

THE BIBLE TEACHER

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EDITORIAL

What Does The Bible Teach?

"Indeed let God be true but every man a liar."

The apostle Paul made the above statement, in Romans 3:4, to prove valid the judgment of God, concerning His requirements. Man often does not understand why God require certain things from him. This was true of Adam and Eve, as well as of so many others of whom we read in the pages of the Bible. We are reminded of Naaman of 2 Kings 5, who was told by God's prophet to go and dip himself seven times in the river Jordan to be cleansed of His leprosy. To Naaman that was a big joke. He got mad and became extremely furious, and instead of heading toward Jordan, where God had asked him to go, he chose to go back to his house. Naaman had his own views and conditions. He said, "Indeed, I said to myself!" In other words, he had already convinced himself what God ought to have told him or had done in his case. He wasn't willing to follow what God had told him to do. But he would have gladly followed if God was willing to accept what Naaman had thought that God should have done.

Man has always wanted to have His own way. Yet, God has given His will to man. First, he spoke through the fathers, and then through the prophets, as we read in the Old Testament of the Bible. But today He speaks to us through His Son or by what

is written in the New Testament of Christ. (Hebrews 1:1). Suppose one want to know what must one do to become a Christian or a follower of Christ? God has revealed in His book, the Bible, in the New Testament of Christ, very clearly that one must hear the gospel of Christ, and believe in him, and repent of sins and confess Him to be the Son of God, and be baptized (immersed in water) for the remission or forgiveness of sins (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; 8:35-39). Why not do what God says to do to become a Christian? Why should preachers not tell the same thing to everyone, as it is given in the book of God? It has become a trend now for those who are writing leaflets or tracts for distribution; and also some of the publishers of the Bible are following the same line; that on the last page or at the end of their writings they are telling people what they should do if they want to become Christian. And here is what they are telling them to do: "You can right now become a Christian." they say, "Through the following prayer one can submit to Christ. Pray this prayer: "heavenly Father, I have sinned against you and other people. I confess my sin. I pray to you to please accept me again as your child so that I may live with you forever. I believe that you have punished my sins through your Son Jesus Christ and have taken away my sins as far as the east is from the west. Now make me acceptable before you. Put on me the dress of righteousness. Give me your Holy Spirit and make me so complete that you may bring through me peace, joy, love, kindness, tenderness and purity. Because I ask all these in the name of my new Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen."

Now on the surface, this sounds very reasonable and good too, that is, pray this prayer and become a Christian. But has God commanded this? Is there an example in the Bible where any people were told to do this to become Christians? This reasoning of becoming a Christian by saying a prayer, sounds exactly as Naaman had said. His reasoning was, "Indeed, I said to myself, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy." (2 Kgs. 5:11). But God didn't do that. He didn't do that even when Naaman got angry and left, after hearing what God had told him to do. God wanted him to go to the water and dip in it seven times. "Indeed, let God be true but

every man a liar."

The Great Judgment Day

J.C. CHOATE

We are all familiar with the courts of our land where the one who breaks the law is taken to be tried before a judge and jury. If that person is found guilty, he or she will have to face some type of punishment.

Maybe we are not as familiar with the great judgment day that the God of heaven has planned for all of us at some point in the future. If we are not aware of it, we need to learn more about it so that we can become prepared.

Please consider the following questions and answers that will help us in our preparation for that day:

1. When will the great judgment day taken place?

Certain specific things will occur before the judgment; but no one knows just when those things will happen. For instance, Christ will return before the judgment takes place. He promised His disciples that He will come again (John 14:1-3). He has not said, however, when that particular date will be. Rather, we are told that He will come as a thief in the night. Peter wrote, *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night . . ."* (2 Peter 3:10). That is, Jesus will come at an unannounced time. We are also told in 2 Peter 3:10 that at His coming, *"the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."* Also, at the coming of the Lord, all the dead, both good and evil, will be resurrected. Christ himself said, *"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation"* (John 5:28,29). Those who are righteous and who are still living at the Lord's return will be caught up in the air to meet Him in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

2. Who will be there?

All will be there—all who have ever lived, both the righteous and the unrighteous. Paul tells us that *"we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"* (Romans 14:10).

3. Who will be the judge?

Christ Himself will be the judge (Acts 17:30,31). Paul wrote, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in the body, whether it be good or bad"* (2 Corinthians 5:10).

