMENTATION OF FAMILY LIVING IS THE CAUSE OF SOME MARRIAGE FAILURE—Far too many times today, families do nothing together. Far too many times couples do not have the needed time together. They are running here, there, and yonder at all hours of the day and night rubbing elbows with everone else's mate, and the result is broken homes. A lot of people can very well describe their home as the place you go when everything else is closed. But that does not make for good marriages, and it does not make for good home situations for children. Families and mates need to do things together, and to go places together. They need to be involved in things together instead of living such seperated lives with such separated interests. When homes are so fragmented, no wonder people decide to stop living under the same roof.

But this is not the way that God planned the home, obviously. And you can mark it down: those children who are the most likely to leave the church, and those parents who are the most likely to drop out of active service to the Lord, and those who are the most likely to begin looking around and to begin cheating on their mates, are those who do not have the close-nit relationship with their family in the home as they should. And one of the greatest things that families can do together is often left completely undone and that is doing the Lord's work together. Think of the real satisfaction that can come to a couple when they work together in visiting the sick, teaching and converting the lost to Christ, etc. together as a team. Think of the training and impression that this makes on the children when they go with Dad and Mom to lead people

to Christ. What better training in the nurture and admonition of the Lord could children get? So we need to pull our marriages and our homes closer together instead of letting them get farther and farther apart.

In article number four in this series, we will conclude this series of articles. Be sure to read the last article on marriage problems.

## **Faith And Its Object**

**B. Asirvadam**

Faith is the indispensable condition of security of life. Without having faith none can enjoy rest and peace of mind. The scripture says that the faithless are unstable like waves of the sea and chaff of the corn driven by wind.

Faith is defined as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Belief and confidence seem to be synonymous but faith is the realization of one's belief in life. The beliefs of people commonly reflect in their lives. It cannot be denied that man is actuated by his belief either intelligently guided or blindly goaded. So man, in reality is the substance of his belief or faith.

Of all the objects of faith none is more powerful than the conviction based on historic evidence that God intervened in our disordered human affairs in the person of Jesus to make it possible for every one to break away from the weary thralldom of sin and failure and to live a free and victorious life as sons of God.

Jesus, having appeared as the Son of the living God, became the rational and dynamic object of faith to prevail over even the death and gates of Hell. The kernel point in belief or faith is that the creator miraculously brought forth into the world a Saviour to redeem the humanity from devastation.

Philosophers say that the world is nothing but the objectifications and substantiation of the plans and purposes of God.

If so, the plan of God in pardoning the sinner through the shed blood of the Lamb is truly objectified in the crucifixion of Jesus as a living sacrifice. The incident on the Cross is not at all a life-losing of one but rather a life-giving act of God to draw the world to Himself objectively.

Things existent in the heart of God seem to have taken shape and form in due time to prove the varacity thereof. The incarnation of Jesus on earth, apart from its main purpose, serves to the atheist a double proof of the existence of God.

All Christian institutions express and incorporate the relation between the believer and the Saviour. Baptism has something to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus besides its objectivity of accepting the Lordship of Jesus for receiving the forgiveness of sins. By participation in baptism and the Lord's Supper the believer's affinity with the Saviour is confirmed concretely.

Great things pertained to the redemption of man, vindicated in the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus as a Scapegoat bearing the sins of the world, are alluded to the real culprit to be saved by the efficacy of faith as objective reality.

The fact that man is transformed by the object of his faith can be proved by the lives of those who believed Jesus as the Son of God and ultimate reality. It appears that man is so constituted that his faith has much influence over his conduct in life. Hence, the axiom holds good: "The worshipper will be assimilated to the object of his worship",

So, Let your object of faith be fair,

It has a vital part and share

In shaping thoughts and moulding fate,

God's system is so intricate.

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, Saviour of mankind and Lord of life stands out as the unique object of faith to be appropriated for the enjoyment of blessings of life in fellowship with men and God.





