

THE BIBLE TEACHER

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Abortion

One of the great moral issues of our time is that of abortion. There are those who favour it and others who strongly oppose it. Those who are for it are in the majority because these are the people of the world who do not see any moral or religious implications. To them an abortion means the ending of an unwanted pregnancy, or of not having to live with the shame of immoral conduct that produced the pregnancy, and it is also seen by them as a solution to the world's growing population problem. Those who reject these ideas do so on the basis that human life is being destroyed. When a human abortion is performed we are not talking about a vegetable or even an animal, but we are dealing with the life of a human being. We believe that a human being begins at conception, and although it remains in the mother's womb for some nine months, still it is a human life and therefore a human being. From its earliest days of existence it takes on the form and features that it will maintain through pregnancy, birth, childhood days, and even throughout its adult life. The only difference is that it continues to develop, to grow in size, and to become more mature. To abort, to terminate, to destroy that life in reality becomes an act of murder just as much so as if one terminated, destroyed, or

murdered a baby after its birth. Therefore it becomes a moral issue and a religious offence since the Bible and most other religious books condemn murder. (Galatians 5 : 19-21).

Abortion is not something new. It has been going on for centuries, practiced mainly among those whose alternative was to have a child out of wedlock. Because of the nature of this immorality, the woman involved was the one who usually had to bear the shame of having the child and suffering the rejection that went with it ; or she had to find some one to perform an abortion ; which was usually done under unsanitary conditions, with a doctor or some woman assistant who was trying to make some money even if it had to be done in opposition to the law and moral and religious practices of the day. Many lives were lost through this practice. Of course those today who are in favour of legalized abortion argue that women are going to have abortions anyway and if they are not legalized then they will continue to be done as they were in the past. Perhaps so, but not on the scale that they are being performed now. Likewise, murder continues, as well as robbery, drinking, taking drugs, and many other such things, but they are suppressed because there are laws that oppose such wicked practices. Where would the world be today, if there were no laws to deal with these immoral acts ? Also, as earlier indicated, abortions are being performed now for a variety of reasons and with no shame being attached to them. This is because there has been a change made in the law on this practice and it only shows that when the law finally legalizes something, that was formerly forbidden, that this does not better the situation but only magnifies it.

It is also argued today that the rich have always been able to have abortions with good doctors and the best of facilities. The argument continues that to legalize abortion, and with the help of the government, enables the poor also to have abortions under better conditions, and through this process many lives can be saved. While this is being reasoned, these same people overlook all the lives that are being lost through the abortion itself.

In past years we have pointed to those times in history when some tyrant went on the rampage and killed babies, young people, and adults by the hundreds and thousands and even millions, and we have always considered such murderers as being calloused, heartless, and animalistic—and rightly so. We have pointed to such examples as the time when Herod sent out a decree that all children, two years of age and younger in Bethlehem, should be destroyed. (Matthew 1: 2-18). This was done in an effort to kill Jesus. Herod was jealous because he had heard that Christ would be king one day, so he was afraid that he would eventually take his position. Naturally, Christ did not come into the world to be an earthly king but a spiritual king. Herod did not know this and consequently he acted as he did. But because of what he did, even though he was not successful in killing Jesus, we still think of him as a very wicked man. There are many other examples that we might use here to illustrate our point, but the one most prominent in our minds involves Hitler during the Second World War. Because of this one man more than six million men and women and children were exterminated. This does not include all of the people who were killed as a result of the war that he brought on the world. We think of him as a horrible and cruel man. And he was all of that, that even more. But what these men did against humanity is nothing in comparison to what has been going on during the last few years. Supposedly, the civilized governments around the world have been legalizing the abortion of unborn human beings by the millions. Doctors and nurses that we have always respected as being those who are working to save lives and to help us human beings to have longer lives have suddenly given their time, efforts, and talents over to the practice of systematically destroying human life. Hospitals and clinics and facilities that were previously used to care for the sick and the dying have now become wholesale warehouses of putting unborn humans to death. Medicines and chemicals that were at one time used to prolong life are now being used to destroy it. Isn't the very thought of all of this revolting? Isn't it horrible, unjust, and immoral? This, in a word, is

murder. Not only so, but mass murder is being performed in our communities, cities, and countries around the world.

Can you imagine a woman being willing to have her own unborn child murdered? If she would permit this with her unborn child, what about the child that has been born? She would no doubt argue that these are two separate cases, but this would be believed only where the individual has been brainwashed to accept the one but to reject the other. But if a woman can be persuaded to believe that it is alright for her to abort her unborn baby, could she not be persuaded to do away with the life of her born child? No doubt she could. And eventually we will be told no doubt that certain crippled, deformed, and insane children should be exterminated for their own good and for the betterment of society. Then it may be that we will be told that the lives of the aged and sickly should be permanently removed. But you might reason that you would be opposed to all such as that. May I ask you this question: How many are really opposed to abortion today? You can see how one thing may very well lead to another. But even if it never went any further than abortion, that still does not justify abortion.

Do you know What happens when a abortion is done? These small unborn human beings are literally killed in the most horrible ways. Many are done through the use of a saline infusion that produce convulsions, heaving, strangulation, and suffocation, burning the baby terribly. Another kind is done with a sharp cutter that is inserted into the womb where the baby is literally chopped to pieces. The "garbage" is then removed from the womb and flushed down a commode or removed in the daily garbage pick-up. In earlier pregnancies, a suction method is used, in which the baby is pulled limb from limb with a strong suction that tears it from the womb. Again the dismembered human being is disposed of as garbage. Even the animals of our day have more protection than this. If such abortions were being performed on many of the animals, and it became known what was being done, and how it was being done, there would go up a cry from humane societies all

over the world and probably this would bring a halt to such a practice. But not so with unborn human life. This may be an indication of how far we have gone down the road in our loss of respect for human life and for the moral principles of our day.

Many of you would say that those terrible things may be happening in America, England, and other Western countries of the world but it would never happen in Asia and especially here in India. Don't deceive yourselves, my friends. It is happening right here in New Delhi and across India. You may not know about it, but it is going on nevertheless. You may want to know what you can do about it. You can be opposed to it yourself, and you can talk to others and let them know that you are opposed to it. You can write your government representatives that you oppose such a practice. To sit and do nothing is the best way to be assured that it will continue.