4. How will He judge?

He knows us, He knows everything we have ever done, every thought we have ever thought, and everything we have ever said and desired. He will judge us without partiality, without being a respecter of persons. Peter could see that God was no respecter of persons in dealing with Jews and Gentiles, and the judgment will be even further proof of that fact (Acts 10:34). Paul said, *"For there is no respect of persons with God"* (Romans 2:11).

5. What will follow the judgment?

The wicked will *"go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal"* (Matthew 25:46). This will be final. There will be no second chance. The soul will live forever either in heaven or hell (Luke 16).

My friends, are you prepared to stand before the Lord at the judgment to give an answer for all you have done in this life? Will you hear Him say, *"Well done,"* or will you hear him say, *"Depart from me"*? Eternity for each one of us will be determined by the preparations we make now for that day.

God sent His Son into this world to die on the cross that we might be saved in this world and in the world to come. If we will believe in Him, repent of our sins, confess Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized for the remission of our sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), then He will save us and add us to His spiritual family, the church (Acts 2:47). If we will then remain faithful to Him unto death, we will receive a crown of eternal life (Revelation 2:10), and live with God forevermore. (Revelation 22:14). If we refuse to believe in Him, or to obey Him, or to live the faithful Christian life, then we will be lost for all eternity.

(Matthew 7:21-23; Matthew 7:13;14). The decision is up to you and to me. The judgment day will come for all of us. May God help us to prepare for that day.

Especially For Women

Have You Thought About This?

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

People minimize the church, saying that our primary focal point should be Christ and the great sacrifice He made for us.

But, the actuality, **God's focal point is the church!** In the stream of history, His goal was not the death of Christ, but what that death accomplished—the restoration to Himself of the souls of men! This is the definition of the church: a body of humans restored to God. In this sense Christ, Himself, served the church, and His death was the means to the end God sought!

No, we must not minimize the One who died to make life possible, but neither should we be guilty of minimizing the prize so precious to God and to our Lord that He made the supreme sacrifice to obtain it for Himself!

Have you thought about this?

Every living human is traveling on a way. Physically, we are going from life to death. The way we are traveling may also lead to spiritual life or it may end in spiritual death. But it is an inescapable fact that all of us are moving toward one destination or the other.

Which end will we reach?

Have you thought about this?

People, as a whole, have decided that there are thousands of ways we might travel. They feel that the choice makes no difference. But it does. In actuality, our choice will determine whether we find spiritual life or death at the end of the way.

Will we follow the gods and rituals of some ancient religion? Will we choose cults and mysticism? Does the road of the

majority appeal to us? Will our parents' choice be ours, too? Will we follow the religious begun by men? Will the nearest denomination satisfy us? Will we decide we are good enough, on our own merit, without any form of religion?

Have you thought about this?

The Bible says: *"There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

"Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own step" (Jeremiah 10:23).

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6).

He explained further, *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved . . ."* (John 10:9).

Jesus is the door to what? He answers, *"I am the door of the sheep . . . I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by my own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd"* (John 10:7, 14-16).

Have you thought about this?

Humans may tell themselves that there are many ways, and that they are free to choose the way they like best. But Jesus, God's Son and our Saviour, says there are only two ways—not the hundreds or thousands that humans have devised—only two:

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

Have you thought about this?

According to Jesus,

- How many truths are there? **One.**
- How many Saviours are there? **One.**
- How many doors are there? **One.**
- How many Shepherds are there? **One.**
- How many flocks are there? **One.**
- How many ways to life are there? **One.**

Have you thought about this?

In the New Testament, the strait and narrow way is identified as a body or group of people. Read with me:

- Saul asked letters of authority "... so that if he found any who were of **the Way**, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:2).

So, the people of the **Way** were literal, identifiable people who were being persecuted.

- "And about that time there arose a great commotion about **the Way**" (Acts 19:23). In Ephesus, some of the people listened to Paul as he reasoned and persuaded concerning the things of the kingdom of God, but others were hardened and did not believe, and they "... spoke evil of **the Way** before the multitude" (Acts 19:8,9).

So people spoke evil of the **Way** when they rejected the preaching about the kingdom of God. The long awaited **kingdom** was **The Way, the church**.

