

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## **What Does the Bible Teach?**

***Preach The Word! Be Ready In Season  
And Out Of Season***

AS THIS publication of The Bible Teacher enters in its 45<sup>th</sup> year of printing, we are thankful to God for enabling us to continue to publish The Bible Teacher each month without interruption. Through all these years we have endeavored to acquaint readers more fully with the truth of God's inspired word as He has revealed for all in His book, the Bible. We appreciate readers of The Bible Teacher who from time to time write or call and encourage us by saying how much they like articles they read in this Journal. Some of you have been receiving this magazine for many years, also we continue to add new readers as and when we receive a request. While we try to publish a variety of articles in each issue of The Bible Teacher, written by sound and faithful Christians, the theme "Pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity" remains the same.

Almost two thousand years ago, as the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Philippians had said, "For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe." (Phil.3:1) We believe God's word of the Bible remains unchanged forever. (1 Peter 1:24, 25). Although while there are some, as have always been, who twist and wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction (2Peter 3:16), who pervert the souls saving gospel of Jesus Christ into another,

or a social gospel, we will continue to stand with the same old gospel message which Christ in the beginning had commanded his followers to preach in all the world. (Mark 16:15, 16), which is not another (Galatians 1:6-8) and consists of the facts that Christ, to accomplish God's will on earth, died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

The sole purpose of Christ's coming into the world was to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). If there was no sin, and man didn't need redemption from sin to become worthy to live in heaven, after leaving this world forever, there was no need for Christ, who was with God in heaven from the beginning, to become a man and come into this world. (John 1:1, 14). It is because of His sacrificial and propitiatory death on the cross for the sins of humanity, by the foreknowledge and planning of God, that man everywhere has hope to be saved from sins, through obedience to His gospel (Romans 6:17,18) and thus to become worthy to live with God in His heavenly home in all eternity.

This is the message of the entire Bible for the whole world. Man everywhere has always been concerned about the needs of his body—food, clothes, houses and health, etcetera. Man wants to live longer on earth. But however longer, his time on earth is limited nevertheless. (Hebrews 9:27). Christ, therefore, posed the question: "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26).

Through the pages of *The Bible Teacher* we have consistently endeavored to bring to all people God's message of salvation of souls from sin. We are making the readers aware of man's greatest need on earth; what God has done to meet man's most urgent need and what God desires man must do to get reconciled with God, and thus to prepare to live with Him in the next life through all eternity. Is there any other greater work on earth that any man can do? No wonder, then, why Christ before going back to heaven, after accomplishing on earth the greatest task of man's salvation from sin, had told His followers: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to the Father." (John 14:12). To God be the glory.

## **Putting Off The Old Man Of Sin**

### Lesson 21 **LAZINESS**

J.C. CHOATE

AS YOU SURELY know, laziness is where one is not willing to work, when he is able to work, and when he can work. He is one that plays around on the job, if he has a job. He is the type that takes a lot of breaks, sits much of the time, moves at a slow speed, and does as little as possible. I hope you are not that type, but I am sure that you can think of various ones who fits that description. It is sad that there are people like that, but there are.

I have seen people many times, when they were supposed to be at work, just standing and looking around. They would spend a lot of time in talking. From time to time they would do something but they would soon return to the state of doing nothing. I have noticed that people who work on the roads do a lot of this. I have gone into offices and seen many just sitting at their desk. Maybe they were drinking tea, but that was all. Some spend a lot of time walking around from desk to desk, visiting with various ones, going to the rest room, and so on. I could go on with many other similar settings where different types of work are supposed to be going on, but it would be the same. A few would be working but many would not. I have often wondered who could afford to pay these people to do so little, and with people like that on the job, how could anything ever be done that way? It is sad indeed.

The Apostle Paul said to those of his day, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." (Romans 12:11). The word slothful means to be lazy, being slow on the job. Paul says that we should not be that way in serving the Lord or in doing anything else. We should be fervent, serious about it, and producing results. When one is slothful or lazy, he is cheating, he is stealing. He certainly is not earning his pay and that is wrong. When one is lazy or slothful everyone loses. The employer loses because the work is not being done, but he is having to pay for it anyway. Next, the one who is lazy loses because he could lose his job. Even if he is not dismissed, he still loses since he proves that he is not a good worker and therefore there is not much opportunity to be promoted to a higher position in that case.

