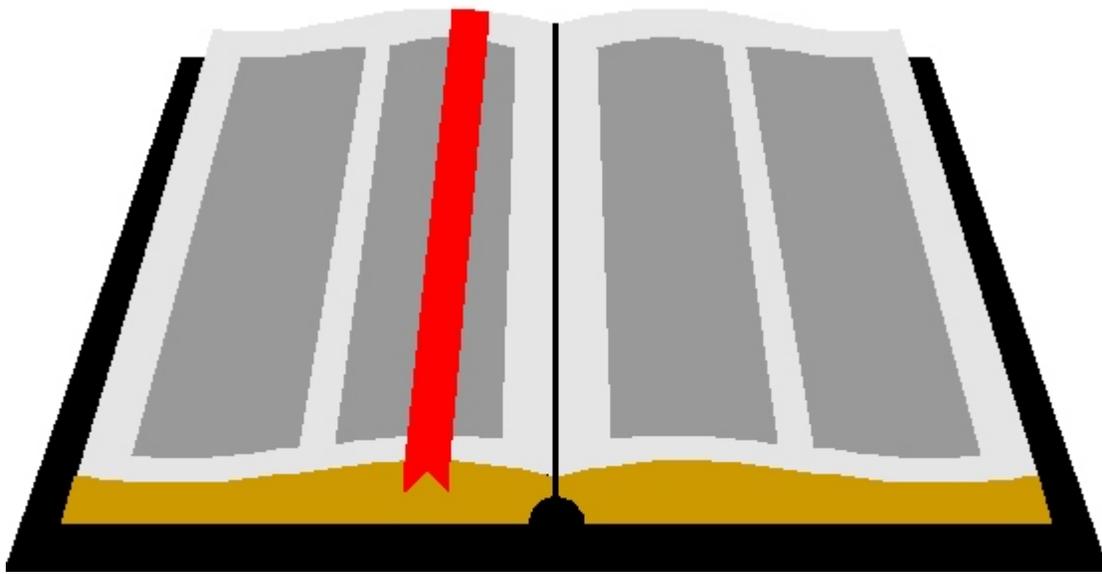


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# Sermons of Truth and Reason



## Volume III: Sermon Outlines

*Outlines That You Can Preach*

Gene Taylor

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# Work Out Your Own Salvation

**Text: Philippians 2:1-13**

## **Introduction**

1. In the letter to the Philippians, one of the prison epistles of Paul, while explaining the joys of Christianity, he begins a lesson on humility.
  - a. The greatest example comes from the life of Christ. (text)
  - b. Their need for humility is obvious: God exalts the humble—only those who are humble will be saved.
2. “Work out” (v. 12) means to “work on to the finish” or “carry out to the goal.”
  - a. They needed to work on the attitude of humility which brings obedience
  - b. Obedience to Christ is constant—it begins at baptism and is completed in death. (Rev. 2:10)

## **I. “Your Own” Salvation Is Personal**

- A. No one can perform the work assigned for you—a charge given.
- B. The seven churches of Asia.
  1. “He who overcomes...” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21)
  2. You will either overcome the world or be overcome by it. (2 Pet. 2:18-22)
- C. Do not allow the faults of others to deter you. (2 Cor. 10:12)
  1. If my family rejects salvation, I still want it. (Luke 13:23-30)
  2. A sobering thought: We will stand before the judge one by one. (2 Cor. 5:10)

## **II. “Work Out” Means to Complete**

- A. “He who endures to the end...” (Matt. 10:22)
- B. One can come up short of entering the final rest. (Heb. 4:1-2, 11)
- C. Each one must complete his/her own salvation on the basis of God’s will.
  1. “Bear one another’s burdens.” (Gr. *baros*) (Gal. 6:2)
  2. “Each one shall bear his own load.” (Gr. *phortion*) (Gal. 6:5)

## **III. “With Fear and Trembling”**

- A. Fear: “Not slavish terror, but wholesome, serious caution.” (Vincent)
  1. A deep sense of responsibility to obey God in all things. (Psa. 34:8-11; Prov. 1:7)
  2. A real fear of displeasing God. (James 3:1)
- B. The example of Felix. (Acts 24:25)
- C. We are dealing with the soul, hence the need to fear and tremble. (Matt. 16:24-26)
- D. Let us consider no sacrifice too great. (Heb. 2:3)

## **Conclusion**

Nothing is more important than your soul's salvation, therefore, there is nothing more important for you to do than to humbly submit in obedience to Christ and to begin to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

# Why People Refuse to Come to Christ

**Text: John 5:31-43a**

## **Introduction**

1. Four testimonies are cited as evidence in John 5 to prove that Jesus is the Christ.
  - a. John the Baptist. (32-35)
  - b. Jesus' miracles. (36; cf. 3:2)
  - c. The Father. (37-38)
  - d. The Scriptures. (v. 39)
2. In spite of all this evidence, many of the Jews refused to come to Jesus. (v. 40)
3. Two opposite attitudes are manifest in this passage.
  - a. A willing Savior who offers Himself as a sacrifice and then offers life eternal.
  - b. Stubborn and rebellious people who let the invitation of Jesus fall on deaf ears.
4. The rejection of Christ was not peculiar to the first century.
  - a. It continues to be a problem today for many of the same reasons.
  - b. Thus, we can learn a lot from this passage as to why people reject Jesus today.