My friends, think of the many great people that the world might have already been deprived of because of abortion. Some of those aborted might have been future Prime Ministers or Presidents. Some might have been doctors and teachers. Some might have been great scientists and discoverers. But ask yourself : What if I had been aborted ? It is true that there may be cases of where the life of the mother is at stake and a choice has to be made between the life of that mother and the life of the baby, but this would be the exception. A parallel crisis of choice would be the removal of a leg or an arm. There have been times when this had to be done to save one's life but it never arbitrarily done just for the sake of doing it. Neither should the life of an unborn human be aborted just because someone happened not to want a child. This would be murder, a heinous crime against the child, against society, and against God the creator of all things. Please get your thinking straight on these questions and, while there is yet time, become a supporter of human life because eventually it could be a means of saving your own life.



**associate
editorial**

AFTER DEATH, WHAT ?

Didn't you ask this question some time ? Many people want to know if there is life beyond the grave, that is, if man continue to exist after his death. What happens to a man's soul, if man has a soul ?

There are some who teach that man does not have a soul, but on the contrary, man himself is a soul, and therefore when he dies he ceases to exist. According to them man is no better than a dog or a horse after his death.

However, the Bible teaches that man has a soul, and that, as a soul or spirit he will live forever eternally. At one place we read, when Christ was going to pray, he told his disciples; "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death : tarry ye here, and watch with me." (Matthew 26 : 38). According to 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Christ will take vengeance on them, punish them, who know not God and obey not the gospel of Christ. But it would not be possible if they did not exist at his coming. At Matthew 16:26, Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" Here we see that man has a soul and that he can lose his soul. Talking, about the wicked people Jesus said, in Matthew 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Here we see, both the wicked and the righteous are going to exist in a particular place for ever. The word everlasting and eternal are the same, that is, forever. Moreover, the wicked, Jesus said, shall go away into everlasting punishment. One cannot be punished if he does not exist. And since the wicked are going to be punished eternally, therefore they will exist there for ever. Also, at

Matthew 10:28 we read, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Thus we see, Man is not a soul, but he has a soul, and he can lose his soul and face everlasting punishment, if he does not believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Contrary to the doctrine of annihilation which teaches man cease to exist after death, another religious group maintain the doctrine of purgatory. According to them, "Purgatory is the state or abode of temporary punishment for those souls, who having died in the state of grace, are not entirely free from venial sins or have not yet fully paid the satisfaction due to their transgressions. It is a state...Although the Holy scripture (The Holy Bible) does not expressly mentions purgatory, it presupposes it." They maintain one must after death enter this state to be purified in the fire of Purgatory until all evil is burned out. The Catholic church with whom the doctrine of Purgatory originate teaches its members to offer masses and alms on behalf of their dead which would help them to get out of the Purgatory. However, the Bible teaches that we have full and complete salvation in Jesus Christ, and through faith and obedience to him our sins are forgiven and washed away by the blood of Christ; and those who are in Christ, and die in Christ, are blessed and they go into heaven into life eternal. Notice what the scripture says in the following verses.

Christ, before his death, at the time he instituted the Lord's Supper, referring to the cup of the fruit of the vine, said, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28). After Christ's death and resurrection when Peter was preaching the gospel of salvation to a multitude of people upon the day of Pentecost and when they asked Peter, what they ought to do to be saved, Peter told 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 2:38). Apostle John says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his

Son cleanseth us from All sins." And "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness." (1 John 1:7,9). Apostle Paul says, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in heaven." (2 Corinthians 5:1). And at Revelation 14:13 the record says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them."

So we gather from what we have seen so far, that there is no such thing as Purgatory taught or even presupposed in the scriptures. Christ died for all men, and he shed his blood for the forgiveness of sins for all men. Those who humble and submit themselves in obedience to the Lord's command and continue to walk in his light, keeping his commandments, they have the assurance that the blood of Christ cleanseth them from all their sins and unrighteousness. They enter the building of God, heaven, as Apostle Paul said. And they are blessed, and rest in peace, after death, as Apostle John says, and not enter into a so-called fire of Purgatory.

Also the belief of death and rebirth is based on man's theory, and there is no scriptural authority for this. According to this, some believe, after death man is reborn again, and this cycle of death and rebirth continue as long until man enters into Nivarna, that is, attain salvation. It is not necessary that a man after his death should be born as a human being, according to this belief, but he may be born as an animal of any kind, depending the kind of life he has lived before in his previous life or birth and the kind of works he has done. But the Bible does not teach this at all. The Bible says, "IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO DIE; BUT AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT. (Hebrews 9:27).

The Bible very clearly teaches that man is both body and soul. It teaches that body is the part of man which God created in the beginning out of dust of the earth and the spirit he received from God. The record says, "And the Lord God

formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7). At death the Bible says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Therefore the Bible warns man in these words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:13,14). 'And in 2 Corinthians 5:10 we have this record, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Seeing all of this, the important question that comes before every one of us is: "Am I prepared to meet God in the Judgment?" And there is only one way for us to prepare ourselves to meet God in Judgment, and that we have already noticed which is "FEAR GOD, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: FOR THIS IS THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN."

Brain Damage Starts With The First Drink

EVERY time a person takes a few drinks of an alcoholic beverage—even a few beers or cocktails at a social function—he permanently damages his brain, and probably his heart and liver also.

This is the startling conclusion of an important new medical discovery made by a team of scientists headed by Dr. Melvin H. Knisely, Professor of Anatomy at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

For years it has been known that alcoholics suffer serious brain damage, but most doctors have dismissed this as simply one of the end effects after years of hard drinking, along with liver damage, kidney malfunction, and heart disease often seen in alcoholics at autopsy.

Dr. Knisely has now demonstrated that this brain damage

is not merely an end effect, but occurs progressively from the first cells destroyed by the very first drink a person takes, and that the damage accumulates relentlessly with every drink he takes thereafter at any time or place.

For the first time, Dr. Knisely's research indicates how the damage occurs and how the ingestion of an alcoholic beverage triggers the mechanism that causes the damage.

From this standpoint it could be one of the most significant medical discoveries of this generation and one which urgently needs to be communicated to the public because of the present-day widespread tolerant acceptance of social drinking in our society.