The wise man, Solomon, said, "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute." (Proverbs 12:24). Do you know what Solomon was saying? He was saying that the diligent, the hard working person, would move ahead and accomplish things but the slothful would drag behind and take what he could get. Again, he said, "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster." (Proverbs 18:9). "The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour." (Proverbs 21:25). "As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed." (Proverbs 26:15). "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." (Proverbs 19:15). "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise ..." (Proverbs 6:6). Here Solomon was using the ant, a small insect, to teach the sluggard or slothful a lesson. He was showing how the ant was always busy storing up food for the winter month. By so doing then it was able to survive. Solomon goes on, "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man." (Proverbs 6:9-11). "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." (Proverbs 19:15). "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing." (Proverbs 20:4). "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." (Ecclesiastes 10:18). And so Solomon, the wise man, had a bit to say about the slothful, the sluggard, the idle, and the lazy people of the world. Actually, he had nothing good to say about them. What good thing could be said about them, then, or today?

While God's word condemns laziness, and such like, the emphasis of the Bible is on work, getting things done, accomplishing something, toiling, laboring, and being industrious. In the very beginning of man's existence God gave him something to do. We read in Genesis 2:15, "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." As a result of Adam and Eve's sin, their work was increased. We read where God said to Adam, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the

herb of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3:17-19).

Going on over to the days of Christ, we know that Jesus was known as a carpenter. (Mark 6:3). Paul worked with his own hands. He said, "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them who were with me." (Acts 20:34). Paul was a tentmaker by trade. Not only does the Bible tell of various ones who worked to earn their living, but there are numerous scriptures that stress this principle in relation to all people. The Lord taught that the labourer is worthy of his hire. (Luke 10:7). Paul said that those who would not provide for their own families had denied the faith and were worse than an infidel. (1 Timothy 5:8).

Have you stopped to think about the fact that if everyone who is able to work would work then that would do away with beggars? Paul said, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." (1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12). But what about those who are lazy and they will not work when they can work? What should we do with them? Should we help them anyway? Hear Paul again: "For even when we were with you, this was commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Should we take that statement seriously? Of course. If one will not work then let him starve to death and get out of the way. Isn't that a pretty hard statement? Not at all. The point is, we should not reward laziness. I have seen beggars come by asking for help, but when given an opportunity to do something to earn it, they refused it and left. Now do you think for a minute that people like that deserve help? Certainly not. Now keep in mind that I am not talking about those who are deserving of help. Rather, I am talking about those who will not work because they are too lazy, and then they want you and me to provide for them. I say, let them starve. But almost 100 per cent of them will not starve. Before it got to that point then they would come around and decide that it would be better to work some, even though they might not like it, than to starve. Try it and see if it doesn't work. But the problem is, there is always someone else down the street that will help. That is a shame because those people will continue to be lazy and let hard working people keep them up.

But again, have you considered the fact that if people will work then that will do away with robbing and stealing. Paul said, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Ephesians 4:28).

One of the big problems in our day is that so many look down on work as being something that is bad and indignant. Too many want positions, not work or jobs. But not everyone can have a position. Someone must get out there and work with their hands and do the dirty jobs. It is true that we might not like to do some of those things, but if that is all there is to do, and we can do it, then let's do it and let's do a good job while we are at it. Take pride in what you do. Work hard. Give a days work for a days pay. Don't try to start at the top. If you do then there is just one way to go and that is down Start where you can, but then you can work your way up to better jobs and better positions.

Not only in physical work, but likewise when it comes to spiritual matters, the Lord has commanded that we obey his teaching. We are exhorted to be doers of the word (James 1:22), to work out our salvation (Philippians 2:12), and to always abound in the work of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58). Christ says that if we will do his commandments (Revelation 22:14), and be faithful to him unto death that he will give us a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10).

But what is the point in all of this? God made us to live, to be active, to work, to earn our living, to provide for our families, to do a good job, and to do it well. We are to use our hands, our minds, and whatever is at our disposal, to labour, to take care of our needs, and to help to provide for those who cannot help themselves. That means that God and his people are opposed to laziness and a do nothing attitude.

## *Does Your Salvation Depend To Any Degree Upon Your Working In The Kingdom?*

EARL BERRY

I ASK THAT you consider this question seriously because some

teach that work is without merit in the plan of salvation. They teach: "Salvation is 100% by the grace of God." They teach: "Regardless of what one does or what one fails to do, has nothing to do with his salvation; that all deserve hell."

In view of this doctrine, I suggest that you give consideration to the scripture cited hereafter:

Matthew 25:21: "His lord said unto him; 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many. Enter thou into the joys of thy lord'."

Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand: 'Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'."

Ask yourself this question: If all deserve hell regardless of what they do or fail to do, will any inherit heaven? If you answer "Yes," how do you explain the following scriptures which affirm God is no respecter of persons: Romans 2:11, Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25, Acts 10:34, and 1 Peter 1:17. Further, how can you explain 1 Timothy 4:8 in which Paul declares that God is a just God and Isaiah in Isaiah 30:18 affirms that God judges righteously?

