

THE BIBLE TEACHER

A stylized sunburst logo with multiple rays emanating from a central circle. The rays are white with black outlines, set against a dark, textured background. The central circle contains the text 'The Bible Teacher' in a decorative, cursive font.

*The
Bible
Teacher*

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THE BIBLE TEACHER

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EDITORIAL

"Be Not Unequally Yoked Together"

God has always forbidden his people to inter-marry with those of the world or with unbelievers. (Exodus 34 : 6). The reason for this was to keep them pure individually. For them to enter into such marriage relationships, there would be the risk of them being influenced to go off after idols and thus form a generation to rise up who knew not God. Another reason why God frowned on mixed marriages was to keep his people pure and whole as a nation. He knew that if warnings were not given and precautions were not taken then they would soon be swallowed up by other nations. One of the classic examples in the Bible of what happens when this is done is the story of those who ended up in speaking the language of Ashdod and therefore being cursed of God. The prophet Nehemiah wrote, "In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab : And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give

your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?" (Nehemiah 13 : 23-27).

Likewise, in the New Testament, and in the Christian age, the God of heaven again warns his people that they should not become entangled with the sons and daughters of the world in marriage. Paul said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6 : 4-18). There are those who think that while the statement saying that we should not be unequally yoked together may have reference to business, and such like, that it would not necessarily include marriage. But the marriage relationship is one of the strongest and most binding bonds that one can enter, so why would it not be included? Let us notice some things about this :

1. Being unequally yoked together would include any relationship where the Christian finds it difficult or impossible to remain a Christian in that particular circumstance. The yoke refers to the age old tradition of binding animals together for the purpose of working them. The idea is that each is to pull an equal amount of weight. But if two different types of animals were used, with one being larger and the other small, then it would be an unequal yoke. In that case

the smaller animal would not be able to pull its share of the weight and so it would be very difficult for it to continue without having to suffer. The lesson being drawn from this is that if you have a Christian being yoked with a person of the world in business, then the non-Christian may force many things on the Christian that he would not have to bear had he chosen a Christian partner. For instance, the non-Christian might choose to be dishonest, stay open on the Lord's Day, and so on, and thereby force the Christian to be involved in things that are not Christian. The same thing is true with a Christian marrying a non-Christian. Once the marriage takes place then the Christian is at the mercy of the non-Christian. The non-Christian may not want his companion to attend worship. When children are born, he may insist that they become members of his church or religion. Even beyond that, the non-Christian may influence the Christian to the point that he or she becomes unfaithful to the Lord.

2. To show how unwise it is for one to be unequally yoked together with the unbeliever, Paul asks these questions: "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" In other words, there is just no way for the Christian to enter into such relationships or to be yoked together with an unbeliever in business, marriage, or any other similar circumstance, without being put in an unfair position and thus to have to suffer the eventual consequences. It is true that occasionally it seems that one is able to survive such an ordeal but what about all of the many cases that results in disaster? For example, from time to time you may hear of a Christian marrying a non-Christian and then for the Christian to convert the partner, but there are many many other cases where the Christian not only failed to

convert his or her companion but the marriage either ended in disaster or the Christian and children became lost to the cause of Christ. All of this is to say again that we just cannot entangle ourselves with unbelievers, especially where we become yoked together or where bonds are made as in business and marriage, without having to suffer the results that will surely follow.

3. The Lord says that we should come out from among them and be separate, that is, if it is possible to do so. That does not mean that we should break up our marriage even with a non-Christian. Just here it should also be pointed out that a Christian can definitely marry a non-Christian and in doing so then that marriage contract is as binding in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of God as those marriages that are entered into by Christians. The only thing, where a couple are unequally yoked together, as already pointed out, the Christian puts himself or herself in a very difficult position that can be very painful. That is specifically the reason the Lord warns against such a mixed marriage. But once the marriage contract is made then the Christian must try to deal with the problem as best as he or she can. It may be that there will be no difficult task to convert the mate but this is generally not the case. When problems therefore arise, the Christian must put God first. As a Christian, he or she must not only think of self but if there are children involved, then they must also be taken into consideration. But by putting God first, that is, by trying to remain a faithful Christian, then he or she may run the risk of the unbelieving companion leaving his family. In that case, unless there was unfaithfulness on the part of the unbelieving companion, then the Christian is left without a companion, with no right to marry in the future, and with children to try to bring up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. So from this one can see some of the problems, frustrations, and consequences that may come from a mixed marriage. That doesn't necessarily mean that if a

Christian marries a Christian that there will never be any problems but it does mean that one can hope for a much better marriage where both are Christians. For sure, the possibilities of it being successful are much greater in this case. There are enough problems with both being Christians, with both having similar backgrounds in economics, education, race, nationality, and being compatible in other areas. Certainly it is not going to help to add to those problems for a Christian to marry one who is not a Christian.

Other problems arise, however, in dealing with these matters here in India. The church is still very young and the members are few in comparison to those of other religions and even other churches. So what do young people do about a companion when there may be few or none of their age or liking that they can choose from to marry. Or what do parents do when they are looking for a companion for their son or daughter when there seems to be no Christian available for this purpose? In such cases, I would suggest the following :

1. If it comes down to the place where a person of another faith must be considered for a marriage companion, then be sure to give sufficient emphasis to the spiritual side so that some solution can be found. Try to convert this person that is being considered for marriage. Arrange time for some Bible Study. Encourage him or her to attend the meetings of the church. If you are successful in converting the party then you may proceed with your marriage plans. If you are unsuccessful then it would be better to consider another person. But whatever you do, do not weaken and marry a non-Christian. If you do then you may well suffer greatly because of a rash decision. It would be better to spend your life without a companion than to spend your life in torment with one and then to finally be lost for all eternity.

2. As parents, if you are looking for a companion for your son or daughter, you should likewise seek out one who is a Christian or one that can be taught and converted before the marriage takes place. This can be

done, and will be done, if you are really concerned about the spiritual welfare of your son or daughter.