## Who Will Go To The Laccadive Islands ?

The Laccadive, as known through the years but recently renamed, are a group of islands off the western coast of South India out in the Arabian Sea. Along with these are the Minicoy and Amindivi Islands. They are owned by India with the headquarters being at Calicut, Kerala.

There is no commercial air service to these islands but boats and ships go back and forth on a regular basis. They are not open to foreigners and very little is ever said about them.

The inhabitants make their living and trading with the mainland. They have an Islamic background but other religions are also represented. An effort is being made to upgrade their society and mainland teachers, doctors, etc., are going in to assist with this.

If these islanders are to be reached with the gospel then Indian Christians must take it to them. Those in South India in particular are in a ideal area to begin to think in these terms.

We have raised the question with the thought that some member of the church reading this might accept this challenge. Can you go ? Will you go ? India cannot be fully evangelized until these people have heard the gospel because this is a part of India too.

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## AN APOLOGY

We apologize to our readers who had to pay some "due" Payment to the Postal Department on the Magazine (Vol. 6, No. 2).

We came to know about this fact as some copies were returned to us marked "DUE" and refused by some readers. The only reason, the Postal Department gave, was that we were not suppose to write "Book Post" on the Cover because we have now a "D" Number.

Also, we wish to thank to all those who honoured the last issue of the Bible Teacher, and paid the due to the Post Man.

## Pleasing God Or Self ?

**Mark H. Nunley**

In Romans 15.1-3 we find, "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each one of us please his neighbour for that which is good, unto edifying. For Christ also pleased not Himself but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

The standards that the people of the world live by are selfishness, uncleanness, wickedness, etc. They go about their lives seeking only to please self in everything not being too much concerned about pleasing anyone else—God included. Those folks that are carnally minded are only interested in what pleases themselves. But if we are to be spiritually minded, if we are to please the Lord, we must put the man of sin, the fleshly desires, to death in our lives so that we might please God in all things (Col. 3:5-11; Rom. 8:1-14).

And the Bible makes it clear to us that even Jesus did not please Himself while He was upon the earth. As our text said, "For Christ also pleased not Himself." Jesus said in John 6:38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine Own will, but the will of Him that sent me." Jesus purpose for coming was to do the will of the Almighty God and that is what Jesus did. The thought of dying on the cruel Roman cross wasn't a very pleasant or desireable thought to the Son of God, but He was willing to face it with the prayer, "Not My will, but Thine be done." And so as Jesus did the will of God and refused to please Himself as He lived as a man, He made the way of salvation possible for those that will obey him.

The Bible also makes it clear that the Holy Spirit did not please Himself (John 16:13-14; John 15:26; John 14:26). The Holy Spirit did not come to exalt his own personality and office, but rather the Holy Spirit came to reveal Jesus through the word that he inspired the apostles to teach. The Holy Spirit never once acted in self-interest, but rather He served the needs of mankind while pleasing God.

But the Bible also makes it clear that the apostles of Christ did not please themselves (I Cor. 9:19; II Cor. 12:15; Gal. 1:10). The apostles' number one concern in life was pleasing God in everything. And as they set out to please God and to serve God, they found themselves serving the needs of others.

In light of these things then, we certainly must understand that the Christian cannot please self in life. As our text said: Just as Jesus did not please himself neither should we please ourselves (Rom. 15:1-3). Christians must be sure that in everything they are pleasing the Lord and that they are serving the needs of other people (I Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:4; Matt. 10:39; Luke 17:33; I Tim. 6:17-19; Titus 3:8; I Thes. 5:15; Gal. 6:10). If those claiming to be Christians do not put the will of God first in their lives, they cannot possibly be found acceptable in the Lord's eyes. This idea that I can do as I please and that I have to answer to no one is a lie that will send a great many people to hell. Whenever what I think or what others think comes before what my God thinks, I stand condemned in the sight of the Almighty and Everlasting God in heaven.