A safe course to follow in trying to find the right answer is to search the scriptures as Christ directed in John 5:39, and as further emphasized by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:15 to study to rightly divide the *Word*. In John 8:32 Christ promised that the Truth would make us free if we know it. He explained in John 17:17 the *Word* was Truth.

A seeker of truth will never knowingly take a scripture out of context to support a doctrine and will never set one scripture against another, remembering that the *Word* is *Truth*, and *Truth* never contradicts itself. To do such is to place one in the class of the unlearned and unstable that wrest the scriptures to their own destruction—2 Peter 3:17.

My purpose in this is as Peter said in 2 Peter 3:1 & 2, 2 Peter 1:12 & 13 & 20. I have not attempted to interpret the scriptures but to point out what the Word in the following scripture has said:

Philippians 2:7: "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*"

James 2:24: "You see then how a man is *justified by works* and not by faith only."

Luke 6:46: "Why do you call me Lord and do not the *things* which I command you?"

Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do. his *commandments*

that they may have right to the tree of life and enter in the gate into the city."

Titus 2:11 & 12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation *hath appeared* to all men, teaching them that *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts* we should *live soberly, righteously, and godly* in this present world."

Hebrews 12:1: "Let us run. with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Ephesians 5:15: "*Walk circumspectly*, not as fools but as wise."

Ephesians 4:1: "I beseech you that you *walk worthy* of the *vocation* wherewith you are called."

Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone that saith, 'Lord, Lord', shall be saved, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven."

1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be you steadfast, un-movable, always *abounding* in the *work* of the Lord for as much as you know, your *labour* for the *Lord* is not in *vain*."

Romans 2:5: "But after the hardness and impenitent heart treasureth up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation and righteous judgment of God who will *render to every man according to his deeds*."

James 2:26: "Faith without works is dead being alone."

John 9:4: "Let US *work* while it is day for the night cometh when none can."

1 Corinthians 3:13: "Every man's *work shall be made manifest*."

2 Corinthians 5:10: "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*."

Ecclesiastes 12:14: "God shall bring *every work into judgment*."

James 1:25: "But whosoever *looketh* unto the perfect law of liberty and *continueth therein being a doer* of the law, this man shall be *blessed in his deed*."

Galatians 6:5: "Let us not be weary in *well doing* for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please God for he that cometh to God must *believe* that He is and is a rewarder of those who *diligently seek him*." Thus *faith is a work*.

2 Thessalonians 1:11: "That our God would count you worthy of his calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness and the *work of faith* with power."

Galatians 5:6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything but a *faith that works* by love."



Hebrews 6:10: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your *work* and *labour* of love."

John 6:25: "This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He hath sent"

2 Corinthians 5:7: "We walk by faith, not by sight."

Ephesians 6:8: "Knowing that whatsoever any good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord."

1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life."

2 Timothy 2:3: "Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

In view of the scriptures cited heretofore, please study Matthew 25:31 to 46 in which Christ gives us a picture of the judgment. Notice beginning with verse 34 that the Son of man is coming in glory with all the holy angels with Him and then He shall sit on the throne of His glory and He shall gather before Him all nations and He shall separate them one from another. He shall set the sheep on His right hand but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those at His right hand: "Come you blessed of my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." In verse 40 the King explains why these on the right hand inherit the kingdom. In verse 41 the King says unto those on His left hand: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The following verses tell why those on the left go away into everlasting punishment. Does this picture indicate that the separation was based upon what some did and what some did not do?

The conclusion may be found in the following: Revelation 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give a crown of life", and in Ecclesiastes 12:13 & 14: "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man." Sometimes confusion and misunderstanding arise because the Word has not been handled aright (rightly divided). Paul was a Jew and he wrote to the Jews in Rome, Ephesus, and Galatia who had become Christians but were holding on to some parts of the law of Moses as a condition of salvation; for example-circumcision. He reminds the Jewish Christians:

Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:6; Galatians 3:10; Ephesians 2:9 that salvation cannot be theirs by doing the *works* of the law of Moses, but by a faith in Christ that works by love-Galatians 5:6.

In Acts 13:38 & 39 Paul said: "Be it known unto you therefore,

men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sin, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. The term, the law, in the New Testament, usually though not always, 150 times or more, does refer to the law of Moses."

Since Pentecost the law of liberty in Christ Jesus, as set forth by Christ and the apostles as shown by the scriptures cited herein that those who are to be saved must *work*. *Not their own ideas*, but must have a faith that works by love: bearing one another's burdens, doing good as we have opportunity, preaching and teaching the gospel. After all that has been said and all the scripture referred to one must believe that works alone will not save. The grace of God plus obedience to God's law, doing what God commands in the way that God demands it to be done motivated by a faith that works by love will free man from the guilt and penalty of sin.

## *SOMETHING IN A NAME*

JOHNNY RAMSEY

THERE IS SOMETHING in a name, and this maxim is true especially in the spiritual realm. Let us be Christians only, nothing more, less or else.