3. Never assume that the unbelieving companion can be converted after marriage. This mistake has been made many times to the sorrow of the Christian. The time to change one religiously, or otherwise, is before marriage. Once the marriage has taken place then in most cases it is too late.

4. Never try to force the non-Christian to become a Christian. Do not offer a bribe or resort to other tactics to win over a person. Neither should that person give over to the wishes of the Christian just to please that person. Rather, if there is to be a conversion then it should be based on the teaching of God's word and a sincere desire on the part of the one being taught to know the truth and to obey God. Only then will it prove to be worthwhile and lasting.

5. But what do you do when the parents are not Christians, and they are seeking a companion for their son or daughter who is a Christian? In that case they would not necessarily care if their child married a Christian or not. They might even prefer that their son or daughter marry a non-Christian or one of their own religion. It is therefore up to the Christian young man or woman to insist that he or she marry a Christian only. This may pose some problems but for the sake of a happy and productive Christian companionship then every effort possible must be put forth to have a Christian marriage instead of a mixed marriage. Pray to the Father for help. Talk to the members of the church about this problem. Surely with the help of God some solution can be found.

6. Understandably, in these situations it is more difficult for a Christian young woman to work out these problems than for a Christian young man. But with the help of God, the Christian woman can find a way to work these problems out so she can have a Christian marriage. As suggested earlier, perhaps she can turn

to other members of the church for help and guidance in these matters. But it is even more important here in India for her to marry a good Christian man because once she is married then her husband will be giving leadership for her and the children and if he is not a Christian then this can lead to her spiritual destruction and the same for her children. It is certainly not desirable for a Christian man to marry a non-Christian but at least he may have such an influence on his wife and family that it is possible for them to be led to Christ. Again, the better way, and the way with the least problems, is for a Christian to marry a Christian.

Young people, please give heed to the advice given in this article, and Christian parents, let me plead with you to bring your children up according to the teaching of the Bible and then put forth the necessary efforts to see that your children marry those of like faith. How wonderful and beautiful it is to have a Christian home. This can more nearly be assured when a Christian marries a Christian!



**associate
editorial**

Good News!

How long has it been since you heard a good news? What was that thing which made you so happy when you heard it? Are you still just as happy today as you were that day? Perhaps not! Because the happiness that the world brings to us, no matter how big it is, it lasts but for a little while. But do you know what "Good News" I am going to give to you? Yes, to you! Because this good news, this gospel is for YOU! And I am going to give you the Good News that is great! Which will bring to you everlasting happiness,

and it will grow and will become a fountain of eternal joy !

But Please wait ! What kind of good news do you like to hear ? Suppose, if I tell you that I can let you know a great secret that'll help you to become world's richest person. Will you be not excited to hear about something like that ? Perhaps you need a job ! And I come and tell you that I can help you to get a comfortable, nice, well paying permanent job. Now, will you not be really happy to know about that ? Or, perhaps, you are sick, perhaps you are very very seriously sick, and I come to you with the good news that I know a very fine treatment for your illness which will help you get better immediately. Will you not be greatly pleased to hear such a good news ? What are your problems ? What are the things that you need ? Suppose, if I come and tell you that I can solve all your problems and difficulties; if I tell you that I can provide for your every need whatsoever—suppose, if I come to you with this kind of a good news, how happy and glad you will be ! Yes, no doubt, you will certainly be much happy.

But wait awhile ! Here I want to ask you a question. A very very important question ! Because this particular question is of life and death. Because this question involves YOUR VERY PRECIOUS SOUL ! Listen carefully : “For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul ? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul ?” Did you hear ? Yes, Jesus put this important question before people almost 2000 years ago. And I am asking you today the very same question.

Do you know there is nothing more important and precious and valuable in the whole world than your own soul ? How much do you think you are going to live more upon this earth ? Fifty years ? Or perhaps, seventy years ? But then what will be of your soul ? Where will be the eternal abode of your soul after death when it departs from the body ? In heaven ? Or, in hell ? Have you ever seriously considered this question ? **Please think !**

The fact is, and there is no doubt about it that every person before God is a sinner. And, therefore, every individual will be perished because of his own sin and iniquity. No amount of wealth and power put together of this world can

save a soul from being perished. It is therefore, Jesus has said, "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

So I ask you once again, after you have seriously considered this question, what will be the real, most important, good news for every person today? What will be the most important and wonderful gospel for you today? Will it not be the one that tell you that all your sins and iniquities can be forgiven, and your soul can be saved from being perished, and you can have the eternal life, the gift of God? And listen, I am going to give you this very Good News! Are you listening?

The Holy Bible says: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

And "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man: though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

Friends, is it really not the wonderful Good News for all of us that God so loved each one of us that to save us from the consequences of our iniquity and to redeem us from the bondage of sin, He sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ into the world, who took all our sins upon himself, for God made him to be sin on our behalf and allowed him to die on the cross for our sins, so that we might become righteousness of God in Him?

If you believe in this wonderful Gospel and want to know what you should do to be saved then open your Bible and read Mark 16:16 And Acts 2:38, or write to us for a free Bible correspondence course.

Smoking, Drinking, Drug Abuse, and Christian Youth

By Joe W. Nichols

Introduction

The subject of smoking, drinking, and drug abuse is one that is not likely to be exhausted by preachers and Bible teachers. Since many of our young people want the truth on the subject, the following discussion is offered for their consideration as young Christians responsible before God.

Why do people Smoke, Drink, and use Drugs ?

In coming to an understanding as to why people smoke and abuse themselves with alcohol and drugs, we must consider first the question: "Why do they start?" The majority of adult users say that they began their abuse in youth and simply never quit the habit. Let us try to understand why a young person would begin such habits.