- Paul said, "But this I confess to you, that according to **the Way** which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers ..." (Acts 24:14).

So Paul was a part of this **Way**, this body of people, who worshipped God in a distinct and recognizable manner.

Have you thought about this?

Jesus said that there is only one way that leads to life, and **He is that Way**. Early Christians who followed that **Way** were not popular; the doctrine they taught was not popular; they were hated and persecuted because they taught what their Lord had taught: that there are not many ways; there are not many acceptable religions; there are not many churches; there are not many ways to be saved; there are not many ways to worship God. **Jesus taught, and early Christians taught "only one way"**.

Jesus said, "I will build my church ..." (Matthew 16:18). Paul wrote, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit: "... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Jesus promised to return for His church, which is His people, His kingdom, His bride (Revelation 22:12; John 14:3; Matthew 25:31-46). Will you and I be in "that Way."

Why I Am A Member Of The Church Of Christ?

FRANCIS DAVID

Many people ask me why are you a member of the church of Christ? They say why are you not a Catholic or Baptist? The Bible tells us that we need to be ready to give the answer regarding our hope. In 1 Peter 3:15, we read: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." Here, I want to give some points to support my answer to this question.

There are several reasons that we can mention here to show our relationship with Christ and His church. The church "ekklisia" is the body of Lord's people. Let us see all these reasons in the light of the word of God. John says: "Thy word is truth" and this is the word which will judge us in the last day." Jn. 12:48.

The first reason that we find in this regard is this that the Lord Jesus is the one who built this church. This was not built by some human builder but rather by the spiritual builder which is Jesus. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus promised to build His church. The church of Christ was not instituted by any human builder. We know some churches were instituted by John Wesley, Joseph Smith, John Calvin, and many others. Jesus had all the authority to build His church and He did build one. He had all the authority in heaven and on earth. (Matt. 8:18). Therefore we see that this church was built by Christ and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Mt. 16:19).

I am a member of this church because this church has a spiritual foundation. The foundation is Jesus Christ. Peter had earlier made a confession to Christ that "thou art Christ" and Jesus promised to build His church on this foundation or

confession that Peter made concerning Christ. Jesus is the true and solid foundation. Apostle Paul says: "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is Jesus Christ." (1-Cor. 3:11).

According to some there might be many churches with different names and doctrines but the Bible says through Paul that there is only one body. "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4). Christ is the only head of this body. There is no one on this earth who can take this headship. In Eph. 1:22,23, we read and it says: "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all. He is the head of this body or Church (Col. 1:18). This is a solid reason to tell you that why I belong to the church of Christ."

Another reason that we can see here is that this church has a Scriptural name. If you call yourself a Baptist, Lutheran, Pentecostal or Salvation Army, you are following the human path. These are the names which have been given by various religious leaders and people just follow them. The church of Christ has a Scriptural name. In Romans 16:16 Paul talking to the Christians says: "Churches of Christ salute you." The church must wear the name of Christ because he is the Owner, saviour of this body. He is the Scriptural builder. If you call yourselves "Lutherans," it means you are glorifying Luther and not Christ. The Bible says, that Church is the Bride of Christ, and the bride (wife) wears the name of her husband. (Eph. 5). No one can deny that church of Christ is Scriptural in name.

The church of Christ is an undenominational body and therefore its against all divisions. The world is divided so much religiously. There are hundreds of denominations and all have their own beliefs and practices. We just follow the Bible and speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent. You don't find the names of these denominations in your Bible. We teach unity among the brethren which is based on the Scriptures (John 17). I am a member of the church of Christ because it is non-denominational and one in unity. This church is neither Catholic nor protestant.

This church was established in Jerusalem in AD 33. The other churches and denominations were started in different places and countries but the church had its beginning in a

scriptural place. Those who heard the preaching of Peter they believed and confessed Jesus and were baptised and we read that about three thousand people were added to the church on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:47). The admission in this church is not based on human practices but rather based on the Scriptures. When I was baptised or buried in the watery grave, I was added by the Lord Himself in the body or the church of Christ.

I am a member of the church of Christ because it teaches that there is only one plan of salvation. There are number of people who teach that salvation is by faith only but the Bible based plan of salvation consist of belief (Jn. 8:24; Heb. 11:6); Confession of Jesus is the Son of God (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10), Repentance of sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30), and Baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), and all those who obey the gospel in this manner are saved in Christ and His church (Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13).