In 1951 in Waterloo, Iowa, a man died and left \$70,000 in his will for "those of my relatives who are fundamentally Christians." As a result of this wording, a strange court case ensued involving a number of the kinfolk of the deceased.

In the final summation, Judge Charlton of Iowa City declared, "As a result of the testimony heard in this court, I concluded that a Christian can believe almost anything or nothing." The judge gave the \$70,000 to charity. *Time magazine* covered the trial in two issues under the striking heading: "Who is a Christian?"

What a travesty upon the religion of Christ it was when no one during the trial opened the New Testament to search for God's definition of a Christian. What a shame it is when men no longer can tell who is a Christian.

The sadness emanating from that Iowa court case was not the money no relative could claim, but it had to do with the almost universal misunderstanding of how to become a Christian. More

people would learn from the Bible how to become a Christian if we could show them the great benefits of Christianity.

Why should a person be a Christian, and how is such a relationship begun and sustained? Although countless reasons can be given for being a servant of Jesus, this article will focus on five of them.

First, upon becoming a Christian, one can wear the grandest name. James 2:7 explains that the first century followers of Christ were persecuted for the worthy name by which they were called. In Acts 4:12 we find that salvation is in the name of Christ alone.

Jehovah promised to give His people a new name, which the mouth of the Lord would bestow, once the Gentiles received the righteousness of God (Isaiah 62:1-2). God kept His promise after Cornelius and the Gentiles had become citizens of the heavenly kingdom. The new name is found in Acts 11:26 where the disciples were called Christians.

Enemies of the truth did not originate that name in derision. God gave the name in honor of His divine promise. We glorify the Lord in that name (I Peter 4:16). Christ has a name that is above every name (Philippians 2:9), and Paul zealously tried to get King Agrippa to be just a Christian (Acts 26:28-29).

Second, a reason to be a Christian is to possess the greatest influence. A Christian is the salt of the earth and light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14). Following in the foot prints of Jesus causes one to lead men out of darkness into light (I Peter 2:21; Acts 26:18). Possessing the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5), results in a new creation in which old things are passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In this wicked world, just abstaining from evil is not enough; we also must shine as lights in the midst of a perverse generation (Philippians 2:15). The far-reaching impact of a godly life will reverberate throughout eternity.

The apostle Paul was very definitive in I Corinthians 11:1 when he wrote that the Corinthians were to follow him as he followed Christ. Parents certainly need to be loyal subjects of the master so their example of leadership will guide their children home to glory.

Third, being a Christian requires one to meet the highest challenge. Most noble men rejoice in a challenge. The rugged call of pristine religion always is pointing us to a higher, richer and more demanding life. We must surrender our wills (Ephesians 4:20-24), reshape our thoughts (Romans 12:1-2), and sacrificially follow the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 14:33).

To be a disciple of the Redeemer, we daily must take up our cross and follow Him (Luke 9:23). Lackadaisical living will not meet the high standard of the One who said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14 KJV).

The abundant life Christ brings is rich, full and demanding. Christianity is not a game for weaklings or fortune seekers. To be loyal in the service of the Savior means we will live soberly, righteously and godly (Titus 2:12).

Not very many are willing to pay the price of spiritual growth as demanded in 2 Peter 1:4-9. The greatest victory we ever can achieve comes when we surrender to the captain of our salvation (Hebrews 2:10).

Fourth, we are Christians in order to sustain the dearest relationship. One of the most glorious reasons for being a child of God has to do with the results of this union. We become sheep in His fold (John 10). The Good Shepherd protects us from harm and leads us into verdent fields of service. Isaiah 58:11 points out that He shall guide us continually.

As Christians we are branches in the vine (John 15). We are partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). We are students of the Master Teacher, for John 8:31 reveals that if one continues in His Word, then he is a disciple indeed.

God is our Father; Christ is our elder brother; and the redeemed of the ages are our fellows in the family of God (Romans 8:17; Hebrews 3). As members of the church we are citizens in the unshakable kingdom (Hebrews 12:23-28). We are soldiers in the army of the Lord as we fight the good fight of faith in a warfare that is not carnal (Ephesians 6:10-17; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

One of the sweetest of all dimensions in this relationship is with Christ -our high priest - as we, in the royal priesthood, serve Him diligently (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:9). Is it not grand to be a Christian?

Fifth, we become Christians because of what we are. Gratitude is one of the basic responses in our lives. However, often we forget to express deep appreciation for the richest benefits of all. The psalmist asked, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"

One of the best-known ballads of World War II days sang the praises of a young soldier who gave his life for four of his buddies.

But we sing of one who died even for His enemies.