And these things also should tell us that the non-Christian cannot please self if he or she wants to go to heaven. Jesus is saying to you if you are not a Christian, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) Jesus is also saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) So long as you reject God and refuse to become a Christian, so long as you refuse to obey the Lord to please yourself in what you do, you cannot possibly hope to go to heaven in the end. In order to be a Christian you must: Believe with all of your heart that Jesus is the Son of God, John 3:16. Repent of your sins (change the thinking about your life and decide that you will put away the former ways to serve the Lord), Acts 17:30. Confess your faith in Jesus as the Son of God, Rom. 10:9-10.

And be baptized into Christ to have your sins washed away, Acts 22:16.

Just who are we trying to please in life? Are we trying to please God or ourselves? Certainly we must be willing to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses and to follow the Lord in every thing if we want to go to heaven some day (Matt. 16:24).

## Christian Giving

### NO. 3

Vipul Rai

Many brethren make the excuse, "Oh, I will give more when I earn more. At present I make fifty Rupees a week and I give one Rupee to the Lord, but when I make five-hundred Rupees a week, I will give more." *If you do not give as you should, with the little that you have, then you will most certainly not give as you should even if you had much more.* "He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and..." (Lk. 16 : 10). If you later on earn ten times more and you give ten times more, you are still giving the same. You are giving the same percentage. In fact, you are not sacrificing all. Actually, when you have more, you need to sacrifice more.

Try missing a meal sometimes, so as to enable you to give more for the Lord's work. Try to walk sometimes, instead of catching the bus. Then you will be able to give more. There are numerous ways in which you can sacrifice and so give more. One good question to ask yourself before you give on Sunday is 'Am I going to miss out on something this week because of what I am about to give to the Lord today?' To sacrifice, means to give up something, or to suffer loss.

**2. Seek First.** Jesus said, "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (Matt. 6 : 33). You must put the Lord first in money matters as well. One good way of doing this is to distribute your income into separate envelopes. Mark the *first* envelope 'For

the Lord' and put the amount you decide to give into it. Then take other envelopes and mark them according to your other expenses, 'Rent', 'Electric bill', 'water bill', 'Children's school fees', etc. Learn to budget in this way. Don't first lay aside all you need for your monthly expenditures and then give your left-overs to the Lord. *The Lord does not want your left-overs.* You don't want the Lord's left-over blessings, do you? Then seek Him *first*. Before you think of anything else, think of the Lord. You can be assured that God will keep His promise. You seek Him first and He will take care of your other needs—rent, food, clothes etc. (...all these things shall be yours as well).

3. **Decently And In Order** (I Cor. 14 : 40). If you are paid each month, then purpose, *ahead* of time as to how much you are going to give each month. Then divide this amount into four equal parts and give that each week, according to the number of Sundays in the month. Don't be fumbling around in your pocket for your contribution on Sunday. Plan ahead of time. If due to unavoidable circumstances you cannot worship with the Church, then send your offering to the congregation. Or else give double the amount the next Sunday you go. If you are visiting another congregation, you need to send your usual contribution to the congregation you normally worship with. Otherwise you may upset the plans of the church. The church knows the approximate amount that comes in each week and she plans her work accordingly. If the amount you usually give is missing, it will ruin the systematic work of the Church. This does not mean that you cannot give to the church you are visiting with. Give to both if you like, but do not divide your usual contribution between the two, but give what you normally give to your congregation, and give an extra amount to the one you are visiting. Extra money will not upset the work but *less* will. Just as in everything else. Christians must *give* decently and in order.

4. **Not Out Of Abundance.** Jesus "sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums.