Young people often find themselves in unhappy surroundings with the desire to be popular and accepted—not just ordinary, but outstanding in the crowd. Torn by disappointments, frustrations, and strenuous competition they turn to "helpers". Instead of self-discipline and character building, many times they seek what the world offers to bridge the gap from discontentment to desired happiness. Many drop out of society; others set out for greener grass, hoping to find a better world somewhere else. Some plot a revolution to overthrow the present society—tear down, destroy and kill, but have nothing better to offer in its place. To a lesser extreme some turn to smoking, drinking, cursing, dope and other crazes in order to fill the gap for distinction. Few there are who will undergo the strenuous task of changing the dislikes and unpleasantness of self and world, one step at a time.

This frustration, we conclude, is the reason many vices are adopted and practised by a great number of our young people today. In such a state, a young lady is led to believe that lipstick, a tight skirt, an emphasized bosom, or a cigarette will make the difference in being outstanding and socially accepted rather than being just a wall flower amidst the crowd. The

young man thinks that drinking intoxicants, using profanity, smoking, or getting involved with marijuana or drugs will make the difference in his popularity. A giant step from childhood to manhood is thought to be bridged by a cigarette, a beer, or the taking of some drug.

The excuses for such habits are many : the rest of the crowd does it, it gives glamour and sophistication, or one must do so to be accepted by the crowd, and parents forbid it. One out of every three high school students smoke. Fifty percent of the nation's teenagers are regular smokers by age eighteen. Everyday about 4,500 or more of our youth light up their first cigarette. Beer drinking and drug abuse affect over half of high school and college students and is increasing at an alarming rate.

**what is wrong
with smoking, alcohol, and drug abuse
from the health standpoint ?**

The 1964 Advisory Committee appointed by the surgeon general of the Public Health Service in U.S.A. has given a convincing report on smoking :

There is a connection between smoking and lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, coronary artery disease, as well as a 70 percent death rate.

Noted side effects are : shortness of breath, throat irritations, chronic cough, loss of appetite and reduced stamina.

Affected also is learning capabilities, vitamin "C" is destroyed in the body (necessary to ward off disease), children breathe and form cravings from the smoke and others break out in a rash.

Beer Drinking

Beer contains the narcotic alcohol which is habit forming as well as harmful to the body. Beer drinking leads to drunkenness which is sin (Galatians 5:21), "...they who practice such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

Beer contains the narcotic lupulin which dulls the senses. Beer drinking causes one to become lascivious and to revel, often this leads to "...strife, jealousies, wraths, ...envyings" (Galatians 5:2-21). "Be not deceived. . .nor drunkards. . . shall

inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." (I Cor. 6:9-10),

Beer usually contains many chemical additives which can harm the body by causing "allergic reactions," "heart disease," "gastric irritation," "liver damage," respiratory failure," and "kidney impairment." Paul states pertaining to drunkenness "and such were some of you : but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified. . ." (I Corinthians 6:11).

"Beer drinking is the open door through which many young people enter to be forever shackled by alcohol." Liquor can wreck a life as well as a home.

Smoking Marijuana

Smoking marijuana definitely affects natural functions of the body. The eyes are affected and vision is often distorted. Dryness of the mouth and throat are an after affect. Normal judgment is affected and the user often reacts slowly and with poor judgment. A large majority of youngsters who start experimenting with marijuana later become hooked on hard drugs.

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse involving amphetamines and barbituates has become a national threat. This is mainly because hard drug users must satisfy their ever-craving habit and to do so they turn to crime for monetary support.

The drug abuser is affected physically and mentally by his habit. His life-style is altered drastically. Stimulants affect the major organs of the body, which in turn cause jitteriness, irritability, tension, and unclear speech. Further affects are dilated pupils, dry mouth, sweating, headaches, diarrhea, and paleness.

Barbituates or "goof balls" mildly depress the action of the nerve of the body which, consequently, affects the skeletal muscle and heart muscle. The heart slows down and the breathing is altered. The blood pressure is lowered. Users are most often irritable, angry, and quarrelsome. Confusion, slurred speech, and staggering usually result.

One terrible part of drug abuse is in the language of the abuser, "the monkey on my back." He is always there demanding attention and satisfaction. To satisfy the habit is costly

in terms of money, family, friends, life, and finally the soul.

Another consideration is that the use of drugs without a physician's prescription is illegal upon conviction carries a stiff penalty.

Such reports reveal the seriousness of adopting such habits and should deter any young person from any further consideration of such.

But you say, "It's my Life Isn't it"

It has been said, "to indulge ourselves today without thought for others is to squander our tomorrows." What you are today is the result of a lot of other people's interest. Every being is a product built socially by others: parents, preachers, teachers, artists, policemen, ancestors, and on and on we could go. Each has made his own contribution to the mould and are seeking a return on his investment. No man is an island—what we do, the things we say, our very appearance will affect the lives of a lot of people. The decisions made today will affect a lot of people tomorrow. Soap perfumes the air, auto fumes contaminate, a morning smile catches on, cursing makes bitter life's way. The school dropout, the alcoholic, the smoker, and the addict are destined to affect the lives of many people. Because of such, many children will be maimed, uneducated, under nourished, and impoverished. Wives will be robbed of husbands in life's golden years; children of fathers; and grandchildren of grandfathers because some thought that their lives belonged to themselves.

What does the Scripture Teach ?

As children of God our lives are turned over to Him by choice for instruction and guidance. To reject Divine direction is to refuse grace, mercy and love and hinder our own personal well-being.

Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live, in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me," (Galatians 2:20).

As Christians, our lives have been given over to Christ, and we like Paul are to say it is no longer I that live—Christ is living in me and through me.

Paul further states, "or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." (I Corinthians 6:19-20). In the light of this scripture, God is to be glorified in our body. What we say and practice and the appearance we display are determining factors as to whether God will be glorified in our bodies or whether we have become a dishonor to Him.

"Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilements of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Corinthians 7:1) Anything that makes filthy and pollutes, and tends to corrupt the body physically is sinful and is to be put away and forever abstained from.

We have but one life to live in our earthly body and God's children are to use it in fear to the glory of God.