Dr. Knisely's discovery is that the circulating red blood cells become agglutinated when alcohol is imbibed, and that this seriously interferes with blood circulation through the small arteries, capillaries, and veins. "Agglutination" means that the red blood cells become sticky and adhere together in wads until the blood becomes, literally, a "sludge"—which is the medical term used. Oxygen can come to nerve cells only by way of the blood.

As sludge resists passage of the blood through the capillaries, anoxia (absence of oxygen) occurs in nearby tissues. Computer analysis shows that anoxic volumes of nervous tissue develop even when the blood is moving. Ultimately, as the level of alcohol increases, many small vessels become plugged, and blood flow through them stops entirely. No more oxygen can be brought to the plugged area.

Neurons, the tiny "thinking" cells of the brain, require a high oxygen supply continuously, and thus are particularly susceptible to anoxia. Deprived of oxygen, they stop their normal functioning. If complete oxygen deprivation lasts for three minutes or more, they are seriously damaged. If it persists for fifteen to twenty minutes, the damage is permanent—the nerve cell, or "neuron," dies.

Brain cells, as medical men have long known, do not multiply and are irreplaceable. Thus, successive damage done to the brain accumulates throughout life. Many people who live long enough show the effects of brain cell loss in the well-recognized

symptoms of advanced age, failure of memory, reduction of sensual acuity, loss of the power to reason clearly.

Every time a person takes a few drinks he hastens this process, damaging his brain by cutting off oxygen supply to enormous numbers of small areas of brain tissue, thereby killing large numbers of brain cells prematurely.

Dr. Knisely, like other teachers of anatomy, had long observed that chronic alcoholism does a frightening amount of damage to the brain. Recently he said that "the brains of skid row drunks are usually worthless for use in teaching the structure of the normal brain to medical students."

Published recently in the little-known but highly respected medical periodical *Microvascular Research*, the paper by Dr. Knisely and his associates, Drs. Herbert A. Moskow and Raymond C. Pannington, may stand as one of the monumental contributions of all time to medical study of alcoholism because of its implications, devastating to the widespread theory that drinking in moderation is harmless.

The report deserves and is receiving widespread careful study.

The finding that alcohol agglutinates the blood cells, thereby depriving brain cells of oxygen, contributes to understanding the development of large numbers of chronic alcoholics in such countries as France. It is not uncommon for French families to give quite young children small amounts of wine instead of water, or with their meals.

Many children become addicted to wine drinking early in life. Once the children are addicted it is difficult to get them out of the habit. Consequently, for many years they accumulate damage to the various parts of the brain, the spinal cord, and nerves. France today has one of the most severe chronic alcoholism problems of any civilized country.

The studies by Drs. Moskow, Pennington, and Knisely are built upon the solid scientific foundation laid by the late Dr. C.B. Courville in his book entitled, *Effects of Alcohol on the Nervous System of Man*, most recently published by the San Lucas Press, Los Angeles, California, 1966. Dr. Courville was a famous neuropathologist, who studied in great detail the

central nervous systems of persons who died after various periods, up to years, of drinking alcoholic beverages. Also, which is very important, as controls he studied the nervous systems of people who probably had not been drinking long and perhaps not even very much, but who were killed in car accidents while they were partially under the influence of alcohol.

He searched all the medical literature and brought together in great detail the fundamental knowledge of many investigators on this subject.

Dr. Courville's book proves with detailed pictures that almost every part of the human central nervous system is badly damaged as a result of drinking enough alcohol over a long period of time. The cerebral cortex, which is indispensable for thinking, is badly damaged; the cerebellum, which is concerned with the coordination of various muscle groups and with balancing, is badly affected. Nerve cells in each of the above die, and are gone, and in many instances the remaining cells show visible evidence of alterations from the normal.

Also, the peripheral nerves, both sensory, which carry message toward the central nervous system, and motor, which carry messages away, show physical signs of damage. All of this knowledge has been available but has been widely scattered in medical literature for a long time.

Some of the effects of alcohol on the brain are shown in a 16mm motion picture entitled "Verdict at 1:32," obtainable from the publishers of *Listen* magazine. In this film Dr. Courville personally shows in his laboratory some of the effects of alcohol on nervous tissue. These effects are obvious to people who are familiar with the types of brain damage.

Dr. Knisely says that he once was a moderate social drinker, and earlier as a medical student had no objection to the custom of an occasional glass. He knows something about hangovers firsthand.

"I used to be a moderate drinker, but I have quit," he says. When he found in the laboratory the evidence of alcohol's effect on the brain, he felt it was not rational for any human being to continue using it, even for the sake of being a good fellow at a

party. "There is only one way to be safe from the danger of alcohol," he declares ; "that is to quit it cold."

The studies by Dr. Knisely and colleagues were carried out by focusing microscopes into the side of the white of the eye, which permits direct study of a statistically valid sample of the moving blood coming up from the heart through the aorta and then through all the arteries going into the head. In more than 200 health normal persons who had not been drinking it was found that blood cells are separate from each other, that they do not stick together, but flow into and through narrow vessels easily and rapidly. The researchers then studied thirty persons brought to a private sanitarium because of alcoholic involvement, and correlated the concentration of alcohol in the blood of each patient with the physical condition of his blood, the rate of flow of blood through narrow vessels, and the number of vessels which were plugged.

Every person who had alcohol in his blood had red cells sticking together in wads. Even patients with as little as .025 percent alcohol in the blood showed agglutination of blood cells. Persons are not considered too drunk to drive in England until they have .08 percent alcohol in the blood ; in some other countries it is .05 percent ; in some states of the United States the legal threshold of intoxication is .15 percent. As concentrations of alcohol in the blood increased above .025 percent, the blood cell wads were larger, went through the narrowest vessel more slowly, and finally plugged visible vessels. Separate experiments showed that when agglutinated blood is visible in the vessels of the eye, it is also present all over the body.

To return to the writings of Dr. Courville, among other things he pointed out that at autopsy "the brain of the alcoholic is often edematous (saturated with watery fluid, like an overfilled sponge), frequently it contains many congested small vessels, areas of atrophy in the cerebral convolutions (nervous tissue wasted away), and multiple hemorrhages from small vessels into the substance of the brain itself."