## **I. Some Lessons To Be Learned From The Text**

- A. People can come to Christ. (Rev. 22:17)
  1. If not, Christ would not have rebuked the Jews for **not** coming to Him.
  2. This passage refutes the Calvinistic doctrines of unconditional election and limited atonement.
- B. Christ wants people to come to Him.
  1. He invites them to come. (Matt. 11:28-30)
  2. He earnestly and persistently pleads with mankind. (Rev. 3:20)
  3. He will tenderly care for those who accept His invitation. (Matt. 23:37)
- C. People must come to Christ if they will have life.
  1. He is the author of eternal salvation. (Heb. 5:9)
  2. Only He can lead one to eternal life. (John 14:6)
  3. Only He has the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)
  4. In no other is there salvation. (Acts 4:11-12)

## **II. Why People Refuse to Come to Christ**

- A. There are many reasons but one attitude underscores them all—a lack of love. (John 5:42)
  1. Those who do not obey Christ, do not truly love God. (1 John 5:3; John 14:23-24)
  2. Those who refuse to come to Christ, even when they know the truth, usually love something else more than they love God.
- B. Some things people love which cause them to reject Christ.
  1. Worldly honor. (John 12:42-43)
    - a. Christianity is not popular and those who stand for the Lord are usually not the focus of praise among men.
    - b. Denying Christ before men because of what men may think is tragic. (Matt. 10:28-33)
    - c. One should have the attitude of the apostle Paul. (Gal. 1:10)

2. Sin. (2 Tim. 4:9-10)
  - a. Love of sin and love of God cannot co-exist. (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4)
  - b. One must make a choice. In choosing he must:
    - 1) Not forget that the pleasure of sin is “passing.” (Heb. 11:24-25)
    - 2) Realize he must ultimately pay the wages of sin. (Gal. 6:7-8; Rom. 6:23)
3. Relatives. (Matt. 10:37-38)
  - a. Sometimes people are hesitant to obey Christ for it might alienate them from their families.
  - b. Others think that their obedience to the truth would condemn their relatives.
    - 1) They refuse to obey even though they know they should.
    - 2) Whether or not you accept or reject Christ has no bearing upon others except in influence. (2 Cor. 5:10)
  - c. Spiritual responsibilities are more important than physical ties. (Matt. 12:46-50)
4. Wisdom of the world more than the truth of God. (2 Thes. 2:10-12)
  - a. Christ is truth personified (John 14:6). To reject Him is to reject the truth.
  - b. The wisdom of God seems foolish to the worldly but the wisdom of the world is foolishness to God. (1 Cor. 1:20-27)

### **Conclusion**

1. Those who have heard the gospel, believe what it says about Christ, and know they need to obey Him but refuse His invitation, are committing spiritual suicide.
2. Make Him your first love. Come to Him today.

# Making Light of Religion

## Introduction

1. To many people religion, even the religion of Christ, is nothing more than a joke.
  - a. It is something at which to laugh or make fun.
  - b. They do not take it seriously.
2. This problem is one that is not new because the Bible addresses it.

## I. Biblical Examples of People Making Light of God

- A. The sons-in-law of Lot.(Gen. 19:1-3,12-29)
  1. Angels had been sent by God to warn “righteous” Lot and his family to flee before the Lord destroyed the cities of the plain.
  2. Lot’s sons-in-law, thinking Lot was joking, died in the destruction the Lord rained upon those cities.
- B. Some Egyptians in response to the seventh plague, the plague of hail.(Ex. 9:13-25)
  1. Those “who feared the word of the Lord” brought their servants and livestock indoors.
  2. Those “who did not regard the word of the Lord” left their servants and livestock in the fields and when the fire and hail came they suffered greatly.(v. 25)
- C. The parable of the marriage feast.(Matt. 22:1-14)
  1. This parable represents God’s invitation to the Jews to the “wedding feast” of His Son.
  2. The Jews failed to take seriously the invitation of Jesus to come to Him for life.
  3. God, in His wrath, condemned them as a nation and destroyed them as a people.

## II. Those Who Make Light of God Today

- A. Those who fail to obey the gospel. They make light of:
  1. Their sins.(Rom. 6:23)
  2. The life and death of Jesus.(John 8:24)
  3. Jesus’ invitation to life.(Matt. 11:28-30)
  4. The church and their need to be a part of it.(Eph. 5:25-27; Acts 20:28)
  5. The judgment to come.(2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thes. 1:7-9)
- B. Those who claim to be Christians but act otherwise. They make light of:
  1. Their commitment to deny all and be a living sacrifice. (Matt. 16:24; Rom. 12:1-2)
  2. The Lord’s commands to “be holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16) and to “abstain from fleshly lusts.” (1 Pet. 2:11)
  3. The command to assemble with the saints. (Heb. 10:24-25)
  4. The responsibility to do “good works.” (Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14)
  5. The Lord Himself by “trampling” Him “underfoot” (Heb. 10:29), counting the blood of His covenant “a common thing” (Heb. 10:29), and “crucifying” Him again by putting Him “to an open shame.” (Heb. 6:6)
  6. The judgment. (1 Pet. 4:17-18)

## Conclusion

1. I urge you not to make light of God and His message for you.
2. Consider the warning of Hebrews 10:31: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

# "Almost" Christians

**Text: Acts 25:13 - 26:31**

## **Introduction**

1. Many are as Agrippa, "almost Christians."
  - a. They need to become one. (Matt. 16:26)
  - b. You should ask the question of yourself, "What hinders you?" (Acts 8:36 in context)
  - c. You should allow nothing to keep you from obeying Christ for the salvation of your soul.
2. Sadly, there are those who could be described as "almost" Christians who claim to be members of the Lord's church.
  - a. By human standards they are not really in the world but, in reality, they are not in the church by Christ's standards.
  - b. Baptism is just the beginning of the transformation process which molds a person into the image of Christ. (Rom. 12:1-2)
3. This lesson will focus on them and what their problems are and how those problems can be solved.