Truly in a reciprocal devotion, each person ought to become a Christian. In Romans 6:1-5, Colossians 2:12, and Galatians 3:27, we learn we must be baptized into Christ unto the remission of our past sins if we wish to arise to walk with the Lord in a new life - the life of a Christian. In the language of Acts 22:16, "Why tarriest thou?"

Acts contains a collection of conversions in the first century (2:38; 8:12, 35-38; 16:31-34). From Pentecost in Acts 2 through Paul's own account of his conversion in Acts 22, we read the clear terms of pardon God has set forth for the gospel era. Acts 18:8 sums up the situation powerfully: "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."

From reading John 15: 4 we learn we cannot bear spiritual fruit unto God until we are first in Christ. Galatians 3:27 and I Peter 3:21 show that this process is culminated when we are baptized into Christ. If you have not yet attended to this essential, delay no longer. "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16).

The most wonderful reason for us to be Christians is so Jesus can save us from the heavy load of sin. The most precious part of us is our eternal spirit. May we allow nothing to jeopardize our salvation.

Christ is the Savior of the whole world (I John 4:14). He tasted of death for every man (Hebrews 2:9). He died for all (2 Corinthians 5:14). Let us gladly do whatever He tells us to do (John 2:5) lest for us He died in vain.

## The New Testament Church Is Divine in Name

LOUIS RUSHMORE

THE CHURCH FOR which Jesus died (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25), over which He is Head (Ephesians 5:23) and about which anyone can read in the Bible, is known by several biblical names. These names are divine in origin and always glorify God or Jesus Christ, with the possible exception of the simple term church (Matthew 16:16; Acts 2:47). Similarly, the New Testament records

divinely given names for the members who comprise the church. Once the biblical names of the Lord's church and its members are learned, one can easily ascertain whether the names of contemporary churches and their members are divine or merely human in origin.

### BIBLICAL NAMES FOR THE CHURCH

In the strictest sense, the Lord's church has no name. Instead, the biblical names of the Lord's church to which reference is made herein are only descriptive terms. These terms describe the nature of the church or its relationship to God or Jesus Christ.

Commonly, names are used to identify one brand of the same or similar product from another brand. If there were only one of something, distinguishing names would not be necessary; the item would be just called what it is or by its association with its maker. This probably explains why the names "Kleenex" and "Q-Tips" became synonymous terms for tissues and cotton swabs, respectively; at one time they were either the first or dominate in their fields. In some parts of the country, folks may ask for "an Orange Coke" for the same reason.

Similarly, before the rise of the Catholic Church and denominationalism, biblically descriptive terms identified the one church without confusion. All these terms simply described the church or its relationship with its Maker. However, now denominational brand names are used by the thousands to distinguish between the denominations and unintentionally also from the church of the Bible.

Hence, biblical names for the Lord's church are not brand names, whereas the many denominational names are brand names. The Lord died for and established only one (His) church (Matthew 16:18). Denominational names identify one brand of church from another and one brand of religion from another, instead of identifying the one true church of the Bible and simple New Testament Christianity.

The descriptive terms by which the Lord's church is biblically known include these: **"my church"** (Matthew 16:18), **"the church"** (Acts 2:47; 8:1), **"church of God"** (1 Corinthians 1:2), **"churches of Christ"** (Romans 16:16), **"body of Christ"** (Ephesians 4:12), **"church of the living God"** (1 Timothy 3:15), **"temple of God"** (1 Corinthians 3:16), **bride of Christ** (Ephesians 5:21-32; Revelation 22:17), **"kingdom of his dear Son"** (Colossians 1:13) and **"house of God"** (1 Timothy 3:15). Though wearing a divine

name is a crucial, identifying mark of that one true divine church of the Bible, assuming a divinely authorized name alone is not the only characteristic of the Lord's church.

### **BIBLICAL NAMES FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH**

Throughout both testaments, various descriptive names are also applied to God's people. Many of these terms used in the Old Testament are also used in the New Testament. There is, though, a singularly different and new name given to the people of God in the New Testament

Terms used in the Old Testament and applied to God's people in the New Testament as well include: "members" (1 Corinthians 12:27), "**disciples**" (Acts 6:1; 20:7), "**believers**" (Acts 5:14), "**saints**" (Acts 9:13; 1 Corinthians 1:2), "**brethren**" (Romans 8:14) and "**children of God**" (1 John 3:1,2). Add also these terms: "**beloved of God**" (Romans 1:7), "**heirs of God**" (Romans 8:17) and "**royal priesthood**" (1 Peter 2:9).

There is yet another New Testament name for God's people that was the subject of prophecy long before its application. Isaiah taught that once the Gentiles gained admittance into the kingdom (church) and its blessings, all God's people would "be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isaiah 62:1,2; 56:5). After the admission of Cornelius and his household, the new name CHRISTIAN was given God's people (Acts 11:26). Used twice more in the New Testament (Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16), the term Christian uniquely describes one's relationship to his Redeemer and serves as a perpetual reminder of Christ.