Dr. Courville stirred the medical profession by suggesting that many deaths attributed to falls, automobile accidents, and even murder, are not caused by those conditions at all but are directly due to alcoholism. A blow to the head from which a

normal man would recover will kill an alcoholic because his brain will hemorrhage so readily. In fact, spontaneous hemorrhages (strokes) are one of the major causes of deaths among alcoholics, one of the principal reasons they live an average of only fifteen years after becoming problem drinkers.

Dr. Courville suggested that, although severe damage is not seen in its grossest form until after many years of drinking, lesser damage is already present in young people in their twenties who have been drinking but a short time. Dr. Knisely agrees.

Dr. Otto Haug of the psychiatry department at Frederikstad, Norway, has demonstrated damage to the brain in alcoholics, using a quite different method in his studies. He takes X rays of the heads of living patients under special conditions. These have shown that in alcoholics there is a decreased amount of brain tissue remaining.

His method, called pneumoencephalography (PEG), consists of withdrawing a small amount of spinal fluid under a local anesthesia and replacing this with air, which passes harmlessly into the head. The air remains for a short time until it is absorbed, and there displaces the fluid in the cavities of the brain and makes the outlines of these cavities visible to X rays. There is a special cavity in each side of the brain and one in the middle. The X rays show that in people who have been drinking, the cavities are enlarged. This could only be true if the volume of the brain tissue itself has decreased. Surprisingly, people who had been mainly beer drinkers showed as much damage as persons who had been drinkers of whiskey, and often more.

Dr. Haug urged that the PEG test be made a part of the diagnosis of every person admitted for treatment for the alcohol syndrome, since it is impossible to know how much the patient's brain is damaged. He pointed out that many patients had so damaged their brains that conventional psychotherapy could be of little value, that such patients could only be institutionalized for their own protection and for that of society.

All of which is important for the people of our modern society. A high percentage of the persons admitted to mental hospitals in the United States have histories of moderate to

long-term drinking. M. Gorman in the book *Every Other Bed* (World Publishing Company, New York, 1956) pointed out that one half of all hospital beds in the United States are permanently occupied by mental patients. As soon as one mental patient leaves, another arrives. The percentage of psychiatric patients who have histories of alcoholism is not exactly known, but estimates run as high as 25 to 33 percent.

In any case there can be no doubt that the consumption of alcohol is a large contributing factor to direct damage to brains and to deviations from normal emotions and behaviour, thus contributing to the enormous numbers of psychiatric patients and the incredible total costs of hospital care.

Just Christians

You can be just a Christian! Does this sound strange? With about 300 or more religious bodies which exist today it might appear impossible to be a Christian without being part of a denomination. It is not only possible, but there are actually millions of "Christians only" in this world.

The churches of Christ

Who are these people who seek to be only Christians? The congregations of which they are a part are usually known as "churches of Christ". This term is not used in a sectarian sense, but is intended to denote their desire to belong to Christ's church. The Bible says, "All the churches of Christ greet you." (Rom. 16 : 16.) However, it is just as correct to describe the church of which we read in the Bible as "the church of God" (1 Cor. 1 : 2), "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12 : 27), or "the household of faith" (Gal. 6 : 10). These and similar Biblical phrases are not proper names, but descriptive expressions which show how the church is related to Christ and His Father.

Individually Christ's followers are known as "Christians" in the Bible. "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11 : 26.) "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." (1 Peter 4 : 16.) Never does a human name prefix this God given name. Paul was one of the greatest of all Christians, but

he did not want disciples to be called "Paulites" or "Paulite Christians". (1 Cor. 1 : 10-17.)

A Distinctive Plea

Churches of Christ have a distinctive plea. Of course, in many ways we agree with others striving to follow Christ. We believe in the divine inspiration of the entire Bible and that it is sufficient to guide us in all matters of faith ; in the death of Jesus Christ and His atonement for our sins ; and that after death all men will be rewarded or punished in another life for the way they have lived here. And with all people of real religious conviction we insist that the moral principles of Jesus are absolute truths to be exemplified in the personal righteousness of the child of God.

The Bible ONLY

However, we not only believe that the scriptures are inspired, but also are convicted that the New Testament must be our ONLY guide in religious faith. God's Word frequently warns us against changing the divine message. (See Gal. 1 : 6-9.) We, therefore, have no creed or catechism to present, but accept Christ as our only creed and the Bible as our only guide book. In this way we are never prevented by an erroneous creed from accepting any truth which may be learned from God's Word.

Restoration Rather Than Reformation

It is obvious to thinking people that the religious world is badly divided. Great leaders such as Martin Luther and John Calvin sought to correct erroneous teachings and practices. But the reformers often started at different points and thus arrived at different conclusions. Division rather than unity has resulted.

Churches of Christ, on the other hand, plead for the restoration of apostolic Christianity rather than a reformation of existing religious bodies. Since all can agree that the early church was right, we should also be able to agree that we cannot be wrong if we succeed in reproducing that church today in every essential part. While many things have changed in the twentieth century, the teachings of Jesus and His apostles have not. Truth is absolute and unchangeable. God's Word is truth (John 17 : 17), and can save today as surely as in the first century if applied in the same way. "The truth will make you free." (John 8 : 32.)

Should you visit one of the churches of Christ you will find it worshipping God as did the early disciples—"in spirit and in truth." (John 4 : 24.) You will observe that it partakes of the Lord's supper, or communion, every Sunday. This is because we are following the example of the early Christians who assembled every first day of the week to "break bread". (See Acts 20 : 7.) Likewise, in every other way churches of Christ seek to reproduce New Testament Christianity—in organization, in work, and in other areas of teaching.

How To Be Just A Christian

In few places is there so much disagreement as in answering the Bible question, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16 : 30.) Here again churches of Christ reply by going to the scriptures for their answer. The Bible teaches that Christ shed His blood for our sins (Matt. 26 : 28), and that without it we cannot be saved. (Heb. 9 : 22.) But what does Jesus require of us if we are to appropriate that sacrifice? Those who crucified Him were told to "know assuredly" or believe that Jesus is "both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2 : 36.) When these people on the day of Pentecost asked for further information, they were told, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2 : 38.) Today we teach as did the apostles then that for Christ's blood to remove our sins we must as believers in Him repent and be baptized. As we are thus saved from our sins, the Lord adds us to His body, the church. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2 : 47.) "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12 : 13.) The saved, then, are in the body or church of Christ; one cannot be saved and be outside this body.