There are other number of reasons that we can mention here but these are just a few to tell you that church of Christ is scriptural body of Christ and that is why I am a member and a part of this church. Are you in Christ, His body or church, if not you can do it today by your obedience to the gospel. It is sad that many know the truth but are unwilling to admit that they are wrong. The Bible says: "And you shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free."

Abiding in the Perfect Will of God

THOMAS R. DOHLING

I want to do your will, my God. Your law dominates my thoughts (Psalm 40:8).

Jesus said: "I have come to do your will, O God" [Heb. 10:7 (Ps. 40:8)]

Are we as committed to doing God's will no matter what happens as our Lord Jesus was? He was committed to doing God's will even when it meant leaving aside His throne & glory (and His Father's bosom) and dying helpless and alone on the

cross? Do we abide (remain) in His will? It simply takes a decision on our part; a commitment to make God's will our only purpose for living on this earth. Once we make that decision, we'll be very happy. Nothing is greater than being in the will of God. It is actually joyous, it is wonderful, it is glorious. The most blessed thing that God ever led me to see and understand from His Word was that I could know His perfect will for my life. I did not have to go in and out of His will; I could know it and abide in it all the time.

Romans 12:1,2 says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This means that we have to voluntarily, willingly and consciously surrender ourselves wholly to God.

1. Present/Offer your bodies to God

Our bodies hold our soul and spirit. In effect this passage tells us to offer our whole beings to God. Hold nothing back from Him. He did not hold back. In His only begotten Son, He left aside His glory and offered Himself. We have to learn to hold nothing back from God. Unless and until we learn this truth, we won't fully know His will. In our own selves and of our own will we strive in vain to abide in the will of God. We fail to turn ourselves completely over to God. Then complain of spiritual barrenness! The key to spiritual fulfillment is to offer ourselves (body, soul, spirit & will) to God. Why? God has been merciful to us and has first claim on us. We are not our own, we belong to God (1 Cor. 6:19,20). When we offer ourselves wholly to God, we are conforming to His will. We become living sacrifices for His use according to His purpose. Each day, our subjection to God is a free-will offering of mind and body; in it, we exchange weakness for strength and doubt for faith. This pleases Him.

2. Do not conform to the pattern of this world

What is the pattern of this world? Self-service, self-projection, self-motivation, self-advancement, self-glory (vain glory), independence (dependence on self) and the like. When we continue in this pattern of the world, we will not know God's

will. 'Self' will be on the throne; self will be the god to be admired, adored and worshipped by all. We will make every effort to bring attention to ourselves by the things we think, say and do. Even God will be called upon to serve us! As Christians, we are not to be like the world in our thoughts, words and deeds.

3. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind

A mental shake-up is essential if we are to abide in the will of God! Our perspectives and attitudes need to change! As Christians we now "have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Our thoughts, words and deeds and indeed our whole lives become **God-centered**. We devote ourselves to God-service, God-projection, God-motivation, God-advancement, God-glory, God-dependence. We let go of self (deny self of its fancies and vain glories). We allow God to remove self from the throne and take His rightful place in us in such a way that we: (a) think God's thoughts, (b) see the words as God sees it, (c) view life the way God views our lives, and (d) have the same attitude as that of Jesus about everything.

If we are really honest with ourselves, we will find that we are living two lives—half self-centered and half (maybe a quarter or less) God-centered! Don't we all, according to the flesh, seek self-service, self-projection, self-motivation, self-advancement, self-glory (vain glory), independence (from God, dependence on self)? How sincerely or deeply do we seek to project and advance God? All of us (if we are honest will concede that we) sadly, fall well short of the mark/standard set by God.

What is God's good, pleasing and Perfect will? Let us examine God's will in some key areas:

Personal life: Matt. 22:37

Church life: 2 Cor. 8:1-5

Family life: Eph. 5:22; 6:4

Societal life: Matt. 22:39

Work life: Eph. 6:5-8

Citizen Life: Rom. 13:1-7

Roman 12:9-21; 13:8-14 teach about doing God's will.

Mk. 3:35: Those who do (remain in) God's will belong to Christ!