## **I. The Laodecians (Rev. 3:14-22)**

- A. They were "lukewarm." (16)
- B. They were not against the Lord but were not really committed to Him. Such is an impossible position. (Matt. 6:24; 12:30)
- C. They needed to open their eyes to the reality of their situation. (cf. 2 Pet. 1:9)
  1. They were to "Buy from Me gold refined in the fire." (18; Prov. 23:23)
  2. They should have had the attitude of the psalmist. (Psa. 119:17-18, 97-104)

## **II. Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-21)**

- A. He was clinging to carnality, its thoughts and ways.
- B. Biblical principles which apply:
  1. Friendship with the world makes one an enemy of God. (Jas. 4:4)
  2. Christians are not to love the world. (1 John 2:15-17)
  3. Christians are to separate themselves from those who are worldly. (2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1)
  4. Christians are to seek those things which are above. (Col. 3:1-4)

## **III. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10)**

- A. Motivated by materialism, they lied to God.
- B. In baptism, one dedicates his life to God. Does your lifestyle speak otherwise?
- C. Biblical principles which apply:
  1. Christians are to be living sacrifices. (Rom. 12:1-2)
  2. Christians are to be doing good works. (Eph. 2:10)
  3. Christians are to be seeking the kingdom of heaven first. (Matt. 6:33)
- D. Some "lies" of today:
  1. Pray "bring us back together at the next appointed time" with no desire to be back.

2. Sing “O, How I Love Jesus” then go elsewhere when worship to Him if offered.
3. Sing “To the Work” then do nothing.
4. Seek the kingdom first? Contribution down dramatically over holidays.

**Conclusion**

1. One is to love the Lord with all his heart, soul and mind. (Matt. 22:37)
2. Paul’s desire for Agrippa should be the desire of each of us—that we are not “almost” but “altogether” a Christian in every sense of the word. (Acts 26:29)

# Building a Strong Congregation

## Introduction

1. Men have many ideas as to what makes for a strong congregation: Finances, numbers, influential people, etc.
2. Some think a congregation is strong because it has a strong social emphasis.
  - a. Presentations and programs which seem vital to the community and society in general.
  - b. The Lord's church is to be spiritual in its emphasis.
3. The Bible presents several areas which need to be emphasized if a local church is going to be strong.

## I. Strong Bible Teaching and Preaching

- A. When the word is disseminated plainly, forcefully, uncompromisingly and yet kindly it will build up. (Acts 20:32)
- B. The word must be preached. (2 Tim. 4:1-4)
- C. The burden is not just on the preacher: All teachers, members must want to teach and be taught the truth of God.

## II. Exemplary Leadership

- A. Every group should be striving to be organized according to God's plan: Elders, deacons and saints. (Phil. 1:1)
- B. Elders are to lead by example. (1 Pet. 5:2-3)
- C. Whether or not elders are in place, those who are older should set a good example for others. (Titus 2:2)

## III. Holy Living on the Part of Every Member

- A. The lives of those who claim to be following Christ must be consistent with their profession.
  1. Should be living soberly, righteously and godly. (Titus 2:11-12)
  2. Not to be conformed to world. (Rom. 12:1-2)
  3. Their manner of life, walk, is plainly spelled out in Ephesians. Christians are to walk:
    - a. In good works. (2:10)
    - b. Worthy of the calling with which they were called. (4:1)
    - c. Not as the Gentiles. (4:17)
    - d. In love. (5:2)
    - e. As children of light. (5:8)
    - f. Circumspectly—carefully. (5:15)
- B. The holy lives of Christians will light the way for others to come out of darkness. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16a)

## IV. Congregational Warmth and Brotherly Love

- A. The fellowship of the Lord's church is to be precious, sweet and dear. (Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 3:18)
- B. Brotherly love among Christians ought to cause others to take notice. (John 13:34-35)

- C. An atmosphere of happiness, friendliness, cordiality, hospitality ought always to be present: No visitor or stranger should ever come into our midst without being graciously greeted and welcomed by happy, friendly members who reach out to others and not just visit with friends.
- D. Without this a congregation will never be what God would have it to be. (1 John 2:8-11)

#### **V. Compassionate Hearts**

- A. Those who comprise the church need to be known as the most tenderhearted people in the world.
- B. They need to be moved with compassion to the needs and suffering around them. (Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Pet. 3:8-12)

#### **VI. An Attitude of Servitude**

- A. “How can I help” and/or “In what way can I serve” ought to be on the lips of every member.
- B. Every Christian must come to a realization of the Lord's purpose for His followers. (Titus 2:14; Rom. 12:11)
- C. Greatness in the Lord’s sight comes by serving. (Matt. 20:20-28)

#### **VII. Evangelistic Fervor**

- A. The emphasis of the early church was soul-winning. (Acts 5:42; 8:1-4)
- B. The church will grow spiritually and numerically when all of us develop a fervency in spirit to reach the lost and bring them to Christ.

#### **Conclusion**

1. As this church continues to function, let us never lose sight of the fact that by and large its strength depends on us as we depend on the Lord.
2. Let each of us endeavor to do all we can to lend as much as we can to this congregation so it will continue to grow and mature, to stand for the truth and to glorify God.

# Seeing God's Grace

**Text: Acts 11:19-23**

## **Introduction**

1. Barnabas went to Antioch where he saw “the grace of God.” (Acts 11:23)
  - a. What did he see when he saw God's grace?
  - b. We will hardly understand what he saw unless we know what to look for.
2. What is grace?
  - a. “Unmerited favor,” the usual definition, is not an adequate one because it does not encompass all aspects of grace. (Luke 2:40; Col. 4:6)
  - b. “That which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight, or causes favorable regard;...on the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, lovingkindness, goodwill generally...especially with reference to the Divine favour or grace, e.g., Acts 14:26.” (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, pp. 509-510)
3. This lesson will consider what Barnabas saw at Antioch when he saw the grace of God.

## **I. He Saw the Redeemed (Acts 11:21)**

- A. Persecuted saints came from Jerusalem “preaching the Lord Jesus” causing a great number at Antioch to believe and turn to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-21)
- B. Their condition had been like that of the Ephesians—without God and without hope. (Eph. 2:12)
  1. They were lost and doomed to hell.
  2. God gave them up. (Rom. 1:28-32)
- C. In His kindness and tenderheartedness, God made it possible for them to be saved. (Titus 2:11-12)
  1. Toward those disobedient, rebellious people, the kindness and love of God appeared. (Titus 2:4-5)
  2. God forgave them in Christ. (Eph. 4:32)

## **II. He Saw the Preaching of the Lord Jesus and the Effects of That Preaching (Acts 11:20)**

- A. What they preached is also called “the word of His grace.” (Acts 14:3)
- B. What they preached is likewise called “the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24)
  1. It is by the gospel that the kindness of God redeems man and provides him all spiritual blessings—the word is the medium of His grace. (Titus 2:11-12)
  2. The word of His grace is able to build up and strengthen the Christian so that he might grow in Christ, grow unto salvation. (Acts 20:32; 1 Pet. 2:1-2)
  3. The redeemed rejoice in their salvation. (Acts 8:39) [Grace: “that which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight...”]