The early disciples were Christians only. Although we live 1900 years later, we too can be Christians only if we will follow the same teachings given to these first followers of Jesus. Christ said, "The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8 : 11.) Just as surely as a planted acorn will produce only an oak, so God's Word will produce Christians and nothing more. We invite your earnest consideration to this plea.

FEELINGS

By Jack Exum

The most obvious difference in the mind of man and the computers that he creates is his emotions, we call "feelings".

Paul writes, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies (feelings), kindness (feelings), humbleness of mind (feelings), meekness (feelings), long suffering (feelings) forbearing one another (feelings) and forgiving one another (feelings) if any man have a quarrel against any (feelings) even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye (feelings) and above all these things, put on charity (love-feelings) which is the bond of perfectness" (words in brackets, mine, JHE) (Colossians 3 : 12-14).

Feelings Are Limited

Some religious "zealots" allow their feelings to become extreme and authoritarian and some of us have reacted to this by subduing and denying our feelings to the opposite extreme.

Many equate quietness with reverence and outward polish as inward praise. The old joke, "You can't praise God in here" may apply all too well to an average assembly of the saints. In doing away with all "shouts of joy", "hallelujahs" "and verbal amens" as evident signs of "pentecostialism", our extreme silence may become only a counter-balance to their extreme noise. Both extremes, when artificial are empty.

Feelings—Truth

Feeling good does not make us good. Feeling right does not make us right. Truth belongs to God and has been revealed, not through feelings but by revelation. Yet on the other hand, there is no virtue in not feeling anything.

Feelings do not precipitate truth, nor confirm truth. A good conscience may be misleading (Acts 23 : 1), and many who are lost, "feel right !" Feelings do not lead—they follow. They do not act—they re-act. So when truth is known through evidence feelings should surround, embrace and accept truth.

"And they went on their way rejoicing" is recorded again

and again as an aftermath of conversion. "By grace—through faith—in Christ—praise God!" We have our chronology right—our theology right—but somewhere along the way we seemed to have misplaced our "DOXOLOGY".

When the Eunuch went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8 : 39), this was after the preaching. The rejoicing followed the believing, and the obedience to the command of baptism. No one rejoicing in dying and the burial scene is hardly the place for "shouts of joy". It's that RESURRECTION—the beginning of the NEW LIFE. This is where the "Hallelujah Chorus" begins.

Knowing truth, believing truth, obeying truth brings that deep GUT FEELING (Bowels of mercies) and knows no other way of expressing itself than to praise God in every waking moment.

Spiritual computers—automatic worshippers—praiseless laughless, joyless, Christians ? That's not us, surely brethren, that's not us!

To the contrary, every believer is a PRIEST OF GOD (I Peter 2.5), dwelling in the TEMPLE OF GOD (our bodies, I Corinthians 6:19-20), offering a complete and unrestrained sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1).

This is our "reasonable service". This is our "spiritual worship" (Romans 12:2).

Amen!

ATTENTION READERS !

In the past several month we have acquired many new readers. If you are among these "WELCOME !" Your name and address was given to us either by you or a friend who thought you might be interested in reading this magazine.

The purpose of this magazine is to help you in your Bible study. We do not, however, wish to be an unwelcome guest in your home. If after you have inspected the material and do not wish to receive it, please notify us giving your mailing number and your name will be promptly removed from our mailing list.

If you are receiving more than one copy of "The Bible Teacher" please let us know your mailing numbers, and help us to make necessary corrections. Likewise, if your mailing address is changed please notify us giving your mailing number. Thank you.

The Seven Beatitudes Of Revelation

By Jerry H. Wilson

Most folk are somewhat familiar with the beatitudes of Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 3-12). Each begins with the word "Blessed" and the purpose is to emphasize the inner spiritual character of the true followers of the Son of God. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (v. 6). "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (v. 8). Jesus ends the beatitudes upon the subject of persecution. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (verses 10-12). The hope of eternal life is strongly emphasized throughout.

Most folk are not so familiar with the series of seven beatitudes in the book of Revelation. These are like a golden thread woven into the fabric of the text beginning with chapter 1 and ending with chapter 22. Consider the seven beatitudes of Revelation:

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand" (1:3).

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them" (14:13).

"Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (16:15).

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (19:9).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (20:6).

"Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

"Blessed 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" (20:14).

Why are there only seven beatitudes? Seven is a perfect number in Biblical interpretation. God created the world in seven days (Gen. 2:1-3). Man's allotted time upon earth is seventy years (Psalms 90:10). The seven beatitudes of Revelation describe the maturity of Christian character in the face of adversity and hardship which reaches its ultimate fulfillment in heaven. We have a goal to strive for but one which will not be completely attained in this life. The apostle Paul said, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13-14). Our Lord and Saviour said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

The Redeeming Blood

By Dick Cupp

God has revealed to us what at one time was a great mystery, unknown to the world. Redemption is through the blood of Jesus Christ!

Paul makes this great declaration in Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

"Redeem" means 'to buy back; to set free; to release.' A slave might be redeemed by someone who pays the purchase price, or a patient who is apparently doomed to die might be redeemed by a heart transplant. In either case, the redeemed one feels two deep emotions: (1) freedom and relief, and (2) gratitude towards the one who redeemed him.

When God redeems us through the blood of Jesus Christ we should feel the wonderful joy of being free from sin and its consequence, and we should feel an overwhelming gratitude toward God, who redeemed us. We have been set free from the wages of sin, which is spiritual death! (Romans 6:23).