**Conclusion:** Every accountable soul should strive to be a Christian only with the full knowledge that only Christians comprise the Lord's divine church. Denominational names are human in origin and clutter the divine term Christian. There are no brand name Christians. One is either a Christian only, or he is not a faithful Christian!

## *Why Are There So Many Churches?*

DAN McVEY

WE LOOK AROUND and what do we see? Churches are everywhere. So many different churches, all teaching different doctrines, all having different names, all trying to serve one God.

Why? Why do some churches teach salvation by grace only? Why do some teach salvation by faith only and others teach salvation by works? How can we teach so many different ways of salvation, and yet say we are all united in Christ?

I believe one reason for so many churches is because people are ignorant of God's word. In Matthew 22:29, Jesus answered a question by saying to the people, "You are wrong because YOU DO NOT KNOW THE SCRIPTURES or the power of God." People are taught so many different things and they believe them because they do not know the Bible and what the Bible teaches. Even the Apostle Paul said that his life of sin before he became a Christian was done in "ignorance and unbelief." (I Timothy 1:13). Ignorance is no excuse; God holds us responsible to know the truth. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32). By knowing the truth, we can obey the truth. When we do not know what the Bible teaches, we can be led away into many false teachings.

Another reason there are so many churches is that there are people who do not teach God's word properly. The Bible warns us so many times of false teachers who would lead us into sin. (Matthew 24:24; II Thessalonians 2:9-12; I Timothy 4:1-3 and many more scriptures). The Bible also warns us to handle the word of God carefully. II Timothy 2:15 says we are to, "handle properly the word of God." This means it can be used in a wrong way if we are not careful. If a man tells you he is a driver and you let him drive your car, you will be in trouble if he does not drive properly. He can spoil your car and maybe kill you!

The number one reason there are so many churches is because people do not respect God's word. We respect the president, the chief, our fathers, but when God speaks, we do not listen! So many people ignore what God says and believe what they want to believe. But listen! The Bible says we are cursed if we add to God's word, take something away or change it in any way. (Revelation 22:18-19; Deuteronomy 4:2, II John 9). Jesus said, "In vain do they worship me who teach doctrines of men." (Mark 7:7). The New Testament exhorts us to be diligent in trying to understand the truth that was delivered through Christ. (Jude 3).

My friends, there are so many churches in the world, but God is not happy. These churches come from ignorance, false teaching, pride and other worldly reasons. Jesus prayed that all His disciples would be united even as God is one (John 17:20-21). The Bible



teaches that Christ has only one body (Ephesians 4:4) which is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). God has only one church. But the world is full of so many churches, and God is not happy. What can we do? We must try to be the church we read about in the New Testament and that is all.

If you are a seeker of truth, we invite you to consider a certain group of people. We are trying to be Christians only. We want to follow the Bible and only the Bible. We have no earthly headquarters, no regional offices, no councils or ruling bodies. We worship in simplicity only as directed by the New Testament of Jesus Christ. We teach only what the Bible says about salvation and faith. We encourage our individual members to live a devoted Christian life in the liberty of faith, serving the Lord daily and joyfully. We are united in Christ by a common faith.

If you want to know more about us, read the New Testament and see what God's people should be. Look at us and study with us. Help us as we strive to restore New Testament Christianity. Denominationalism (so many churches) has caused the world to lose faith in Christ. We want to be God's people only and put away the teachings of men. Let God receive the glory, not man. Let God direct our faith, not man. Jesus said, "I will build MY CHURCH." (Matthew 16:18). We must strive to be that church just like in the New Testament. If Jesus built His church (and He surely did), we should try to be that one church by following His word. We know there is no salvation outside of Christ (Ephesians 5:23; II Timothy 2:10), therefore, we must strive to be in Christ and be His people.

Why not come and "let us reason together," (Isaiah 1:18). Are you interested in the New Testament way? Are you interested in pure, simple Christianity? I hope so. Please contact us. You will find us called the "churches of Christ" because that is what we are trying to be—the church of Christ. Come, join with us as we strive to restore New Testament Christianity.

# He is Dead and Yet He Speaks

MAX PATTERSON

IN THE GREAT faith chapter in the Bible, one of the examples is that of Abel. We can learn several important lessons from his life:

1. Abel did what he did by faith. Hebrews 11:4 states, "*by faith*

*Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.*" Abel listened to God. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The result was, *"And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering"* (Genesis 4:4). Our worship must be in faith.