## **III. He Saw the Love, Mercy, Goodness and Kindness of the Saints (Acts 11:27-30)**

- A. Those who had been recipients of God's grace showed grace to others.
  1. When those in Antioch heard of the need of the saints in Judea, they determined to send relief.

2. The unselfish giving of the Macedonians is called “the grace of God.” (2 Cor. 8:1-5)
  3. The Corinthians were to abound in this same grace. (2 Cor. 8:7)
- B. God makes grace abound so that those who are His may abound unto every good work. (2 Cor. 9:8-11) The giving of aid to Jewish Christians by Gentile brethren proved:
1. Their subjection to the gospel.
  2. That the grace of God was in them exceedingly. (2 Cor. 9:13-14)

**Conclusion**

1. When Barnabas had seen the grace of God he was glad. (Acts 11:23)
2. We too are glad when we look on the grace of God.

# The Power of the Word of God

**Text: Hebrews 4:12**

## **Introduction**

1. The things of this world decay and die—they lose their power and strength.
2. The Bible is different. It has been challenged in every century yet it has stood the test of time against all its enemies and the corroding influences of time.
3. Jesus Christ is God’s exclusive spokesman today. (Heb. 1:1-3)
  - a. Is there any power in what He said?
  - b. Just how powerful is His word?

## **I. Men Have Always Sought to Minimize the Word of God**

- A. Many never seem satisfied with it.
  1. Naaman was not satisfied with the word of God given to him by Elisha. (2 Kings 5)
  2. Even in Hades, some wanted more: the rich man. (Luke 16:19-31)
- B. The plain language of Luke 8:11 still stands: “The seed is the word of God.”
  1. Did you ever contemplate the tremendous power in a seed?
  2. The power in the seed is the power of life. (Word is living - Heb. 4:12)

## **II. The Power of the Word of Life**

- A. The Power of His Word to:
  1. Heal physically—the nobleman’s son. (John 4:46-53)
  2. Raise the physically dead. (John 11:1-44; esp. 41-44)
  3. Subdue the physical world. (Mark 4:35-41)
  4. Hold all things in the physical realm together (Heb. 1:3)
- B. The Spiritual application—the power of the word of life to:
  1. Heal those spiritually sick. (Matt. 9:11-12; Rom. 1:16-17)
  2. Raise the spiritually dead to life. (John 6:68; Col. 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:20-22)
  3. Subdue the world of sin and Satan. (Rom. 7:23-25; John 16:33; 1 Cor. 15:55-57)
  4. Hold your life together (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

## **Conclusion**

1. Trust the power of the word of God.
2. Obey it for life.

# The Life of Joseph: Evidence of the Providence of God

**Text: Gen. 39:1 - 50:26**

## **Introduction**

1. The story of Joseph takes up more space than any other Old Testament account.
  - a. Flood: Involved the whole world yet little detail is given.
  - b. Why? Not for our enjoyment or entertainment but God had a real purpose.
2. Three questions:
  - a. Why should God use so much space in relating the account of Joseph? (One of marks of inspiration is the brevity of Scripture)
  - b. When Joseph became ruler in Egypt, why did he never return home?
    - 1) He had money and power and an army at his disposal.
    - 2) There were good roads and chariots.
    - 3) It was only 200 miles.
  - c. Why should God select 12 men as hard-hearted as the brothers of Joseph to be founders and leaders of 12 tribes who would be called “chosen people” for 1500 years of history?
3. As we answer these questions we will learn a lot about God and His providence.

## **I. God Uses “Space” So That We Might See His Hand Working in the Life of Joseph**

- A. It shows us that God would and could bring good out of everything that happens to His servants.
  1. It graphically illustrates the principle stated in Romans 8:28. (See 8:18)
- B. Consider the account of Joseph
  1. Why was Joseph a prime minister in charge of country?
    - a. He guided Egypt through seven years of plenty putting grain in store houses and then through seven years of famine keeping the Egyptians alive and sending grain to other countries. His brothers come to Egypt and Joseph is able to provide for them.
    - b. Why was he able to do this? Because he saved up grain in store houses. Why? Because the king had appointed him to do it. Why? Because he had interpreted the dream of the king. Why? Because he had been in prison and the king’s servants had heard Joseph interpret their dreams.
  2. Why was Joseph in prison? Because as a servant in Potiphar’s house false accusations were made against him by Potiphar’s wife.
  3. Why was Joseph a servant in Egypt? Because the Ishmaelites sold him to Potiphar as a slave.
  4. Why did the Ishmaelites have him? Because they had bought him from his brothers who hated him and wanted to get rid of him.
  5. Why did his brothers hate him? Because their father showed partiality to him since Joseph was the son of his favorite wife, Rachel.
- C. Notice: Every incident was dependent upon the previous incident.
  1. From the time Joseph goes to the fields to take food to his brothers God planned and determined to bring good out of everything that happened to him.

2. God did not plan every incident then reach down and make it happen
  - a. The hand of God is seen in two places: Prison (interpreting dreams) and in Pharaoh's house (interpreting his dream).
  - b. Everything else happened in the natural course of events.
- D. Joseph could not see the hand of God. He did not know God would bring good out of everything until later. (Gen. 45:5)
  1. Yet God allows us to view the life of Joseph and when we see how God took advantage of every incident in his life to save His people, we can take comfort in God's provision and care of His people today.
  2. God can and will bring good out of everything that happens to His people today.
    - a. That does not mean that God is intervening in your life but rather that even when evil happens, God can make it work out for your good.
    - b. God's providential care is something in which you can trust.