(Contd on last page)

बपतिस्मे के सम्बन्ध में बाइबल क्या सिखाती है

ले० जसवन्त गुड़िया

क्या यह सच है कि मसीह की कलीसिया केवल बपतिस्मा पर ही जोर देती है या केवल बपतिस्मा का ही प्रचार करती है? जी नहीं, यह सच नहीं है।

बाइबल हमें बताती है कि आरम्भ में मसीह की कलीसिया (रो० १६:१६ ५; मत्ती १६:१८) ने सुसमाचार का प्रचार मसीह यीशु से किया (प्रे० २:२२) और जहाँ-जहाँ प्रचार किया गया इसी ढंग से किया गया (प्रेरितों ८:५; १०:३६; १३:२३; १७:३; १८:५)। यहाँ एक बात विशेष रूप से ध्यान देने योग्य है कि लगभग २५ वर्षों के अंतराल में, हजारों मील की दूरियों पर, विभिन्न स्थानों पर, विभिन्न सामाजिक परिस्थितियों के बावजूद इस प्रचार के ढंग वा स्वरूप में लेश मात्र का भी परिवर्तन हमें नहीं मालूम पड़ता। पौलूस के कथन से यह और भी स्पष्ट हो जाता है “क्योंकि मैं ने यह ठान लिया था, कि तुम्हारे बीच यीशु मसीह, वरन् क्रूस पर चढ़ाए हुए मसीह को छोड़ और किसी बात को न जानूँ।” (१ कु० २:१-५)।

चूँकि बपतिस्मा की शिक्षा में विभिन्न मत आज वर्तमान हैं और परमेश्वर का वचन हमें चिंताकर कहता है कि मसीहियों को हर बात में एक मत होकर रहना है (१ कु० १:१०; इफि० ४:१-६), इसलिये यह नितांत आवश्यक हो जाता है कि सत्य को प्रगट और हरएक विरोधात्मक मतों का खंडन किया जाय। सो आईए बपतिस्मा के सम्बन्ध में परमेश्वर के वचन से एक संक्षिप्त अध्ययन करें और हर एक मतों का मूल्यांकन सुसमाचार के आधार पर करें।

“बपतिस्मा” शब्द यूनानी भाषा से लिया गया है। इसका अर्थ “डुबाना” “गाड़ना” या “दफन करना” है। सुसमाचार के अनुसार भी यही अर्थ है। देखिए : रो० ६:३-४; प्रे० ८:३५-३६। बपतिस्मा “लेना या देना”, परमेश्वर

(१) **बाजलों का बर्तिसमा**—शोक लोगों को कहना है कि बर्तिस

लोगों में प्रचलित है, हम एक संक्षिप्त अध्ययन करें।
 पर किया और अब उन सभी लोगों को जो बर्तिस के विषय में आज विभिन्न
 हमने उपर्युक्त पंक्तियों में बर्तिसमा का अध्ययन सूत्रमाचार के आधार
 भीतर ही पूरी हो सकती है, बाहर नहीं।

पूर्वक पूरी करने है उसी प्रकार हमारी यह दौड़ मसीह की कलीसिया के
 वाले अपनी दौड़ पट्टी (Track) के भीतर ही दौड़ कर दौड़ को सफलता
 प्राप्त होता है (२ रि० ५ : ७-८)। जिस प्रकार खेल के मैदान में दौड़ने-
 और यदि हम दौड़ को पूरी करते हैं तो हमें अनाल जीवन का मुकूट
 लेकर हम अनाल जीवन की ओर बढ़ते हैं, एक दौड़ में हम भागी हो जाते हैं।
 नहीं है। बर्तिस सूत्रमाचार पर विस्वास लाकर, मन फिराकर बर्तिसमा
 इसी प्रकार मनुष्य केवल बर्तिसमा लेने ही पर उद्धार प्राप्त कर ले ऐसी बात
 पूरा करना पड़ता है, कि हम स्टेशन पर समय पर पहुँचे, गाड़ी पकड़ें इत्यादि।
 स्थान पर नहीं पहुँच जाते हैं। बर्तिस उसके अतिरिक्त और शर्तों को भी
 से पहले निकट लेना एक शर्त है। यद्यपि केवल निकट लेने पर ही हम मृत्यु
 निय एक शर्त है, जिस प्रकार कही जाया करने के लिये गाड़ी में सवार होने
 २ : ३८; १ पत्र० ३ : २१; मरकुस १६ : १६)। जो बर्तिसमा उद्धार के
 जो मुख्य है (१ रि० ६:२३; ५ रि० १२; यूहे० १२ : ४) बचाया जाता है। (प्र०
 उस पर विस्वास लाकर, मन फिराकर बर्तिसमा लेना है जो पाप के दंड से
 बर्तिसमा लेना चाहिए। इस प्रकार कोई भी जन जब सूत्रमाचार, सैन कर
 १६), जब से हँसकर या दफन होकर (मरकुस १ : १०; प्र० ८ : ३६)
 ८ : ३६) बड़ा पिता, पूत्र और पवित्रात्मा के नाम से (मती २८ :
बर्तिसमा लेने की विधि—जहाँ अधिक जल हो (प्र० ३ : २३; प्र०

हरे मसीह की कलीसिया है। (१ रि० १ : २२-२३; प्र० १:१८)।
 के भीतर होना या मसीह में होना या मसीह की देह में होना। और मसीह की
 मसीह की पहिन लेते हैं। ग० ३:२७) मसीह की पहिनना अर्थात् मसीह
 मिल जाते हैं। प्र० २ : ४७। क्योंकि जो मसीह में बर्तिसमा लेते हैं वे
 २:३८)। बर्तिसमा के द्वारा हम मसीह की कलीसिया में प्रवेश करते हैं या
 है। बर्तिसमा के द्वारा उद्धार या पापों की क्षमा प्राप्त होती है (प्र०
 तिसमा लेने के योग्य वे ही हैं जो सूत्रमाचार पर विस्वास कर के मन फिराते
 की आवा है। (मरकुस १६:१६; मती २८:१८-२०; प्र० २:३८)। बर्त-

मनुष्य पाप के साथ जन्म लेते हैं तो इसीलिये यह कहनी ही पड़ती है कि पाप दंड से मुक्त होने के लिये बालकों को भी बपतिस्मा दिया जाय । इस दलील को लिये उद्धरण के लिये वे बाइबल के निम्नलिखित आयतों को प्रस्तुत करते हैं ।

(क) "देख मैं अपने के साथ उरपन हुआ और पाप के साथ अपनी माता के गर्भ में पड़ा ।" शं० सं० ५१ : ५