And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living' (Mk. 12 : 41-44). This poor widow put in the least, yet Jesus said that she put in more than all the others. The reason for this was that the others gave out of the *excess* that they had. They gave to the treasury what they themselves *did not need*. They did not sacrifice. On the other hand, this widow gave "out of her poverty". She "put in everything she had". In fact, she put in "her whole living". This widow could not afford to give that much, yet she did. She gave all that she had and all that she actually *needed* for her own living. She sacrificed. Brethren, it is not the amount that we give that actually counts, but *what we have left over after we give* that makes all the difference. How do you give?

**5. Not Comparatively.** Sometimes we may give more than many others are giving, and so sit back satisfied. However, we may *have* more and so the Lord naturally expects us to give more. It is possible for our *greater gift* to be *less acceptable* to the Lord, just as mark 12 illustrates. Each man must give as he has been "prospered".

**6. Liberally.** "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality;..." (Rom. 12 : 6-7). Let us give generously, not sparingly.

**7. In Secret.** Jesus said, "Beware of practising your piety before men in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may

be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matt. 6 : 1-4).

**8. Distinguish Between Needs And Wants.** There are many things that we *want*, but they are not necessarily the things we *need*. For example, I *need* a toothbrush, but I *want* an electric toothbrush. I *need* a razor but I *want* an electric shaver. I may *need* a bicycle but I *want* a motor-cycle. I may *need* a car but I *want* two cars. I may *need* two pairs of shoes but I *want* fifteen pairs. I may *need* a two-room flat but I *want* a seven-room bungalow. I may *need* meat, rice, water, chapattis and two eggs a day, but I *want* ice-cream, Coca-cola, cakes, candy and five eggs a day; and so on and on. Do you see the difference between *need* and *wants*? If we buy all we *want*, we obviously are not going to be good givers. There is no end to our *wants*. Let us be satisfied with fulfilled *needs*. Let us learn to sacrifice at least some of our *wants*, so as to enable us to give more.

On the other hand, let us not overdo our giving. Provide enough for your family. Do not starve your children in order to give more (I Tim. 5 : 8). Surely the Lord wants us to fulfil our needs, but be sure always to put Him FIRST.

**9. On The First Day Of The Week.** Paul writing to the church in Corinth said, "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up,..." (I Cor. 16 : 2). we are to give on the first day of the week, Sunday (Matt. 28 : 1), and not on any day we chose or each time we gather. Let us not go beyond the Lord's teaching.

**10. Refuse If Not Used As I Want?** Many Christians refuse to give because their offering is not being used as *they* think it should be used. The responsibility of using the Lord's money lies with the elders and deacons as they see to the spiritual and physical needs of the Church (Acts 20 : 28). You could of course offer your suggestions, but remember, they know best. If the church is young and does not have elders then this responsibility lies with the men of the congregation. We must give even if the church is not doing *all* that we think she should be doing. We cannot give only if it is being spent according to our desires.

**11. Give And It Will Be Given You.** Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you; good measures, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Lk. 6 : 38).

This verse expresses some wonderful thoughts. If we give, we will get. Not only this—but we will be given *good measure, pressed down, shaken together* and to top it all—it shall be given *running over*. Consider a bucket, full of candy. If you compress the candy, there will be room for more. If you shake the bucket the candy will sink lower, thus making still more room. This is how the Lord says He will give to us. He will give us a good measure of blessings. Then he will *press down* and add more blessings. Not only this, but He will *shake together* and still add more. Not only will God fill our 'bucket' with blessings, but He will give them to us *running over*. What a wonderful assurance.

A preacher was invited to preach to a poor congregation one Sunday. He took his son along. Later, the collection box was passed around and this preacher also put in his contribution. At the end of the service, the congregation decided to give the entire offering to the invited preacher so as to cover his travelling expenses etc. When the preacher opened the box, do you know what he found inside? Just the amount *he* had put in. His son looked up at him and said, "Dad, if you had put in more, you would have got more." It is true that we shall get as we give or reap as we sow.

"He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God; for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God. Under the test of this service, you will glorify God by your obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ, and by the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others." (II Cor. 9 : 10-13).