Peter states, "Beloved I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." (II Peter 2:11) Any vice that causes us to be less spiritual in conduct and example toward others is warring against the soul and is a detrement to life eternal.

Paul exhorted all to "abstain from every appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:22). Peter exhorted elders, "But making yourselves ensamples to the flock." (I Peter 5:3). Any responsible person in a spiritual position of guiding others must of necessity be careful in pattern of practices that others might follow.

Conclusion:

We should not be disillusioned into thinking that all our dissatisfactions and unhappiness of self and surroundings can be corrected in a day. Neither should we look to the world for our remedies. God is the author and finisher of our faith through Christ, the Master of our lives. Our responsibility is to conform to Christian principles. Christianity, to us, is the best way. We travel this way but once, and life is beautiful

only to those that through toil and patience make it so.

In the words of the inspired writer, "I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service, and be not fashioned according to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:1-2) "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, and not on things that are upon the earth." (Colossians 3:2).

To those who Persist in evil Practices

"Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to do uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves." (Romans 1:24).

Have You Wondered About The Thousand-Year Reign?

By W.N. Jackson

Perhaps many who read this will not be familiar with the word "Premillennialism," but they will be familiar with the doctrine thus identified. Indeed, most in the Protestant religious world are exposed to premillennial teaching, and the great majority of the men who occupy the pulpits in the sectarian world are evangelists for premillennialism. We hope, in this brief article to define term and to give Bible references for the refutation of the doctrine.

The Doctrine of Premillennialism

This system has to do with teaching about the next coming of our Lord, and in particular with the establishment of His kingdom upon this earth. The word "premillennialism" is made up thusly; "pre" means "before"; "millennial" means "a thousand years"; and "ism" refers to "doctrine," or "system."

Hence, the doctrine that teaches that the Lord will return to this earth before the establishment of His kingdom upon this planet. Proponents of this teaching insist that the Lord will return to this earth, set up His kingdom, and rule with his saints in a thousand-year era of bliss. While the Bible teaches us that the Lord will appear one day, and that the Lord has a kingdom, and that the saints are citizens in that kingdom, the system known as premillennialism takes these truths and creates a man-made doctrine in conflict with plain Bible teaching. This is not surprising, since it has even been Satan's tactics to handle the Word of God deceitfully. (2 Cor. 4:2).

Many Bible References

To The Kingdom

The nation of Israel was, of course, familiar with the system of kings and kingdoms. All during the latter part of the Old Testament, God's prophets pointed to the coming of the Saviour, and identified Him as a King who would set up His kingdom and rule over it. Isaiah promised that He would be a Governor and that the nature of His kingdom would be that of peace. (Isa. 9:6,7).

As the New Testament opens, John came with the message that the kingdom "is at hand," (Matt. 3:2) and Jesus began His ministry with the same message (Mark 1:15). Called the "King of the Jews," (Matt. 2:2). Jesus acknowledged this fact before Pilate (John 18:37). He had just made the point that His kingdom was not of a worldly sort, but spiritual (v.36). This is a vital point, for the truth on the matter of the return of Christ, the establishment of the kingdom, the thousand-year period, and the disposition of the saints during the extent of the kingdom hinges on the nature of that kingdom.

The Identity of the Kingdom

As we just saw, both John and Jesus spoke of the kingdom being "at hand." Our Lord told some of his own generation that they would not see death until they also saw the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1). This certainly told them that the kingdom, in whatever form, would come in that generation. In Matthew 16:18, 19 Jesus used the terms "kingdom" and "church" interchangeably. He stated that He would build the

church and that Peter would be given the keys of the kingdom. We follow Peter through the gospel records, and note that when He preached the message of the resurrected Lord in Acts 2, those who obeyed the gospel were saved, added to the church. (vs 47).

We can also follow the word "power" which would be a mark of the coming kingdom. The Lord has promised this in view of some of his own generation. The apostles were told, before the Lord's ascension, that they were to wait in Jerusalem until they received power from on high (Luke 24:49). Luke reminds us of that promise, identifying that power as the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5, 8), whereby these apostles would be witnesses of the Lord unto all the earth. We note that the power came on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4) and that the church was the institution established on that occasion (v. 47). The kingdom was to come with power, and the power made possible the message which resulted in the establishment of the church.

Surely this truth is reinforced by Paul's declaration that there is just one body (Eph. 4:4), and he had earlier identified that body as the church (Eph. 1:22, 23). Paul and the members of the church at Colossae were in the kingdom (Col. 1:13), and so were John and those who received the Revelation epistle (Rev. 1:9). We might also note that among those with John in the kingdom were members of seven different congregations of the church of the Lord. (Rev., chapters 2 and 3). Indeed, there is one body, the church, that church is the kingdom that Jesus promised to build, and it came into being nearly 2,000 years ago, in Acts 2. It therefore is not future, as premillennial teaching has it. Since the kingdom is identified as the church, and since the church is the Lord's body (Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22, 23), a spiritual institution, there is no justification for men taking promises concerning the kingdom and looking for actual fulfillment by events upon this earth.

Regarding Premillennialism's Points

1. Unfulfilled Old Testament prophecies. Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law of the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. (Matt. 5:17). As He fulfilled

the prophecies concerning himself, so his kingdom, or church, fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. This is so, even though we might not be able to see the fulfillment in the most minute detail. Remembering that the church is a spiritual institution, we see that premillennialism's error is in expecting literal, earthly fulfillment.

2. New heavens, new earth. Premillennialists cite 2 Peter 3 : 13, where this language is used, and then look for a renewed planet Earth as fulfillment. The Greek word for "earth" here is used of "earth, land, ground, country and world," and more would have to be given than just the word "earth" to denote this planet. But the Lord had promised that his own would be with him in "the Father's house." (John 14 : 2, 3) ; Paul stated that we will, at the end, rise to ever be with the Lord "in the air," (1 Thess. 4 : 17) ; Peter says that our inheritance is reserved for us in heaven (1 Peter 1 : 4), and he also states that this earth, and all things therein are to be burned up, dissolved (2 Peter 3 : 10, 11). Clearly, then, we see that the Lord and the righteous will not be upon this earth after his next appearing.