## II. Why Didn't Joseph Go Home?

- A. He wanted to forget home.
  1. He did not want to see his family.
  2. Put yourself in his shoes, what would have been your attitude if someone had treated you that way?
- B. What about his father?
  1. Maybe, he thought "Why didn't he come get me? Doesn't he care?"
  2. He may have gone to Egypt thinking nobody cared so he wanted to forget them and get on with life.
  3. He marries and has a happy home. A baby is born whom he names "Manasseh," which means "I have forgotten." (Gen. 41:50-51)
- C. God's providence would not let him forget.
  1. In saving his family God saves Joseph from the misconceptions he may have had.
  2. He allows Joseph to be able to see the good that came from his brothers' actions. (Gen. 45:5)

## III. Why Select These Twelve Mean Men?

- A. They are not the same men now—they have changed.
  1. They are now willing to offer their own lives to save young Benjamin.
  2. A good point for us to remember: We must not judge a person by the worst thing he has ever done. (Consider Peter who cursed and denied the Lord)
- B. They were now sorry for what they had done. They had gone from selfish to selfless.
  1. Though once despicable they are now useful to God.
  2. Though we were once miserable sinners, we can change and be useful to God, even leaders among His people.

## Conclusion

1. God's hand is in the story of Joseph. My friend, if you are a Christian, God's hand is in your life too.
2. Whatever happens to you rest assured that God will bring good out of it. All things do work together for good to those who love the Lord.
3. You may not think so, you may not understand but no matter what evil may befall you, if you trust in the Lord, God can and will make it work for your good.
4. This is the assurance that each Christian has. Do you want that assurance too? Then become a Christian today.

# Partaking of the Sins of Other People

**Text: 1 Timothy 5:17-22**

## **Introduction**

1. Sin by its nature spreads consequences and punishment.
2. In the text, Timothy was not to hastily charge an elder with wrongdoing but at the same time if he allowed sin to go uncorrected, he would partake of it.
3. There are several ways we can partake of the sins of others.

## **I. Commit a Sin Together**

- A. Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1-11)
- B. A warning to young men, in reality, a warning to all. (Prov. 1:10-15)

## **II. Commit the Same Sin Separately**

- A. Jews who were as their “fathers.” (Acts 7:51-3; Matt. 23:29-32)
- B. When Christians act as people of the world, they become “partakers” with them. (Eph. 5:3-7)

## **III. Do Not Actually Commit the Sin but Consent with Those Who Do**

- A. Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 8:1; Acts 22:30 - 23:1)
- B. The effect is seen in the church.
  1. “I don’t agree with everything they do, but ... ” is an oft-heard refrain by many in liberal churches.
  2. Such an attitude is condemned in 2 John 9-11.

## **IV. Know Another's Guilt but Fail to Act, Rebuke and Expose**

- A. All that is needed for evil men to prosper is for others to do nothing.
- B. Ezekiel was set as a watchman over Israel. (Ezek. 3:17-21)
- C. Parents can be guilty like Eli. (1 Sam. 3:13)
- D. Preachers who know the truth but remain quiet. (Acts 20:25-27; 2 Tim. 4:1-2)
- E. Churches who refuse to withdraw from the ungodly. (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thes. 3:6)

## **V. By Our Example and Influence**

- A. When we harm the weak. (1 Cor. 8:10-13; Jas. 4:4)
- B. By failing to assemble with the saints. (Heb. 10:24-25)
- C. Immodest apparel can cause others to sin. (Matt. 5:28)

## **VI. By Giving Aid to and/or Following False Teachers**

- A. The text warns against upholding elders when they sin.
- B. We must not encourage error. (2 John 10)
- C. We must not follow false teachers. (Matt. 15:14)

## **Conclusion**

Both those who sin and those who partake are guilty and will suffer unless they repent.

# The Example of Youth

Text: 1 Timothy 4:12

## Introduction

1. To keep others from looking down on his youthfulness, Timothy, in the text, was instructed by the apostle Paul to be a good example.
2. “Example.” (Gk.: TUPOS).
  - a. “...a die (as struck), i.e. (by implication) a stamp or scar; by analogy a shape, i.e. a statue, (fig.) style or resemblance; specifically a sampler (‘type’); i.e. a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning)” (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*)
  - b. Timothy was to be a model for others as others had been models for him.
    - 1) His mother and grandmother. (2 Tim. 1:3-5)
    - 2) The apostle Paul. (Phil. 4:9; 1 Cor. 11:1)
    - 3) Jesus. (1 Pet. 2:21-23)
3. This lesson will examine each area listed in the text in which Timothy was to be an example realizing that it is in those same areas young people should be exemplary today.

## I. In Word

- A. Our mouths speak according to that which fills our hearts. (Matt. 12:33-37)
  1. To have good speech we must fill our hearts with good things. (Phil. 4:8)
  2. We must fill our hearts with the word of God. (Col. 3:16)
- B. Learn to control your tongue at an early age. No:
  1. Lying. (Rev. 21:8)
  2. Foolish talking. (Eph. 5:3-4)
  3. Cursing, swearing. (Jas. 3:5-10)

## II. In Conduct (KJV: Conversation)

- A. Gk.: ANASTROPHE. “... prop. ‘walk’, i.e. manner of life, behavior, conduct ... ” (Thayer, p. 42)
  1. Behavior.
  2. From another word which means “to busy oneself,” thus, one needs to be an example in what occupies his greatest attention. And that should be spiritual things. (Matt. 6:33)
- B. One is to be an example in his manner of life. What are you living for?
  1. Good times? Fast lane? The high life?
  2. You ought to be living in a holy manner. (1 Pet. 1:13-16).