Yet we should not give just for the sake of receiving, but because we want to give. We want to help with the Lord's work and thus show how *grateful* we are for what the Lord has done for us. This is why we should give.

**12. Christian Privilege.** Giving is a Christian privilege (I Cor. 16 : 1-2). If we give because it is a privilege rather than a command, we will enjoy giving and we will always strive to give more and more. We give of a free-will (II Cor. 9 : 7). The Lord's church does not conduct money raising fetes, raffles or dinners. She does not participate in door-to-door appeals soliciting for money, nor does she expect non-members to contribute. *Giving is a Christian privilege.*

**Who Gives Us?** The Lord "gives you power to get wealth" (Deut. 8 : 18). If we realise this we will cheerfully give more. "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above" (Jas. 1 : 17). *All we have, belongs to the Lord anyway.* Can we not at least give a portion of it?

**The Lord Promises To Provide.** "God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4 : 19). Of course we must give, if we expect God to supply our needs. "No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly" (Psa. 84 : 11). Here the condition is "walk uprightly". God "who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?" (Rom. 8 : 32). God was willing to give us his only Son. Surely He will give us everything else that we need!

**Have Faith.** "Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:10-11). The Lord wants us to venture out in faith and GIVE. He says He will open the very windows of heaven and pour down an overflowing blessing upon us. Just as the Lord watched over the

Israelites during their forty years in the wilderness, so He will take care of YOU. Your vine will not fail to bear fruit. He will keep the insects from eating your crops. He will make sure that you will have plenty and to spare. If Malachi were writing to us today, he might have said that the Lord would make sure we were promoted to better paying jobs! we need to *venture out in faith*.

**Unscriptural Giving Means Incomplete Obedience.** As Jesus "was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honour your father and mother.' And he said to him, 'Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth.' And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said to him 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.' At that saying his countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions" (Mk. 10 : 17-22). This man had been keeping the commandments from his youth, but he had not yet learned to *give*. We may have believed in Christ a long time ago, repented of our sins, confessed Christ before men and been immersed in water for the forgiveness of our sins and may be obeying the Lord in our daily lives; yet if we are not giving as we should, then our obedience is incomplete (Jas. 2 : 10). We "lack one thing"—scriptural giving.

**Lay Up Treasure In Heaven.** Jesus said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matt. 6 : 19-20). Lay up your treasures in heaven and not on earth. Heaven offers you the highest rate of interest! Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands,

for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life" (Mk. 10 : 29-31). Cannot this verse be applied to our giving up our **money** for the Lord's sake? If we sacrifice our money for the Lord's cause, surely He will not let us go unrewarded. If we give scripturally, (as we have made up our mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion but cheerfully) the Lord can increase our offering a "hundredfold". For instance, one Christian may only be able to give ten paise and he gives that. In the Lord's sight this may become ten Rupees. Another may give one Rupee though he could easily afford to give more. In the Lord's sight this may remain one Rupee. Thus the person who gave ten paise actually gave more than the one who gave one Rupee. This is only an illustration to get the point across.

Remember this "hundredfold" does not necessarily mean that the Lord will multiply our money a hundred times. He may bless us in numerous *other* ways, some of which we may not even realise or understand or expect. Besides this, the Lord promises us *eternal* life! What else could we ask for? Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth because *earthly wealth will not bring you happiness.*

**Naked We Came, Naked We leave.** "For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world" (I Tim. 6 : 7). You will not be able to take a single paisa to heaven with you! All you can do is lay up treasure in heaven *while* you are living here on earth.

**Learn True Values.** How come you can afford to spend three Rupees for the movies each week, two Rupees for candy, four Rupees for novels, three Rupees for bettle-nut, but you give only one Rupee to the Lord each week? What is wrong? Learn true values in life. Learn what is worth spending money for and what is not.

**Account To God.** What if the Lord should ask you to account for each Rupee that you earned? What would you answer Him?