John 7:17: God's will is contained in the teaching of Christ!

Heb. 10:36: Endurance needed to remain in God's will!

1 Pet. 4:1,2, 19: Christians live their lives on earth for God's will!

1 Jn. 2:17: One who does God's will remains for ever!

1 Thessa. 4:3, 5:18: Becoming holy and giving thanks is God's will!

Obedying all of Christ's teaching is remaining in God's will.

"We will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:23).

If indeed God lives in us, we will remain in His will.

We will consciously and deliberately turn off all worldly, sinful thoughts, words, and deeds and prevent them from invading our lives! Not by ourselves but by the power of God living in us! As long as we are totally surrendered to God, and He is on the throne of our lives, we continue to remain in His will and seek to do that which is well-pleasing to Him!

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes and is baptized shall be saved and have eternal life." (merger of John 3:16, Mark 16:16 is mine)
This is God's will.

Where are we today—In God's will or outside it? Is God on the throne or self? Who do we seek to project in our lives—self or God? Has our minds been transformed, renewed? Do we have the mind (attitude) of Christ? Let us examine ourselves and see what changes and adjustments we need to make in order to abide in the will of God. Remember, the Bible is God's Will and Testament. It portrays God's dealings with man through covenants and promises. As long as we abide by the terms of the will/testament/covenant, we are blessed according to God's promises. When we fail to abide by the terms/conditions of the will/testament/covenant, we miss the blessings promised by God. The New Testament is in force today. Choose to abide by the terms of God's will (the New Will for man, the covenant of grace) and walk in it in order to inherit the promises of Almighty God! As His children, you will inherit all the eternal blessings and abide with Him for ever!

Let The Bible Answer

ROBERT MEREDITH

What are the different kinds of worship mentioned in the scriptures? There are basically four different kinds of worship of which one can read in the Bible. Three of these are condemned and will lead one to eternal damnation. The other is the only one which is pleasing and acceptable to God.

Ignorant worship is pictured by the Apostle Paul in Acts 17:23-30. Paul was in the cultural centre of the first century, Athens. The Grecians were known for their philosophers and their many temples and altars to many pagan gods. Upon seeing an altar with an inscription: *"To the unknown God,"* Paul used it as an opportunity to preach to them about the one true God with which they were not familiar. The Athenians had erected this altar just in case they had missed a god. (They believed in many gods.) The Apostle said they were worshipping ignorantly. They simply did not know better. But this ignorant worship did them no good. They were told they had to repent. Some today can worship ignorantly. (They simply do not know better.) Just as then, today ignorant worship is not pleasing unto God.

A second type of worship is Will worship, as pictured in Colossians 2:8, 20-23. In this text, Paul portrays some who worshipped after their will and not God's. Some believe that they can worship God as they please and dictate and that God will accept it. However, Isaiah wrote, *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts; neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are MY ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts"* (Is. 55:8-9). When one worships God, it must be as He wills not as we choose.

Vain worship is another false type of worship. Jesus spoke of this type in Matthew 15:8-9. Vain worship is any worship that follows the commandments and doctrines of men. The Lord would declare in Matthew 15:13 that all who followed such would be rooted up. If one's worship is not based on a *"thus saith the Lord,"* but in man's false teachings, then his worship is empty, useless or vain.

The only kind of worship which is acceptable to God is described in John 4:24. The Worship that is in spirit (having the proper attitude and being mentally involved in) and in truth (as directed by God; John 17:17).

All worship is not pleasing to God. He tells us this in His word. The only way one's worship is acceptable is if he worships as set forth in the New Testament (John 4:24; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Col. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 2:8; 2 Tim. 4:2).

The Word of God Not Broken, Bound, Nor Buried

J. NOEL MERIDETH

The Bible is a vast library of sixty-six books in one volume, written by forty men over a period of sixteen hundred years. It has one message—progressive, constructive, and complete. It is divine in authorship, human in penmanship, infallible in authority, infinite in scope, universal in interest, personal in application, regenerative in power, and inspired in totality.

This Word of God, the masterpiece of God, the Book above and beyond all books, as a river is beyond a rill in reach, as the sun is beyond a candle in brightness, as the Atlantic is above and beyond a mud puddle in glory, is immortal in its hopes—a complete code of laws, the most authentic history ever published, the best covenant ever made, the best deed ever written, and the best will ever executed. The accuracy of its statements and prophecies is substantiated by every turn of the excavator's spade in Bible lands, by history and by the multitude of inscriptions deciphered among classic ruins.