## III. In Love (KJV: Charity)

- A. This is the type of love that motivated God to send His Son to earth for the sins of mankind.
  1. It is interest in the welfare of the object of that love even if that object is unworthy of love.
  2. “...the characteristic word of Christianity,... ” (Vine, p. 702)
- B. What should one love in this manner.
  1. Truth. Even if it makes us face up to some shortcoming it exposes in us. (2 Thes. 2:10)

2. God. Even if it means to stand against Satan and be ridiculed by the world (Matt. 22:37).
3. People.
  - a. Christians. For their dedication and example. (1 Pet. 2:17; 1:22)
  - b. People in general. They are your “neighbors.” (Matt. 22:39)
  - c. Enemies. For such typifies the love of God. (Matt. 5:44)

#### **IV. In Spirit**

- A. “Spirit:” “...the rational spirit, the power by which a human being feels, thinks, wills, decides; ...” (Thayer, 520)
- B. It has reference to one’s disposition and/or attitude.
- C. What is a good disposition? One of:
  1. Joy. (Phil. 4:4)
  2. Positive attitude. (Phil. 4:13; Rom. 12:17)
  3. Thankful for life and its opportunities. (Phil. 4:6)
  4. Loving, caring. (Rom. 12:10)
  5. Honesty, fairness. (1 Pet. 2:12)
  6. Respect (for authority and those in authority). (Eph. 6:1-3; Rom. 13:1-2; Titus 3:1-2)
  7. Fervent spirit in relation to Jesus. (Rom. 12:11)

#### **V. In Purity**

- A. “Purity:” “Cleanliness, specifically, chastity.” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance)
- B. The young cannot afford to allow a moment’s passion to rob them of many of life’s greatest blessings from God. (Heb. 13:4)
  1. You cannot be too careful to guard your purity while desires grow strong.
  2. You need to remember that God has provided for the lawful fulfillment of all desires.

#### **Conclusion**

I thank God for the many fine young people who are taking God seriously and doing these things.

# Courage Is Required

**Text: Joshua 1:1-9**

## **Introduction**

1. With the death of Moses, Joshua had been chosen by God to lead the children of Israel into the land of promise.
2. In the text we see God's command to him especially noting the charge to be strong and courageous.
3. Joshua would need courage to remain faithful to the task before him because he would face many adversities.
4. The Christian also needs to be strong and courageous to remain faithful to the Lord today because he too will face many things that will challenge his faith.

## **I. Strength from the Text**

- A. As Joshua was told to be courageous, so is the Christian. (Phil. 1:27-28)
- B. As Joshua was told to observe to do all according to the law, so is the Christian. (James 2:10)
- C. As Joshua was commanded not to turn to the right or the left from the law, the Christian is not to turn away. (Acts 20:22-24; 2 John 9)
- D. As Joshua was told he would prosper if he served God properly, so is the Christian. (Rev. 22:14)

## **II. Why Is Courage Needed?**

- A. God commands it. (Josh. 1:9; Heb. 10:35-39)
- B. God pledges His support. (Josh. 1:9; Matt. 28:30; Heb. 13:5-6; Phil. 4:13)
- C. God gives assurances of success. (Josh. 1:8; Isa. 4:10-11; Rev. 2:10; 3:21)

## **III. When Is Courage Needed?**

- A. When in the minority.
  1. It is easy to renounce a position when you are in the minority.
  2. God's people have always seemed to be in the minority.
    - a. Noah. (Gen. 6:8; 7:1)
    - b. Elijah was outnumbered by the prophets of Baal 450 to 1. (1 Kings 18)
    - c. The apostle Paul stood alone. (2 Tim. 4:16)
  3. Things are not different for God's people today. (Luke 13:23-24; Matt. 7:13-14)
  4. God expects His children to stand for right even when in the minority. (2 Cor. 6:17-18)
- B. In the face of civil government.
  1. Sometimes God's faithful have had to stand up to civil government.
    - a. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. (Dan. 3:16-18)
    - b. Daniel. (Dan. 6:7-10)
    - c. Peter and John. (Acts 4:18-19)
  2. Christians today must face up to civil government. (In our country we may be having to do it more and more)
    - a. We need to pray for our government but at the same time we must always be prepared to serve God rather than men.
    - b. How can I know if I could stand the test? See if your courage gives out in lesser situations: Family, ridicule at work, etc.

C. In facing temptation.

1. Good people face temptation.
  - a. The example of Joseph. (Gen. 39:6-12)
  - b. Satan walks about as a roaring lion. (1 Pet. 5:8; Jas. 1:13-15)
2. Christians are to resist the devil (Jas. 4:7) but it takes courage.
3. Courage comes from a knowledge of God's care. (1 Cor. 10:13)

D. In rebuking sinners.

1. It is much easier to overlook and forget the sins of others but that is not what is best for either party.
2. Some examples of courage in rebuking others:
  - a. Nathan. (2 Sam. 12:7)
  - b. John the Baptist. (Mark 6:18)
  - c. Paul to Peter. (Gal. 2:11)
3. The consequences of acting properly are not always pleasing.
  - a. Some will not repent, some persecute the one who rebukes, etc.
  - b. Yet, it brings a certain kind of satisfaction. (Acts 20:26-27)

E. In admitting wrong

1. Sometimes this takes more courage than anything else.
2. The cowardly way is to justify one's wrongs.
3. The example of David. (2 Sam. 12:13)
4. Nothing short of the kind of courage David possessed will suffice for the Christian.

**Conclusion**

1. Many will often say to me, "How courageous you are!" But I am usually preaching among friends.
2. The courageous ones are those who go out into the world each day and place their faith before others.
3. May each of us be courageous and strong and live each day for the Lord no matter what the circumstances or consequences.

# The Second Coming of Christ

**Text: Acts 1:9-11**

## **Introduction**

1. The Bible centers around Jesus. Someone has said the Bible could be summed up in three sentences.
  - a. Christ is coming. Prophecies and shadows found in the OT point to Christ's first coming.
  - b. Christ is here. The gospels record the life of Jesus as He walked on the earth.
  - c. Christ is coming again. This is the theme of the NT Scriptures from the time Christ ascended to heaven.
2. Much error is taught in the religious world in reference to Christ's second coming: when it will be, what He will do, etc.
3. We need to understand what the Bible teaches in regard to His coming and its purpose so that we might be prepared for it.