3 Revelation chapter 20: This is a favorite text of the premillennialists, yet it contains no point peculiar to that doctrine. They cite this passage to make the point that the Lord's own will reign with him a thousand years, verse 4, but they have to misuse the verse to get their point across. Note verse 4 carefully: John saw not all the righteous, but the souls of those beheaded—the martyrs. In the same verse, and of these martyrs, John said he saw them living and reigning with Christ a thousand years. He is simply saying that during this Christian dispensation, he saw the martyrs elevated to reign with Christ, and thus those of us yet here in this age can be encouraged that our labour is not in vain. We have hope of one day being with Christ, and we are assured in this by the fact that John saw the martyrs with the Lord. There is no indication at all that the reigning was upon the earth. They were with Christ!

Premillennialism Abuses the Church

The doctrine of premillennialism simply makes the church an after thought and a substitute arrangement brought in by

God as men await the real kingdom. But Paul said that the church is to make known the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which He purchased in Christ (Eph. 3:10,11). One must believe the Bible, or the premillennial theory; both cannot be right!

Again, premillennialism takes kingship away from the Lord. By that doctrine He is not King, since he has no kingdom as yet. This contradicts that which is the clearest proof in the New Testament to the effect that the Lord now reigns as king over his kingdom. It is found in I Corinthians 15:24-25. There, the apostle speaks of the end, and the fact that the kingdom will then be given to the Father (v. 24)—not established then, but given to the Father. It was already in existence before His coming, then. Paul continues, showing that the Lord reigns until all enemies are subdued, and the last enemy he will destroy is death. Note, He reigns until death is no more! Then, while death is in existence, the Lord reigns. The proof we have, everyday, that the Lord reigns over his kingdom is the fact that man die, that morticians are still in business, and that daily journeys are still being made to cemeteries.

Friends, study this matter carefully. Note that the Old Testament pointed to the King and his kingdom, and that the New Testament shows the fulfillment of all this in the church Jesus purchased with his own blood. Those who obey the gospel are added into the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47); another way of stating that they enter into citizenship in the kingdom of God. Men look and wait in vain for an earthly kingdom upon this planet. When the Lord next appears, it will not be to set up his kingdom, but to give the existing kingdom to the Father. What a tragedy if you're not in that kingdom! Make it sure by obeying the gospel today, and live faithfully until the end.

Why the plague of Biblical Ignorance?

Dub McClish

The "ignorance crisis" has been growing gradually worse over the past few decades. I believe the following elements are major contributing factors:

1. We do not study the Bible like our spiritual forefathers did. We have become slaves to frenzied schedules. Parents and children alike are involved in so many "good" things that we haven't time for the BEST. Our family members run in many different directions, making it difficult to have perfect attendance, even at mealtime. In those rare moments when all are at home, more often than not we are offering up our devotions before our TV altar.

2. Weak preaching has done its part. Mind you, no one ever became learned in the Bible by listening to preaching alone. But, our grasp of God's word can be powerfully accelerated by strong Biblical preaching. The less we study at home, the more we need stronger preaching from pulpit! Several years ago the cry began to go up that our preaching had been "too hard," "too doctrine-centered" and "too tactless." If that ever was the case, it certainly is not so now. Many of our preachers are so up-to-date that they know more about the fine art of ear-tickling than of sounding forth the clarion call of the saving gospel. Many pew-sitters have confused polite little 20-minute talks that could be made with approval in any pulpit in town, with gospel sermons. Preach the Bible to such people and you'll raise a ruckus. Say what you will about our preachers of yore (and many like them today, thank God), their hearers know more Bible after their sermons than before.

3. The profusion of Bible versions is at least suspect. I am not opposed to up-to-date and accurate Bible version and no Bible student should be. However, with the proliferation of versions has come a corresponding lack of distinction in men's minds about what is and what isn't scripture. Often the most far-fetched paraphrase is most readily adopted by the most ignorant person on the Bible. Rather than enlightening, ignorance is thereby compounded.

A SURVEY

By Boyd Cribb

Jerry Hadden, a Western Reserve Sociologist, conducted a Survey, about 10 years ago, that disturbed me, because it indicates a trend that is increasingly dangerous to the church. Mr. Hadden contacted 10,000 Protestant ministers, and asked their opinion on particular topics. 7,441 replied to the questionnaire. Below are some of the findings :

"Do you believe in Jesus' physical resurrection from the grave, in the same sense that you believe that Abraham Lincoln was assassinated ?"

- 51% of the Methodist ministers said "NO".
- 30% of the Episcopal priest said "NO".
- 35% of the United Presbyterian ministers said "NO".
- 33% of the American Baptist ministers said "NO".
- 13% of the American Lutheran ministers said "NO".

"Do you believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ as a biological miracle ?"

- 60% of the Methodist ministers said "NO".
- 44% of the Episcopal ministers said "NO".
- 49% of the Presbyterian ministers said "NO".
- 44% of the Baptist ministers said "NO".
- 19% of the American Lutheran ministers said "No".

"Do you believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, that is, do you accept a nearly interpretation of the Bible ?"

- 82% of the Methodist ministers said "NO".
- 89% of the Episcopal priests said "NO".
- 81% of the Presbyterian ministers said "NO".
- 57% of the American Lutheran ministers said "NO".

(October 13, 1967 issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY.)

The figures would probably be even higher today ! Yet the Bible affirms for itself, the truthfulness of each of the above. (John 20, Acts 1, Matt. 1: 18-25, Rev. 22 : 18-19, II John 9-11.)

When a person rejects the basis of his religion, which is, or should be, the word of God, then he has absolutely nothing

to stand upon, but his own opinions, or the traditions of men. That is the basis of the four hundred denominations that we have today.