2. By obeying God, Abel obtained witness that he was righteous. God commended him for doing what was right. God bore witness by the fact that He accepted Abel's offering.
3. God testified of his gifts. This means that God spoke well of his offering—God approved. One of the meanings of "testifying" is to give a good report.
4. *"And by it he being dead yet speaks."* Although Abel is long gone, he still speaks through the record of his faith. He speaks to us today. What does his record say to us? It says that God approves of our behavior when it harmonizes with His Word. What are the words and examples we will leave to future generations? With what actions do we want to speak, long after we are dead?

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the following lines in "A Psalm of Life," which seem appropriate just here:

Lives of great men still remind us  
We can make our lives sublime;  
And departing leave behind us,  
Footprints in the sands of time.

## ***ABRAHAM***

HANS J. DEDERSCHECK

THE DESIGN OF the Bible is to reveal the divine plan of redemption in Jesus Christ. An understanding of the Bible requires a knowledge of its first book, Genesis. One of the great personalities of Genesis is a unique man, Abraham. The messianic line, from Adam's son, Seth, and continuing through Noah's son, Shem, assumed a national character through the calling of Abraham who became the head of the messianic nation. A nation, separated from all other nations and provided with divine institutions was required to prepare the way for, and to bring forth, the promised Messiah, the *"seed of the woman "*.

In Abraham we have the preeminent man of faith. *"Just as Abraham 'believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham "* (Galatians 3:6-9).

It is by faith that we appropriate all the benefits of divine grace. By faith the atoning work of the Messiah becomes efficacious. By faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, and faith is reckoned for righteousness. In Abraham is exemplified this faith by which we are justified in Christ. Of all the great souls of the Old Testament, it is Abraham whom Paul uses in setting forth this great doctrine of justification by faith.

*"...That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ... But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham 's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:14, 25-29; Romans 4:1-25).*

The call of Abraham shows four things:

- (1) he had to leave his native land;
- (2) God promised him another land;
- (3) he would receive a great seed;
- (4) in him all nations would be blessed (through Christ).

Following God's requirements and believing in His promises required a lot of faith on Abraham's part. Since God spoke to him, though, this was enough for the patriarch.

Abraham indeed left his home without knowing where he would go. God showed him, step by step, and he arrived at Canaan according to the Lord's promises. God made a covenant (a pact) with Abraham. He promised a powerful seed, and Abraham believed God. Through Isaac the way would be made for God to keep the messianic promise. Abraham, who believed God, was justified. This is the way people need to come close to Christ today to be justified:

*"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8).*

*"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).*

*Therefore, "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:35-39).*

## ***Moses—Died Too Soon, Grave Unmarked***

JACK HARRIMAN

MOSES WAS ONE of the greatest men the world has ever known, and he was Israel's greatest leader. Even God said so! In view of this, his premature death and unique burial are strange indeed (Deuteronomy 28-34).

Moses died just outside of the Promised Land because he failed to give God credit for providing water from a rock (Numbers 20). He had spoken and acted as if he had brought the water by his own power.

Now, just before Israel's entrance into her inheritance, God instructed Moses to go apart into the mountain overlooking the Promised Land. It would seem that this was done so that Moses could get a mental picture of the land and of Israel possessing it. Through his leadership, the people had been saved many times during the past forty years. Now, God wanted Moses to face death knowing they would finally pass over the Jordan and receive all that He had promised. Through this preview, Moses could die in peace.

When the New Testament speaks of Old Testament events, it usually sheds more light on matters, but in the case of Moses' burial at the hands of angels, the mystery is deepened (Jude 6-9). The most logical explanation for the unmarked grave seems to be

God's determination to prevent the burial place from becoming a religious shrine.

Today we can learn five important lessons from these last days in Moses' life.

**Lesson Number One:** Before you die, speak clearly and earnestly to your people about being faithful to God after you are gone. Moses did! Too many go to their grave leaving too much unsaid.

**Lesson Number Two:** Willingly hand your work over to another before you are gone. Moses did! Even though there was not another man on earth who could have done the work that Moses did, the time came to hand it over to someone else. This is especially applicable to preachers, elders, and other church leaders.

**Lesson Number Three:** Don't get careless in your last years. Moses did! Thirty-eight years he avoided such sin, but got careless just two years short of the Promised Land.

**Lesson Number Four:** Face death without murmur and complaint. Moses did! Neither his body nor his mind was worn out. He had not even lived as long as his father before him, but there is no hint that he tried to bargain with God for more time.

**Lesson Number Five:** Go up to the mountain top and look at the Promised Land. Moses did! He saw its beauty and bountifulness, and he got a mental picture of Israel in it. Of course, I mean heaven. Paul and John were both provided a brief visit there and what they saw inspired them to endure to the end (2 Corinthians 12; Revelation 4). The Word of God provides information about that place, information which enables us to build a mental image of heaven and ourselves in it.