## **I. The Assurance of Christ's Coming**

- A. Christ said He would come again. (John 14:1-3)
- B. The Holy Spirit said Christ would come again. (Heb. 9:27-28)
- C. The angels said Christ would come again. (Acts 1:9-11)
- D. The apostles said Christ would return.
  1. John. (1 John 3:2)
  2. Paul. (Col. 3:3-4)
  3. Peter. (2 Peter 3:9-10)

## **II. The Time of Christ's Coming**

- A. People have endeavored to set the time of His coming.
  1. William Miller, Ellen G. White and other Adventists, premillennialists who believe it will usher in the kingdom.
  2. Jehovah's Witnesses have set the time of Christ's return again and again.
- B. Please do not appeal to Matthew 24 to show that no one knows the time of Christ's return (vv. 35-36) because that chapter is dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem not the end of the world.
- C. The figures used to describe the second coming of Christ demonstrate that no one knows when it will be.
  1. As a thief in the night. (2 Peter 3:10; 1 Thes. 5:1-2)
  2. Sudden destruction will come upon the wicked as labor pains come upon the woman with child. (1 Thes. 5:3)

## **III. The Manner of Christ's Coming**

- A. He is coming in person. (1 Thes. 4:16-17)
- B. He is coming as He went back to heaven. (Acts 1:11)
- C. He is coming in visible form. (Rev. 1:7)
- D. He is coming without warning. (1 Thes. 5:2)
- E. Some will be prepared, some unprepared. (1 Thes. 5:1-6)

#### **IV. The Purpose of Christ's Coming**

##### **A. Negatively, He is not coming to:**

1. Establish His kingdom.
  - a. It was established on Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. (Dan. 2:44; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)
  - b. It was in existence by the time Paul wrote to the Colossians and Hebrews. (Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28)
2. Sit on David's throne.
  - a. He is now sitting on the throne of David. (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:29-32; 2:36)
  - b. Zechariah 6:13 says the Christ would sit on throne and rule and be a priest on the throne—He is doing that now. (Col. 3:1; Rom. 15:12-13; Heb. 4:14-16)
3. Restore the Jews to Palestine. God has already fulfilled every promise He ever made to the Jews concerning Palestine. (Joshua 21:43-45)
4. Convert the Jews. If they are going to be converted, it will be as everyone else—by the gospel. (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 9:28; Acts 10:34-35; 2 Cor. 6:2)
5. Begin a literal 1000 year reign on the earth.
  - a. Christ is reigning over all of heaven and earth now over a spiritual kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:24-26; John 18:36)
  - b. Revelation 20, the chapter some use for a proof-text of a literal 1000 year reign, is a figurative chapter in a figurative book.

##### **B. Positively, He is coming:**

1. To raise the dead both good and bad. (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15)
2. For judgment—to reward the righteous and pass formal sentence against the wicked. (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:12-15)
3. To deliver up the kingdom to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:22-28)

#### **Conclusion**

1. Seeing that Christ is coming again, we must be prepared.
2. Failure to prepare for that return will result in eternal condemnation. (2 Peter 3:10-13)

# The Antichrist

**Text: 1 John 2:18-29 (cf. 1 John 4:1-6; 2 John 7)**

## **Introduction**

1. The New Testament Scriptures mention the Antichrist as one who opposes the Lord.
2. Christians need to examine what and who the Antichrist is because of the many misconceptions people have concerning him.
3. This lesson will carefully consider what the Scriptures say about this person, and identify the characteristics to be manifested by him so that we will be able to recognize the real Antichrist.

## **I. The Context of John's Writings**

- A. John wrote in the latter part of the first century.
- B. Gnosticism had arisen to become a problem to the church.
  1. The gnostics claimed special knowledge.
  2. They developed concepts of the nature of Christ which were erroneous.
    - a. Their concepts were based on what they believed to be the incompatibility of humanity and divinity.
    - b. They believed humanity and divinity could not dwell together so they had to deny either the humanity of Jesus or His divinity.
  3. Mainly, two schools of thought developed both of which denied an essential element in the nature of Jesus.
    - a. Docetists.
      - 1) They denied that Jesus was actually humanity.
      - 2) They claimed Jesus only seemed to be flesh and blood.
    - b. Cerinthians.
      - 1) They said Jesus, the man, was born as others and was indeed the son of Mary and Joseph.
      - 2) They said the Christ, deity, descended on Jesus at His baptism and left him on the cross.

## **II. Characteristics of the Antichrist**

- A. Many are looking for an evident personality to appear on the scene and fight openly against Christ.
  1. That would be all too obvious.
  2. All would recognize him and he would deceive few. (1 John 2:26; 2 John 7)
- B. The real meaning of "anti:"opposed to. (1 John 2:18)
  1. Notice the plural and singular aspects of this teaching
    - a. First, there was to come in the last times antichrist, singular.
    - b. Secondly, there are now many anti- (opposed to) -Christs.
  2. There is not just one mighty, powerful person who is claiming that he is opposing Christ. Instead there are many who are secretly, deceptively working in opposition to the Son of God and His people.