From rusty coins and corroded marbles, we find confirmation of its won veracity. Infinite in height, infinite in depth, it is—and will forever be. It breaks the fetters of the slave, takes the heat out of life's fierce fever, the pain out of parting, the sting out of death, and the gloom out of the grave.

The Bible addresses all mankind, speaks with binding claims, and commands the obedience of all. It is the divine

revelation of the world's creation, the soul's salvation, human destiny and the realities of eternity. It offers the first and demands the last by its unequivocal, "Thus saith the Lord."

NOT BROKEN

"If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken)" (John 10:35). The Jews in this passage took up stones to throw at Jesus because they said He should not apply the word "God" to Himself. Jesus' refutation is accomplished by means of reason and Scripture. Major premise: The Scripture cannot be broken; minor premise: The Scripture calls men commissioned by God "gods" (quoted from Psalm 82:6); therefore: Jesus, sanctified and sent into the world by God, is rightly called "God" in a correspondingly higher sense. The axiom in parentheses "and the scripture cannot be broken" is objective and absolute. The parentheses simply show it is a parenthetical phrase or explanatory comment. Every statement of the Scripture stands immutably, indestructible in its verity, unaffected by denial, human ignorance, or criticism, charges of errancy or other subjective attack. No word of it can be destroyed.

NOT BOUND

"Wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the Word of God is not bound" (II Timothy 2:9). Paul, a mighty missionary, a valiant soldier of the cross, a great preacher who traveled the Roman Empire with the truths of redemption and left a trail of glory across the Gentile world, this marvelous man who dotted plains and cities with churches he planted, was in bounds—but the Gospel he preached was not bound. Paul died, his pen is inactive, but the great message of truth goes on. His epistles and message still continue. Time and again when the Word of God has seemed to be confronted by insuperable barriers of hostility, indifference, rivalry, and materialism, it has burst its bonds and gone on its conquering way. There is no prison for the Word of God.

NOT BURIED

"For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than

any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). "But the Word of the Lord abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:25). There have been and are those who have tried to bury the Word of God. (1) There was the Pagan persecution under Diocletian. He made death the penalty for any person who dared to own a copy of the Scriptures. After the decree had been in effect two years, he boasted that he had erased the Scriptures from the earth. But, this was soon found to be an idle boast for a few years later, Constantine desired copies of the New Testament for all the churches of his empire, and within a few hours, fifty copies of God's Word were made accessible to him. (2) There was the Papal persecution of the Bible in a different form—locking it up from the common people and putting the key in the hands of the priests. Rome became the jailer of the Word of God. Human legends and traditions were urged in its place. But, John Wycliffe, after twenty-two years on the task, completed the first English Bible in 1382. Wycliffe was tried and excommunicated by the Roman Church, and forty years after his death, the authorities dug up his bones, burned them, and scattered the ashes on the River Swift. Tyndale published the first printed New Testament in 1525. He said that one day he would make the boy that drives the plow in England know more Scripture than the pope himself. His last words, before being burned at the stake, were: "Lord, open Thou the King of England's eyes." Today, the Bible has been translated into over one thousand languages and dialects. (3) Then, another enemy of the Bible stood up as Goliath of Gath challenging Israel—Rationalism, the deification of human reason. The Bible miracles are denied, the deity of Jesus is denied, and the incarnation and resurrection are called myths. No matter under what veils of pretense it makes its assault, rationalism regards the Bible as a human product.

Some have cut up Scripture with a penknife, some have tried to drown it in the muddy waters of their philosophy and ignorance, and some have tried to laugh it out of court. But, the Bible stands alive. It is a sword in battle, a guiding light, a gate to heaven, a standard for youth, a comfort for the aged, salvation for the sinner, and grace for God's children.

The Importance Of Singing

PAUL VAUGHN

Christianity is involved with spiritual songs. The songs of the church bring gladness and give hope. They will encourage Christians to be faithful, courageous, helpful, loving, and kinds. Singing has received a notable measure of attention in the Bible. After the Israelites escaped from the pursuit of the Egyptians through the Red Sea, they sang a song of gratitude to God. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God and I will exalt Him" (Exodus 15:1-2). They were singing from a thankful heart to God for His protection and wonderful blessings.