## *Caleb, A Man Of God*

KEN TYLER

CALEB WAS A remarkable man. Among a nation of disobedience he remained true to God. Listen to this pronouncement of the Lord, *"Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto their fathers, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord"* (Deuteronomy 1:35,36). Verse 38 points out that righteous Joshua would also enter the promised land.

Why was Caleb pleasing to God? It was *"...because he...wholly followed the Lord"* (Deuteronomy 1:36). Does this statement describe your life? It's not good enough to say there is just too much sin and temptation. Caleb stood among a nation and world of wickedness. It's bad enough to live in a world of wickedness, but even the people of God in Caleb's day were evil. Yet, Caleb still *"wholly followed the Lord."* But he refused to lose sight of the most important thing in the world, that is, to please God.

Today, are you wholly following the Lord? Listen to these statements from Psalm 119: *"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart"* (verse 2); *"With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments"* (verse 10); *"...I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart"* (verse 69). Acceptance of God means the surrendering of our all to Him.

In the New Covenant, Jesus explained, *"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it"* (Mark 8:34,35). No matter what compromises the world around us may be making, or how others are rationalizing regarding disobedience to God, we cannot please Him unless we are willing to count the cost and give up everything. Only then can He give back to us above and beyond all that we have laid on the line for Him.

Caleb has set a great example before us. If followed, it will lead to the promised land — heaven. May we all take heed to the example of this great man of God. Truly, we need more Calebs today.

## *"As the Lord Had Commanded"*

LOY MITCHELL

*"THEN MOSES LOOKED over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them"* (Exodus 39:43).

Good news! Moses had been instructed by God to build a tabernacle. He inspected the work and found that all had been done *"as the Lord had commanded."* I like that message. God's commands are not burdensome. Every commandment of God is

good and right. Not one command of God is bad or harmful to man. Yes, it was a great day, for the Israelites had done the work as commanded by God.

Dear reader, are you doing what the Lord has commanded? Put yourself to the test as you read the following passages.

### **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**

*"Then he led them outside and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you and your household will be saved'" (Acts 16:30,31).*

### **Repent of Every Sin**

*"No, I assure you, but unless you change your hearts (repent), all of you will perish" (Luke 13:5).*

### **Confess Jesus Before Men**

*"Everyone who acknowledges (confesses) me in the presence of men, I will also acknowledge him in the presence of my heavenly Father; and whoever denies me in the presence of men, I will also deny him in the presence of my heavenly Father" (Matthew 10:32,33).*

### **Be Baptized for the Forgiveness of Sin**

*"Peter said to them, 'Change your hearts (repent), and let each of you be immersed (baptized) in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins might be forgiven, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38).*

### **Always Abound in the Work of God**

*"So, my beloved brothers, be firm, unshakable, always abounding in the Lord's work, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:58).*

### **By Our Obedience We Show Our Love**

*"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15).*

It is not enough to simply *know* His commandments. The question is, do you *keep* His commandments?

## ***UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE***

JANE MCWHORTER

IN DEPICTING THAT terrible scene on Calvary, Matthew commented: *"And many women were there beholding afar off,*

*which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him"* (Matthew 27:55).

Have you ever thought about those women who helplessly watched from afar as Christ suffered the torturous death on the cross? Two of the ones mentioned had sons the same age as our Lord. Can you imagine the mental agony of these followers and the utter frustrations of their desires to ease the suffering of the One to whom they had ministered? Have you ever wondered what these women had done for Christ during His ministry? They probably prepared meals, offered water, and provided lodging for a weary, homeless body. The Scriptures state that they had followed Him from Galilee, the northern region, which was a long way from Jerusalem. The road was difficult, especially for a woman. The weather was still cold at this time of the year. Would we have been so devoted if we had lived at that time?

No longer are we given the opportunity to minister to the needs of Christ's physical body, but an earlier passage in Matthew offers the same opportunity. Whenever we feed and clothe the needy, offer hospitality, provide companionship and help for those in trouble, we are doing it for Him. *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"* (Matthew 25:40).

Our Lord has no hands but our hands. There are so many around us who are in spiritual and emotional need of a Christian friend. Each day dozens of opportunities present themselves, but we are usually too busy with "things" that really aren't important at all. If Christ were present in a physical body, I wonder how quickly we would drop all and run to Him. But we can't. The **only** way we can minister to Him is by serving others. It matters not that the recipients seem ungrateful. We are doing it for **Him**.

In all likelihood, there was not a woman in that crowd who would not gladly have exchanged her life for that of her master, but none of them could. We are told how to save our spiritual lives: *"...he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"* (Matthew 10:39). We find our true lives by becoming so absorbed in living for Him (and serving others) that we lose our lives to the world.

The next time there is an occasion to serve others, try to visualize what an opportunity you have. *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these..."*