**Withhold And You Shall Suffer Want**, "Honour the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce: then your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will be bursting with wine" (Prov. 3:9-10). "One man gives freely yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. A liberal man will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered" (Prov. 11:24-25). Do you withhold what you should give? A gospel preacher was out preaching to some congregations when he got a letter from his wife stating that they were short of money at home. This is what he wrote back: 'Perhaps we are not giving enough'. What an example for us. If we are poor, perhaps it is because we are not giving enough! Let us give more and the Lord will also give us more, because He will then know that if we are giving liberally while we are poor, surely we will give a lot more when we are rich.

**Your Offering Can Save.** Lastly, remember that your one Rupee may save someone's soul, so just imagine how many souls your ten Rupees may save!

Beloved Brethren, I hope these Bible thoughts will help you to be 'Giving Christians'. In no way are these ideas complete or exhaustive. Please add to these thoughts, expand upon them, apply them practically to your lives and then *cheerfully give more*.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

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## विशेष सूचना

रेडियो श्री लंका से प्रसारित किए जा रहे संदेशों को अब एक आकर्षक पुस्तक के रूप में प्राप्त कीजिए "सत्य सुसमाचार", १७२ पृष्ठ की यह पुस्तक, जिसका मूल्य रु ३/- है, आप बिल्कुल मुफ्त प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। आज ही केवल २५ पैसे का डाक टिकट हमें भेजकर अपनी प्रति प्राप्त कीजिए।

# आपका जीवन कहां है ?

लेखक : सनी भाई

आज से लगभग दो हजार वर्ष पूर्व, प्रभु यीशु ने लोगों को उपदेश देकर कहा, "चौकस रहो, और हर एक प्रकार के लोभ से अपने आप को बचाए रखो: क्योंकि किसी का जीवन उसकी संपत्ति की बहुतायत से नहीं होता। उसने उन से एक दृष्टान्त कहा, कि किसी धनवान की भूमि में बड़ी उपज हुई। तो वह अपने मन में विचार करने लगा, कि मैं क्या करूं क्योंकि मेरे यहां जगह नहीं, जहां अपनी उपज इत्यादि, रखूं। और उसने कहा; मैं, यह करूंगा : मैं अपनी बखारियां तोड़कर उनसे बड़ी बनाऊंगा; और वहां अपना सब अन्न और संपत्ति रखूंगा : और अपने प्राण से कहूंगा, कि प्राण, तेरे पास बहुत वर्षों के लिये बहुत संपत्ति रखी है; चैन कर, खा, पी सुख से रह, परन्तु परमेश्वर ने उस से कहा; है मूर्ख, इसी रात तेरा प्राण तुझसे ले लिया जायगा : तब जो कुछ तूने इकट्ठा किया है, वह किसका होगा?" और यीशु ने कहा "ऐसा ही वह मनुष्य भी है जो अपने लिये धन बटोरता है, परन्तु परमेश्वर की दृष्टि में धनी नहीं।" (लूका १२:१५-२१)।

वास्तव में आज संसार के लगभग सभी लोगों की तुलना उस व्यक्ति से की जा सकती है। उसने संसार के धन व संपत्ति को अपने जीवन में इतना अधिक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान दे दिया था कि वह सोचता था कि उसका धन व संपत्ति ही उसका जीवन है। परन्तु वास्तव में वह यह भूल गया था कि किसी का जीवन उसकी संपत्ति की बहुतायत से नहीं होता। वह मनुष्य इस बात से अनजान था कि अपनी और अन्य लोगों की दृष्टि में चाहे वह कितना भी धनवान क्यों न हो परन्तु परमेश्वर की पवित्र दृष्टि में वह निर्धन और दरिद्र था, क्योंकि परमेश्वर किसी को भी सांसारिक धन व संपत्ति की बहुतायत से धर्मी नहीं ठहराता। पृथ्वी पर कोई भी मनुष्य अपने धन व संपत्ति के भरोसे पर अनन्त जीवन में प्रवेश नहीं पा सकता। न किसी का धन किसी को मरने से बचा सकता है। परमेश्वर का वचन कहता है, हर एक मनुष्य के लिये एक बार मरना और फिर न्याय का होना नियुक्त है। (देखिए इब्रानियों ९:२७)। और बाइबल में यह भी लिखा है कि अधर्मी लोग अधोलोक में अनन्त दण्ड