In the book of Psalms, singing is emphasized and was important to God's people. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation" (Psalm 95:1). "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being" (Psalm 104:33).

The church that Jesus built with His death at Calvary is a singing church. Paul told the church at Ephesus to sing, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:18-19). Just before His death on the cross, Jesus and the disciples "... sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Mark 14:26). What can be learned about the importance of singing in the worship service?

SINGING IS AN UTTERANCE OF TRUST

Trust is an indisputable ingredient of the Christian life. It is relying on God for all the blessings and support He has promised in the Scriptures. One cannot be pleasing to God without faith. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder

of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). This trust, faith in God, should be strong and not waver. Paul said, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:14). Those who are wavering in their faith may not be singing enough.

There are songs that express one's faith in God, Jesus the Bible and the church. They are able to strengthen the heart of the faithful child of God and shore up one in danger of falling away from the family of God. Singing will help Christians live by faith because they admonish one another to trust in God. The importance of singing in building faith is of tremendous value to the Christian.

SINGING IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

Singing is the divinely approved way of worshipping God in music. There are two types of music, mechanical instrumental music and vocal music. God chose vocal music as the music to be used in worship. It is written, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:18-19). Again, it is written, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).

All worship to God must be done in a way approved by God. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). What does it mean to worship God "in spirit and truth?" To worship God in spirit is to worship honestly, from the heart with the right attitude. Chicanery and insincerity is never to be a part of the true worship of God. Worshipping God in truth is worshipping according to His Word. Jesus defines truth in the Gospel of John. He said, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Only the worship that is directed by God's Word is acceptable to Him. Man should worship God as God's Word directs, by the authority of Christ. "And whatsoever

ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Colossians 3:17).

Vocal music is the only authorized music in worship in the Christian Age. All other forms of music in worship have come about because of the wants and desires of men. These doctrines of men are unacceptable because they are not of truth, authorized by God's Word. Thus, mechanical instrumental music in the worship of God is vain worship because it is from man and not from God. It is written, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but in vain they do worship Me, teaching of doctrines and commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8-9).

CONCLUSION

The music of the church should encourage Christians to right living, faithful service, and unity with God. When Christians assemble to worship God, tones of joy should fill the buildings, praising God for His great love, honor, and power. Music of the church is God-centered and not man-centered because faithful Christians desire to please God and not self. Let all show their trust in God by singing as He has authorized in the Scriptures.

The Positive And The Negative

WILLIAM MARDELL LYNCH

An atom is the smallest particle of matter that has separate and distinct chemical characteristics. The chief components of the various atoms of matter have been named electrons and protons. In various combinations and associations, we have other elementary particles of atoms, mesons, neutrinos and deuterons, but in this article, we are not interested in these. It is with the positive and the negative principles that we are concerned here.

The electron is the smallest-known negatively-charged

particle in the universe. The proton is a positively-charged particle equal in amount to the electron but about 1,850 times heavier. The simplest nucleus of all particles of matter is the hydrogen atoms made up of one electron and one proton. This tells me much. There is an element of the positive and the negative in all the universe but the positive outweighs the negative 1,850 times!

The battery in your car has a positive and a negative pole. And, both have to be connected to get the power to your car's starter. Your car has two to four forward gears and but one reverse. Would it not be inconvenient to have a car with only forward gears?

God gave us positive and negative commands. He has prepared a heaven and a hell. In all areas, in all places, in all things, we have to have both. We have hot and cold, height and depth, bitter and sweet, love and hate, light and heavy.

Of late, we are hearing too much in the church the philosophy of a popular song of a few years ago: "Accentuate the Positive and Eliminate the Negative." You can no more eliminate all the negative in the work of the Lord and achieve what God wants done than you can disconnect the negative pole of your battery and start your car, remove the reverse gear of your auto and have convenient transportation, or remove all the electrons of all the atoms of matter and still have a material universe.