Thank God that I do not know a single Gospel preacher, that stands in the pulpit of any congregation of the church of Christ, who will not readily affirm his belief in the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth, of a physical resurrection of our Saviour. If there is one, he should be fired :

Listen to what God's word says for itself, by reading the following passages : II Peter 1 : 15-21 and II Tim 3 : 15-17.

You might then ask your preacher if he believes in the above. You might be surprised.

"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name." John 20 : 31.

THE PLACE OF REPENTANCE IN GOSPEL PREACHING

Shelby G. Floyd

In preaching there must be one all engrossing topic in every address; and in the preaching of Jesus and his disciples, the prominent topic of almost every sermon was the subject of repentance. They preached repentance wherever they went. In attestation of this, we shall notice the preaching of repentance under the commission of John the Baptist, of Christ, of the twelve and of the seventy.

First, let us notice the preaching of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ. Among the very first words recorded of John the Baptist, we read that he was involved in preaching repentance to the people in the area of Jerusalem and Judaea. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3: 1-2.)

In preaching repentance, as in every other duty laid upon us by Christ, there must be the proper motives brought to bear upon the hearers to induce them to repent of their sins. The motive which John presented to the people urging them to

repent was the fact that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. In other words, the kingdom would soon be established, and the people should repent of their sins and turn to righteousness, in order that they might be prepared to enter the kingdom and be subjects of the Lord. That this is true, one only needs to notice what John the Baptist said to many of the Pharisees and Sadducees which came to be baptized by him : "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come ? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." (Matt. 3: 7-8.)

Many persons have confounded repentance with a reformation of life. It is true that where there is genuine repentance, reformation of life or conduct will surely follow as the day follows the night. There cannot be one without the other ; but that is not to confound the two, they are distinct ideas. The Pharisees and Sadducees that came to John's baptism claimed to have repented of their sins, but the only way their assertions could be proved to be genuine would be by bearing fruits of a penitent life. Therefore, they were to match their alleged repentance by a change of conduct in their life. This was to be done in view of the fact that the kingdom of heaven was near or at hand. Since the kingdom of heaven was to be a spiritual kingdom, the Pharisees and Sadducees would only understand the nature of that kingdom, and be ready to be a subject in it by turning from their sins to righteousness which the gospel of Jesus Christ demands.

John, further said upon this same subject, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance." (Matt. 3:11.) John demanded that they not only repent, but also bear fruits of repentance before he baptized them. Having baptized them, he stated that he was baptizing them unto repentance. Repentance is not an isolated act that is done just once in a person's life. Faith is not just an isolated act that takes place once in our lives, but faith continues all the days our life while we walk on the earth so it is with repentance. Repentance is coextensive with our faith. So John not only demanded that they repent before they were baptized and bear the proper fruit, but he was baptizing them unto a life of repentance. So every Christian

must continue to repent of his sins all the days of his life.

Mark, in his biography of Jesus Christ, summarized the work and preaching of John by stating: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Mk. 1:4.) Therefore, John was a great propounder of repentance. His baptism was founded upon a life of repentance, and it looked forward to a life of repentance. Therefore, repentance in gospel preaching is very important; inasmuch, as the man who prepared the way for the Lord preached repentance in practically every sermon to the people of Jerusalem and Judaea.

Secondly, we notice the preaching of Jesus Christ. It is especially worthy of notice in this investigation that in the first and last communications of the Lord, we find an imperative command to repent. The first words recorded concerning the public ministry of Jesus Christ involved his preaching repentance: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17.) Jesus presented the kingdom of heaven as the same grand motive to bring men to repentance which his predecessor John used in his preaching.

After John had been arrested and put in prison by Herod, Jesus continued to preach that men should repent and believe the gospel. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mk. 1:14-15.) From the collocation of the words repent and believe, some have drawn the conclusion that repentance precedes faith, but this is an intellectual impossibility. They already believed in God and they were to repent of their sins toward God, and then they were to repent of their sins toward God, and then they were to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ with a corresponding repentance from everything that was wrong. Therefore, faith precedes repentance in the gospel order of things.

(Contd, see last page)

हैं। तब आप किस मार्ग पर चल रहे हैं?

जसवंत गुड़िया

नये नियम की एक पुस्तक में लेखक हमें तीन प्रकार के मार्गों के विषय में बताता है। लिखा है, “उन पर हाय कि वे कैन की सी चाल चले, और मजदूरी के लिए बिलाम की नाई भ्रष्ट हो गए हैं; और कोरह की नाई विरोध करके नाश हुए।” (यहुदा 1 : 11)।

कैन का मार्ग :—पवित्रशास्त्र हमें बताता है कि कैन और हाबिल दो भाई थे तथा हमारे आदि माता-पिता, आदम और हव्वा, के पुत्र थे। उन दोनों में एक विशेष बात यह थी कि वे परमेश्वर पर विश्वास करनेवाले व्यक्ति थे और यह उन्होंने अवश्य ही अपने माता-पिता से सीखा होगा। वे इस बात से भी अनभिज्ञ नहीं थे कि किस प्रकार उनके माता-पिता ने परमेश्वर के प्रति अपने विश्वास को छोड़कर उसकी आज्ञा का उल्लंघन किया था और पाप में गिरकर परमेश्वर से अलग हो चुके थे। फिर उन्होंने यह उचित समझा कि वे परमेश्वर की उपासना करें। लेकिन कैन की भेंट को परमेश्वर ने ठुकरा दिया और हाबिल की भेंट को स्वीकार कर लिया। फिर लिखा है “विश्वास ही से हाबिल ने कैन से उत्तम बलिदान परमेश्वर के लिये चढ़ाया (इब्रानियों 11 : 8)। यहां हम इस बात पर ध्यान करें कि ऐसा क्यों हुआ जबकि कैन भी तो परमेश्वर पर विश्वास रखनेवाला व्यक्ति था और इस बात का प्रमाण उसकी भेंट है क्योंकि यदि वह अविश्वास करता तो भला परमेश्वर को भेंट क्यों चढ़ाता? जाहिर है कि उसने विश्वास तो किया किन्तु कर्म नहीं किया अर्थात् परमेश्वर की आज्ञानुसार भेंट नहीं चढ़ाई। क्योंकि ऐसा विश्वास व्यर्थ है (याकूब 2 : 14-26)। यहां कर्म का तात्पर्य है परमेश्वर की आज्ञाओं का पालन करना न कि मनुष्य के भले कर्म; क्योंकि मनुष्य के भले कर्म तो परमेश्वर के सम्मुख मूले चिथड़ों के तुल्य हैं। (यशायाह 64 : 6)। और परमेश्वर ने कैन से कहा भी कि यदि वह भला करे तो उसकी भेंट ग्रहण की जाएगी (उत्पत्ति 4 : 7)। आज भी कितने ऐसे लोग हैं जो कैन का सा मार्ग अपना रहे हैं और अपने आप को परमेश्वर के अनुग्रह से वंचित करके स्थापित ठहरा रहे हैं। वे परमेश्वर पर विश्वास तो करते हैं और उसकी उपासना भी करते हैं पर उसकी आज्ञाओं