पाएंगे तथा धर्मी जन स्वर्ग में प्रवेश करेंगे । (मत्ती २५:४६) । बाइबल हमें यह भी स्पष्टता से बताती है कि किसी भी व्यक्ति का न्याय उसके धन व सम्पत्ति के विषय में न होगा परन्तु हर एक व्यक्ति अपने-अपने भले-बुरे कामों का बदला जो उसने देह के द्वारा किए होंगे पाएगा । (देखिए २ कुरिन्थियों ५:१०) ।

पृथ्वी पर तो लोग अपने धन के भरोसे पर किसी भी स्थान पर जा सकते हैं । अक्सर धनी लोग ऊँचे और बड़े स्थानों पर बैठाए जाते हैं । परन्तु स्वर्ग में धन की बहुतायत का कोई भी महत्त्व न होगा । इसी विषय में, प्रभु यीशु ने एक और दृष्टान्त देकर कहा, “एक धनवान मनुष्य था जो बैजनी कपड़े और मलमल पहिनता और प्रति-दिन सुख विलास और धूम-धाम के साथ रहता था । और लाजर नाम का एक कंगाल घावों से भरा हुआ उसकी डेवढ़ी पर छोड़ दिया जाता था, और वह चाहता था कि धनवान की मेज पर की जूठन से अपना पेट भरे; बरत कुत्ते भी आकर उसके घावों को चाटते थे । और ऐसा हुआ कि वह कंगाल मर गया, और स्वर्गदूतों ने उसे लेकर इब्राहीम की गोद में पहुँचाया; और वह धनवान भी मरा; और गाड़ा गया । और अधोलोक में उसने पीड़ा में पड़े हुए अपनी आँखें उठाई, और दूर से इब्राहीम की गोद में लाजर को देखा । और उसने पुकार कर कहा, हे पिता इब्राहीम, मुझ पर दया करके लाजर को भेज दे, ताकि वह अपनी उँगली का सिरा पानी में भिगोकर मेरी जीम को ठन्डी करे, क्योंकि मैं इस ज्वाला में तड़प रहा हूँ । परन्तु इब्राहीम ने कहा, हे पुत्र स्मरण कर, कि तू अपने जीवन में अच्छी वस्तुएं ले चुका है, और वैसे ही लाजर बुरी वस्तुएं : पर अब वह यहां शान्ति पा रहा है और तू तड़प रहा है ।” (लूका १६:१६-२५) ।

अपनी मृत्यु के बाद आप कौन से स्थान पर होंगे इसका निश्चय आप स्वयं कर सकते हैं । परन्तु याद रखिए, किसी का जीवन उसकी संपत्ति की बहुतायत से नहीं होता । क्या आप बता सकते हैं, आपका जीवन कहां है? क्या आपका जीवन सम्पत्ति में है ? हो सकता है आपका जीवन आपके परिवार में हो, या फिर किसी जायदाद में हो, या फिर संसार की किसी अन्य वस्तु में हो जिस से आप प्रेम करते हैं । मैं आप से फिर पूछता हूँ, आपका जीवन कहां है ? क्या आप बता सकते हैं, “यदि मनुष्य सारे जगत को प्राप्त करे और अपने प्राण (आत्मा) की हानि उठाए, तो उसे क्या लाभ होगा? और मनुष्य अपने प्राण (आत्मा) के बदले में क्या देगा?” (मरकुस ८:३६,३७) ।



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