(ख) "... उस ने अपने बराने समेत बपतिस्मा लिया....." शेरिनी १६ : १५ ; १६ : ३३ ।

(ग) "... तुम में से हर एक अपने-अपने पापों की क्षमा के लिए यीशु मसीह के नाम से बपतिस्मा ले....." शं० २ : ३८ । "बुकि नीचे के दो आयतों में "बराने समेत" वा "हर एक" का उल्लेख है इसलिए बालक भी इनमें शामिल हो सकते हैं ।"

लेकिन हम यदि ठीक-ठीक बचन का अध्ययन करें (२ लि० २ : १६), तो हम पायेंगे कि उपर्युक्त विचार पूर्ण रूप से गलत है । राजा दाऊद ने कहा कि कहा, "मैं.....पाप के साथ अपनी माता के गर्भ में पड़ा" एक अन्य अध्ययन में यह कहता है कि "माता के गर्भ से ही मैं पैदा हुआ हूँ" शं० २२ : १० सी यदि मैं यह सवाल करूँ कि "उनका क्या होगा जो अपनी माता के गर्भ में इस प्रकार में आने के पहले, यान् स्थान देते हैं? क्या उद्धार की योजना उन प्राणियों के लिए नहीं है?" तो इन का क्या उत्तर होगा, आप ही फ़ैसला कर सकते हैं ।

इस विषय पर एक बर्हिमा उदाहरण राजा दाऊद का ही है । २ शं० ११, १२ अध्याय । राजा दाऊद यन्मिचारे में फंस गया फलस्वरूप उससे एक पुत्र उरपन हुआ और अपने जन्म के सातवें दिन बालक मरे गया । अब इन बातों पर गौर कीजिए, यन्मिचारे के फलस्वरूप बालक उरपन हुआ, जवना करीबे जाने के दिन अर्थात् आठवें दिन तक भी जीवित गया । अब इन बातों पर गौर कीजिए, यन्मिचारे के फलस्वरूप बालक पाप वाक्यात् परन्तु वह मरे पास लौट न आया । " २ शं० २३ : १ ।

अब हम दूसरी दो आयतों का विश्लेषण करें । यह बात सब है कि उरहोंने बराने समेत बपतिस्मा लिया लेकिन यह ब्रह्म भी सत्य है कि उरहोंने

घराने समेत विश्वास भी किया। प्रे० १६:३४ और प्रे० २:३८ में “हर एक” के अग्रे “विश्वास करके” वा “मन फिराओ” शब्द भी जुड़ा हुआ है। सो यहां प्रश्न यह उठता है कि क्या एक नवजात, शिशु “विश्वास” कर सकता है वा “मन फिरा” सकता है? इस प्रश्न का उत्तर वे खुद नकारात्मक ढंग से देते हैं।

“बालक बपतिस्मा” मत के साथ और एक प्रकरण भी जुड़ा हुआ है, वह है दृढ़ापन (Confirmation) अर्थात् एक बालक जब उसे बपतिस्मा दिया जाता है तो वह न तो विश्वास करने के काबिल होता है और न ही मन फिराने के। सो कुछ व्यक्ति उसके लिए पापों का अंगीकार करते हैं, विश्वास करते और मन फिराते हैं। जब कि बाइबल कहती है कि कोई किसी के पाप का भार नहीं उठा सकता। यहे० १८:२०। और वह बालक जब बड़ा हो जाता है, सोचने समझने के काबिल हो जाता है तो उसे उद्धार की शिक्षा देकर दृढ़ (Confirm) किया जाता है। सो यहां भी मैं यह प्रश्न रखता हूं, कि क्या आरम्भ की कलीसिया के इतिहास में आप कहीं भी यह बात पाते हैं कि प्रेरित पतरस या पौलुस ने कुछ व्यक्तियों को अमुक स्थान पर (Confirm) किया? या कहीं भी इस मत का जिक्र है? नहीं।

छिड़काव का बपतिस्मा—अनेक लोग बपतिस्मा जल की बूंदें छिड़ककर या जल शरीर के ऊपर उडेलकर देते या लेते हैं। जब कि हमने अध्ययन किया कि बपतिस्मा जल में डुबाकर ही दिया जाता है। फिर भी इसके समर्थक बचाव के लिये यह दलील देते हैं कि पिन्तेकूस्त के दिन जब ३००० लोगों ने बपतिस्मा लिया तो क्या यह सम्भव था कि इतने लोगों को डुबा कर ही बपतिस्मा दिया गया? यह प्रश्न भी निराधार है। क्योंकि क्या यह संभव नहीं कि १२ व्यक्ति ३००० लोगों को बपतिस्मा दें? जब कि यूहन्ना बपतिस्मा देनेवाले के पास प्रतिदिन भीड़ की भीड़ लोग आते थे। लूका ३ : ७। भीड़ में कितने लोग शामिल हो सकते हैं इसका अनुमान स्वयं आप कर सकते हैं।

अब हम उस मनुष्य पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करें जो कि कूश देश का खोजा, मंत्री व खजांची था और वह अपने लोगों के साथ सवारी में यरूशलेम से अपने देश लौट रहा था। प्रे० ८ : २६-४०। मार्ग में फिलिप्पुस ने उसे सुसमाचार सुनाया, उसने विश्वास किया और जल में बपतिस्मा लिया। यहां एक बात अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण और मार्क की है। यरूशलेम से कूश देश, जो कि आजकल इथियोपिया कहलमता है, की दूरी कई सौ मील की है। मार्ग में मरुस्थल,

जान, गहर, गीब पकड़े होंगे। उस समय में यह दूरी कई दिनों में तय की जाती होगी। अब आप सहज ही अनुमान लगा सकते हैं कि ऐसी यात्रा के लिए लीना जीवन का अवश्य ही प्रबन्ध करने थे। लेकिन उसने फिलिपस से कहा "देख यहाँ जल है" और फिलिपस के जल पाने पर उसने रख को रोकने की आज्ञा दी। तब वे उतर कर जल में उतर पड़े। लेकिन फिलिपस ने क्या उस से कहा कि "अपने सेवकों से एक पात्र में जल मंगावा ले में तुम्हें छिड़ककर ही बपतिस्मा दे दूँ" नहीं वह ऐसा कह ही नहीं सकता था क्योंकि परमेश्वर के विधान में ऐसा प्रबन्ध है ही नहीं।