पर ध्यान नहीं देते। उनके अनुसार केवल विश्वास ही के द्वारा हप पापों से मुक्ति पा सकते हैं, जबकि प्रभु यीशु ने आज्ञा दी की जो विश्वास करे और बपतिस्मा ले उसी का उद्धार होगा। (मार्कुस 16 : 16)। पवित्र शास्त्र हमें सिखाता है कि मसीही आपस में एक मत, एक विश्वास और एक आशा में बंधे रहें। (1 कुरिन्थियों 1 : 10; इफिसियों 4 : 4; यूहन्ना 17 : 20)। परन्तु अनेकों लोगों का यह विचार है कि सांप्रदायिक (Denominational) कलीसियाएं अपनी-अपनी जगह ठीक हैं और यह भी उचित है कि वे विभिन्न नामों से कहलाएँ। उदाहरणस्वरूप, लूथरन, पेन्तिकोस्तल, बैपटिस्ट इत्यादि। इसी प्रकार अनेक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत किए जा सकते हैं जो कि ईश्वरीय आज्ञाओं के विपरीत हैं।

बिलाम का मार्ग :—(गिनती 22, 23, 24)। बाइबल की इस पुस्तक में हम बिलाम के चरित्र के विषय में पढ़ते हैं कि वह एक भक्त जन था और परमेश्वर से प्रेरणा पाकर भविष्यवाणि करता था। मोआब के राजा बालाक ने उससे आग्रह किया था कि वह इस्राएल पर जो कि परमेश्वर की चुनी हुई जाति श्री शाप दे ताकि वे उन पर विजयी हो और उसकी परिश्रमिक के रूप में अपार धन-दौलत का लोभ उसके सन्मुख रखा। सबसे पहला कदम जो बिलाम ने उठाया वो वास्तव में सराहनीय था कि उसने अपने परमेश्वर से पूछा कि क्या वह कार्य उसकी इच्छा के अनुकूल है या विरुद्ध और परमेश्वर ने उसे मना कर दिया। परन्तु धन-दौलत के लोभ को वह अपने मन में दबा न सका तथा इसके फलस्वरूप उसने फिर परमेश्वर से पूछा। जबकि परमेश्वर ने उस पर यह प्रगट किया था कि “न वह (परमेश्वर) आदमी है कि अपनी इच्छा बदले” (गिनती 23 : 19)। तब परमेश्वर ने उसकी हठ-धर्मी देखकर उसे आज्ञा दे दी लेकिन उसके मार्ग में कई तरह से रुकावट पैदा की ताकि वह ऐसा न करे और मन फिराए। परमेश्वर ने अपने दूत को भेजा कि वह उसे रोके, यहां तक कि उसकी गंदही, जो कि एक मूक पशु थी, परमेश्वर की सामर्थ से बोल उठी और उसको रोका लेकिन धन का लोभ इस तरह उस पर छा गया था कि वह इस पर आश्चर्यचकित होने के बजाय पागल हो उठा (गिनती 22 : 22-35)। और उसने परमेश्वर के सन्मुख दीन होने तथा मन फिराने के बजाय उल्टी ही चाल चली (गिनती 22 : 32)। उसने यह समझा कि कदाचित् परमेश्वर अपनी इच्छा को बदल दे जबकि उस पर यह प्रगट किया गया था कि परमेश्वर अपनी इच्छा बदल नहीं सकता। और अंत तक उसने देखा भी की परमेश्वर ने अपनी इच्छा नहीं बदली और शाप दिलवाने की बजाय आशीष ही दिलवाई। फिर

भी उसने अपना मन वहीं फिरोया, और कहा, "सौभाग्य यदि मेरी मृत्यु धर्मियों की सी, और मेरा अंत भी उन्हीं के समान हो।" (मिनाती 23 : 10)। यहाँ एक बात बहुत ही स्पष्टता से उभर आती है कि जो लोग परमेश्वर के सामने टेढ़ी और उल्टी बात बोलते हैं उनके मनों की वह कठोर कर देता है और अंत में डाल देता है कि वे मृत्यु की न पड़वान और अपने ही कामों के द्वारा विनाश के अधिकारी ठहरें। (मती 13 : 14-15; यूहन्ना 12 : 40-41; 2 पित्सुर्गनीकियों 2 : 11-12)। इसके विपरीत जो परमेश्वर के सामने अपने आप की दोष और नञ करतें हैं और अपने आप की उसकी आशा मानने के लिये उसके आधीन हो जातें हैं उन्हें वह हीरोमण बनाएगा। (याकूब 4 : 10)।