Some of us have become so positive in our thinking that we are asserting that under no circumstances can one human being judge another. We have heard the precious words of our blessed Lord, "Judge not that ye be not judged," misapplied so much. Certainly, we are not to judge censoriously, and if we do, Jesus has already informed us the kind of judgment that will come to us. But, the same Christ that said in Matthew 7:1, "Judge not that ye be not judged" said in John 7:24, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

On the matter of love, we have some today that have gone over-board. They have become so enamored with the idea of the positive that they think it almost criminal to disagree with anyone on anything. Some parents have tried this theory in the permissive growing-up of their children and they have produced offspring that respect neither God nor man, who can get along

with neither society nor themselves. Certainly, we are to love; love God, our fellows, but not to the point that we refuse to object to wrong, fight evil, or oppose falsehood.

The New Testament is filled with positive precepts and examples but there are some things that are not to be done, some teachings that are not to be tolerated; in short, there is some negative along with the positive that is absolutely necessary. May God help us to be as well integrated as the atom, as balanced as the battery of our cars and as practical as the four-speed transmission with reverse. "Accentuate the Positive" but don't "eliminate the Negative"!

The Teacher And His Teaching

FRED DILLON

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16).

In this brief passage, the apostle to the Gentiles gives Timothy a double-barreled charge—one that all preachers need. Those who labored in the first century needed it as well as those who attempt to evangelize the world today.

1. "TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF"

Every preacher, yea every Christian, must first and foremost watch their own lives. The same Paul admonished the brethren at Corinth to "examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith—prove your own selves" (II Corinthians 13:5).

Before I can reach out to others, I must examine myself. I must prove my own self. How many preachers and teachers are there around today who can teach the truth, preach the truth, and have great followings; but do not live the truth, do not do the truth. In many cases, their own lives are in shambles.

I can never help someone pull a mote from the eye when I

have a beam in my own. This is why Paul in admonishing the Christians at Galatia told them, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1).

I cannot bear my brother's burdens when my burdens are pulling me down into the depths of sin and death. Paul cautioned, "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6:3). He added, "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." (Galatians 6:4).

2. "AND UNTO THE DOCTRINE"

(I Timothy 4:16b)

It makes no difference how clean and pure I keep myself or how much I am able to impress the world with my goodness, unless I have the right doctrine, I am still in trouble with my Lord. Beloved John was swift to point out, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God" (II John 9).

There are undoubtedly and even reportedly many "good people" in the world who know not the true doctrine of Christ and who believe they are right with God.

Cornelius was a man who was just, devout, one who feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the people and prayed to God always (Acts 10:2). No doubt, this Roman centurion was very influential to all around him, especially his family. When the angel of God came and informed him that he needed to send men to Joppa and call for Peter, he was made to understand that he needed to be told "what thou oughtest to do" (Acts 10:6).

That Cornelius was willing and anxious to follow God's instructions is now a matter of Biblical history. Not only did he send for Peter, but gathered together all his kinsmen and near friends and announced to the apostle, "Now therefore are we all here present before God to hear all things commanded thee of God" (Acts 10:33).

With the right kind of lifestyle and the true doctrine of Christ

sown into his heart, Cornelius as well as his family were baptized in the name of the Lord and prayed that Peter would tarry with them.

Paul instructed Timothy to "hold fast the form of sound words," and told another son in the Gospel, Titus by name, "to speak the things which become sound doctrine."

Charged by Paul to "Preach the word" (II Timothy 4:1-5), the young evangelist was also exhorted to be an example of believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith and in purity" (I Timothy 4:11-12).

While we raise our children to behave, to be good citizens, and to stay out of trouble . . . "to abstain from all appearance of evil," we must simultaneously feed them on the milk and later the meat of the New Testament of Christ. We must develop them with an attitude to "desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:12).

We must never sacrifice doctrine to make those around us believe we are loving, kind, warm-hearted people.

On the other hand, we must never forget to "present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service" (Romans 12:1-2).

If we conform to the world and sacrifice the doctrine of Christ, we simply become part of the world and out of step with the truth. When we know that only the truth can make us free from sin and death, we must, "buy the truth and sell it not." We must bind it upon the tables of our hearts.

There is great power in this verse in I Timothy. If we are willing to watch our own lives, and still hold fast to the doctrine of Christ, we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ with "blessed assurance, Jesus is mine." If we sacrifice either of the Holy Spirit's admonitions, we will be in trouble with our Lord. We must take Him at His Word. He doesn't lie! (Romans 3:4).