और अब तीसरे मत पर गौर करें कि "बपतिस्मा लेना आवश्यक नहीं है। हमारा उद्धार बिना बपतिस्मा लिये ही सकता है। यदि हम यीशु मसीह पर विश्वास करते हैं और उसे हम व्यक्तिगत उद्धारकर्ता ग्रहण करते हैं, मन परिवर्तन का निर्णय लेते हैं तो हमारा नया जन्म होता है। इसलिए बपतिस्मा लेना अनिवार्य नहीं है"। इन लोगों की धारणा, जैसा कि इतिहास की कर्त्तवीर्या का पालन ने लिखा "क्याकि विश्वास के द्वारा अनुग्रह ही से पुन्हारा उद्धार हुआ है, और यह पुन्हारी और से नहीं, वरन परमेश्वर का दान है। और न कर्मों के कारण, ऐसा न ही कि कोई बमब करे"। (इ. २: ८-९) और "दाहिनी ओर के कर्मों के बर्क", पर आधारित है।

"व्यक्तिगत उद्धारकर्ता जान कर हम मसीह को ग्रहण करें तो हमारा उद्धार होगा" यह कथन आज के फौशन जगत में एक नया फौशन है। क्याकि इस तरह का प्रचार इसी सदी से आरम्भ हुआ है।

नया जन्म—प्रमं यीशु ने कहा था...."जब तक कोई नये सिरे से न जन्मे तो परमेश्वर का राज्य देख नहीं सकता....."जब तक कोई मनुष्य जल और आत्मा से न जन्मे परमेश्वर के राज्य में प्रवेश नहीं कर सकता है"। य. ३: ३; ५, और, पौलस के अनुसर, "उस ने (परमेश्वर ने) हमारा उद्धार किया और यह धर्म के कामों के कारण नहीं, जो हम ने आप किए, पर अपनी दया के अनुसर, नये जन्म के स्नान, और बपतिस्मा के द्वारा नया जन्म जल और आत्मा के द्वारा अर्थात् बपतिस्मा के द्वारा होता है। क्याकि "धर्म" में से हर एक.....बपतिस्मा ले तो हम बपतिस्मा का दान पाओगे।" (इ. २: २८)

अब पौलस के अनुसर "क्याकि विश्वास के द्वारा अनुग्रह ही से पुन्हारा उद्धार हुआ है...और न कर्मों के कारण" और "धर्मों के कामों के कारण नहीं जो हम ने किया" यही कर्म से अभिप्राय हमारे अपने भले कर्मों से है।

अब यह निश्चय करना आसान हो जाता है कि "वह डाकू" व्यवस्था के आधीन में था और मरा, और जिस प्रकार दाऊद, एलिय्याह इत्यादि को बपतिस्मा लेने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं थी उसे भी नहीं थी। नई वाचा के आधीन हम हैं और बपतिस्मा लेना हमारे लिये अत्यन्त आवश्यक है चू कि यह प्रभु की आज्ञाओं में से एक है, भले ही यह मूर्खता सी प्रतीत हो लेकिन हमें चाहिए कि सीधे मन से, निर्विवाद, विश्वास सहित परमेश्वर की आज्ञाओं को मानें। उसकी आज्ञाएं कठिन नहीं हैं। १ कु० १ : २१, २५; १ यू० ५ : ३। क्या सुसमाचार के अनुसार बपतिस्मा लेना कठिन है? नहीं बिल्कुल नहीं। एक धर्मी मनुष्य होने पर भी कुरनेलियुस को बपतिस्मा लेना पड़ा। क्यों? क्योंकि यह प्रभु की आज्ञा है प्रे० १० अध्याय। सो हमने पाया कि बालक बपतिस्मा, छिड़काव का बपतिस्मा। केवल विश्वास के द्वारा उद्धार, ये तीनों मत सुसमाचार के अनुसार नहीं हैं बल्कि पूर्ण रूप से मनुष्यों के बनाये धर्मोपदेश हैं। वे लोग जो इन मतों से सहमत हैं उनके लिये परमेश्वर का वचन कहता है कि "ये व्यर्थ मेरी उपासना करते हैं; क्योंकि मनुष्यों कि विधियों को धर्मोपदेश करके सिखाते हैं" (मत्ती १५ : ८) बाइबल हमें बताती है कि मन फिराव, विश्वास, बपतिस्मा और हाथ रखना, मृतकोत्थान और अंतिम न्याय मसीह की शिक्षाओं में बुनियादी बातें हैं, इनमें कोई भी बदलाहट नहीं आनी चाहिए इन शिक्षाओं की नेंव फिर से कोई न डाले। इब्र० ६ : १-२। लेकिन आज इन शिक्षाओं पर लोगों के विभिन्न मत हैं। विभिन्न नेवों पर विभिन्न मतों का प्रचलन है जैसा कि बपतिस्मा के विषय में हमने पाया। और वास्तव में यह अत्यंत खेद जनक विषय है। इसलिए हम इन मतों का दृढ़ता से खंडन करते आ रहे हैं क्योंकि प्रेरित पतरस ने आज्ञा देते हुए लिखा "यदि कोई बोले तो ऐसा बोले, मानो परमेश्वर का वचन"। परमेश्वर का वचन मानव हृदय में केवल दो ही प्रकार के प्रभाव छोड़ता है (१) मन फिराव का फल उत्पन्न करता है (प्रे० २ : ३७), या (२) डह और जलन उत्पन्न करता है (प्रे० का० ७ : ५४)।

लेकिन इसकी हमें कोई चिंता नहीं, चू कि हम आपकी भलाई की कामना करते हुए यह आपको बताते आए और अन्त में अब भी बाइबल की ओर आकृष्ट करते हुए बताते हैं कि "क्योंकि वह समय आ पहुंचा है कि पहिले परमेश्वर के लोगों का न्याय किया जाए और जबकि न्याय का आरम्भ हम ही से होगा तो उन का क्या अन्त होगा जो परमेश्वर के सुसमाचार को नहीं मानते?" १ पतरस ४ : १७।

तो आप किन में से है सुसमाचार पर चलनेवाले या विरोध करनेवालों में?

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