आज कितने ही लोग हैं जो परमेश्वर की आज्ञाओं की टाल देते हैं या तोड़ मरोड़कर अपनी इच्छानुकूल बना लेते हैं। वे यह जानते हैं कि यदि परमेश्वर की आज्ञानुसार वे चलना आरम्भ करें तो उन्हें मान-समान, धन-दौलत, पद-गौरव तथा सौ-सम्बन्धी इत्यादि जो सब कुछ हैं वे सब अपने ही मरुस होनी कि कोरह ने कौन सा मान अपनाया और जिस तरह अपने ही मरुस होनी कि कोरह ने कौन सा मान और उसके अधिकारों का इन्कार और अवहेलना की। मरुस की परमेश्वर ने दशाएलियों के लिये एक मध्यस्थ ठहराया था कि उसके द्वारा अपनी आज्ञाओं और इच्छाओं को दशाएलियों के मुख प्राप्त करे। लेकिन कोरह ने इसके लिए मरुस का विरोध किया और उसके अधिकारों की अवहेलना की। आज भी बहुतों ने ऐसे लोग हैं जो परमेश्वर और हमारे बीच जो मध्यस्थ है अर्थात् यीशु मसीह का इन्कार कर रहे हैं। उसके पद की अवहेलना कर रहे हैं अर्थात् वे मरुस यीशु मसीह की परमेश्वर का पुत्र नहीं मानते। वे इस बात की मानने के लिए कतई तैयार नहीं हैं कि मरुस यीशु एक ही समय मरुस और परमेश्वर दोनों ही हैं। आदिये पवित्रात्मक के कुछ पदों पर ध्यान दें :

(1) "अदि मैं बचन था, और बचन परमेश्वर के साथ था और बचन "बचन" अर्थात् मसीह यीशु। (यूहन्ना 1 : 1, 14)। परमेश्वर था... और बचन देहेयाही हुआ। (यूहन्ना 1 : 1, 14)।

(2) मरुस यीशु ने कहा "जिसने मुझे देखा है उसने पिता को देखा है।" (यूहन्ना 14 : 9)।

- (3) (क) “अब सनातन राजा अर्थात् अविनाशी अनदले अद्वैत परमेश्वर का आदर और महिमा युगानुयुग होता रहे। आमीन।” (1 तिमोथियुस 1 : 17) ।
- (ख) “जो परमधन्य और अद्वैत अधिपति और राजाओं का राजा और प्रभुओं का प्रभु है.....और न उसे किसी मनुष्य ने देखा और न कभी देख सकता है...” (1 तिमोथियुस 6 : 15-16) ।
- (ग) “और मेम्ना उन पर जय पाएगा; क्योंकि वह प्रभुओं का प्रभु और राजाओं का राजा है।” (प्रकाशितवाक्य 17 : 14) ।
- (घ) “दूसरे दिन उसने (यूहन्ना ने) यीशु को अपनी ओर आते देख कर कहा, देखो, यह परमेश्वर का मेम्ना है, जो जगत का पाप उठा ले जाता है।” (यूहन्ना 1 : 29) ।

आज के युग में लोगों के मध्य विभिन्न विचारधाराएं और मत हैं। वास्तव में यह निर्णय करना कि कौन सी विचारधारा ठीक है या कौन सा मत ठीक है अत्यंत ही कठिन है। यह धारणा भी आपत्तिजनक है कि “सभी मत अपने-अपने स्थान पर ठीक हैं।” और यदि हम ऐसा समझते हैं तो वास्तव में हम अंधे हैं जो कि स्वयं तो गडहे में जा गिरेंगे और अन्य लोगों को भी ले डूबेंगे। क्योंकि पवित्रशास्त्र हमें सिखाता है कि हम एक ही मत, विश्वास और आशा को अनुसरण करें। (1 कुरिन्थियों 1 : 10; इफिसियों 4 : 4) । प्रभु यीशु ने कहा “मार्ग और सच्चाई और जीवन मैं ही हूँ; बिना मेरे द्वारा कोई पिता के पास नहीं पहुंच सकता।” (यूहन्ना 14 : 6) । सो पवित्रशास्त्र के अनुसार मार्ग केवल एक ही है अर्थात् जीवन, सच्चाई और भलाई का मार्ग जो कि परमेश्वर ने मानव जाति के लिए तैयार किया है ताकि हर प्राणी परमेश्वर के उद्धार को देखे (लूका 3 : 5-6) । यदि लोग अपने मनों को दीन करें वा अपने पूर्वद्वेषों से मुक्त होकर इस मार्ग की खोज पवित्रशास्त्र में करें तो निश्चय ही इस मार्ग को समझेंगे और अपनाने में कोई कठिनाई न होगी। इस मार्ग में यदि हम धीरजपूर्वक बने रहें तो निश्चय ही स्वयं को फलदायी बनायेंगे। (लूका 8 : 15) । जो निर्बल हैं वे भी चंगे होकर पाले हुए बछड़े की नाई कूदेंगे और फांदेंगे। (मलाकी 4 : 2) ।

आज आप कौन से मार्ग पर चल रहे हैं? इसका निर्णय आप स्वयं कीजिए कि कौन सा मार्ग अपने लिये आपने अपनाया है। क्योंकि अभी समय है, जो हां अभी वह समय है, जो बहुत ही मूल्यवान है और आप उसका लाभ उठा सकते हैं, अर्थात् अपनी आत्मा का उद्धार प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। क्योंकि आप जानते हैं कि बीता हुआ समय कभी वापस नहीं आता।

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On one occasion when Jesus had been condemned because he associated with sinners, he stopped their mouths by likening himself to a physician which would not go to those who were well, but to those who were sick. Then he said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Mk. 2 : 17.) Even in the cities of the Galilean lake where Jesus did most of his preaching People were not exempt from his upbraiding because they had not repented at his preaching. (Matt. 11:20-24.) Among the very last words which Jesus spoke before he ascended back to the Father in heaven, he emphasized upon the importance of his trained ambassadors who would later be inspired that they should preach repentance to all the nations: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day : And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem." (Lk. 24: 46-47.) Therefore we find that the first and last words of Jesus Christ involved the preaching of repentance.

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