- C. Identification of these antichrists can be made today.
  - 1. Our salvation depends upon understanding who they are and what makes them such. (1 John 2:19)
  - 2. “They went out from us.”
    - a. John, an inspired apostle, stands for the revealed word of God, the New Testament Scriptures.
    - b. Those who “went out” from the apostles claimed and practiced something other than what they preached. They were anti (opposed to) Christ, hence “antichrists.”
- D. This is the key to identifying the antichrists: All who depart from the word of Christ as it is revealed in the New Testament oppose Christ.
  - 1. They may appear to have a loving personality, be dynamic in persuading people to be saved, live for God, do good works.
  - 2. God’s word is divine, adequate, complete and any who depart and teach something else opposes Christ.
- E. There lies the danger: Any of us may become “antichrist.”
  - 1. We may be deceived by those who outwardly appear to be very godly.
  - 2. They may appear to be working for Christ and His cause. (Matt. 7:21)
    - a. They may say Christ is Lord and that He is ruling in their lives. (Luke 6:46; John 8:31)
    - b. We are either with Him or “anti” Him. (Matt. 12:30)
- F. How can we tell?
  - 1. The real test: Agreement, acceptance and advocacy of the same doctrine the apostles made known. (1 John 2:22-23)
  - 2. At the time of John’s writing people were going off on their own reasoning in line with the basic theory they had accepted relative to the nature of Christ—denying He had come in the flesh. (This was a major point of the epistles of John)
  - 3. The principle is true in relation to any doctrinal departure. (1 John 4:6).
    - a. Such is the test for determining who is of Christ and who is against Him.
    - b. We must discern truth from error and associate ourselves with those who teach and practice truth and disassociate ourselves from those who depend on something other than God’s revealed message.
- G. Whoever is a deceiver and is in opposition to Christ is antichrist. (2 John 7; cf. 2 Thes. 2:4ff)

### **Conclusion**

- 1. We have taken a stand in relation to Christ.
- 2. We are either on His side, fighting and living in His kingdom or we are against Him, His cause and His people.

# Placing Too Much Emphasis on Self

## Introduction

1. Those who comprise our society seem to be consumed with self.
  - a. The “me” generation has aged to become the most influential segment of society.
  - b. Many of the ills of society (Crime, poverty, immorality, lack of business productivity, declining SAT scores, etc.) are often blamed on a poor self image.
  - c. As a nation we have become obsessed with “rights” with no regard as to their effects upon others. (Consider the “pro-choice” advocates who, while demanding their individual rights, show no regard for the child.)
2. The problem is neither new nor peculiar to our time. Nor will it go away.
  - a. From Eden to eternity the chief cause of evil-doing has been and will continue to be self and selfishness.
  - b. It is at the root of all sin.
    - 1) Who is your greatest enemy? Is it not self? (1 Cor. 10:13)
    - 2) Someone has said, “To conquer self is to conquer all.”
    - 3) We are prone to blame others but we must look at self.
3. The proper attitude toward self is a sign of maturity.
  - a. The best definition of maturity I have ever heard: “When you arrive at and accept the realization that you are not the center of the universe.”
  - b. We can somewhat condone selfishness in a child because he does not know any better but immaturity and ignorance are never excuses for an adult to be selfish in his attitudes and actions. (Acts 17:30)
4. This lesson will give attention to self so that we might develop the proper attitude toward self and self-importance. We will consider:
  - a. Some examples from the Bible—both good and bad.
  - b. The problems of an undue emphasis on self.
  - c. How to really solve the problems of self.

## I. Biblical Examples of Improper Attitudes Toward Self Which Illustrate the Characteristics of Selfish People

- A. Cain. No concern for others. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9)
- B. Ahab. Concern for things. (cf. Luke 12:16-21) He coveted Naboth’s vineyard. (1 Kings 21)
- C. David. Fulfill own pleasures. His selfishness led to adultery and murder. (2 Sam. 11)
- D. James and John. Desire power and prestige for self. They wanted places of honor. (Matt. 20)
- E. The older brother of the prodigal. No compassion or love. (Luke 15)

## II. The Problems of an Improper Attitude toward Self

- A. **Self-centeredness.** Absorbed, wrapped up, in self.
  1. No one enjoys a self-centered person.
  2. It is easy to see in others. It is hard to recognize in self.
  3. The example of the priest and Levite. (Luke 10:30-31)
    - a. They were guilty, among other things, of self-centeredness.
    - b. They had neither pity nor compassion for others.

- B. **Self-conceit.** An exaggerated estimation of ones own ability or powers.
  - 1. God hates pride. (Prov. 16:18; James 4:6,10; Luke 18:14)
  - 2. We are not to think too highly of self. (Rom. 12:3)
- C. **Self-willed.** Stubborn, set on having own way.
  - 1. Some examples:
    - a. Jonah.
    - b. The rich fool. (Luke 12:16)
    - c. The Jews who stoned Stephen and their ancestors. (Acts 7:51-53)
  - 2. God does not want it in the leaders of His people. (Titus 1:7)
- D. **Self-indulgence.** Giving free course to ones own passions, desires and inclinations.
  - 1. A sin which leads one from God.
  - 2. Two examples: Romans 1:24-26 and 2 Timothy 4:10.
- E. **Self-righteousness.** Being righteous in ones own eyes.
  - 1. A trait of the Pharisees (Luke 18:9-14; Rom. 10:1-3) which prompted them to accuse Jesus of eating with sinners. (Matt. 9:10-12)
  - 2. It is the basis of the three parables found in Luke 15.
- F. **Self-satisfaction.** Being pleased with who and what one is.
  - 1. The satisfied person has reached his goal.
    - a. He has no other worlds to conquer, no loftier heights to scale, no greater work to do.
    - b. His journey can only be downward.
  - 2. One cannot establish bounds for the person who is not satisfied with himself or his accomplishments.
    - a. Many are guilty of the “ministry of mediocrity,” but not Paul (Phil 3:13-14; 1 Cor. 10:12)
    - b. Complacent churches are rebuked for their indifference. (Rev. 3:1)

### III. How to Solve the Problems of Self

- A. Follow the examples of selflessness given in the Bible.
  - 1. Abraham. He gave Lot his choice of land. (Gen. 13)
  - 2. Joseph. He forgave and then helped his brothers. (Gen. 45)
  - 3. Good Samaritan. Unlike those who were outwardly pious, he took the time to help a person in need. (Luke 10)
  - 4. Barnabas. He sold his land and gave all the money to the Lord’s cause. (Acts 4)
  - 5. Paul. He gave himself to the Lord. (Gal. 2:20)
- B. Put self to death. (Gal. 2:20) This is done by:
  - 1. Self-denial. (Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:23)
    - a. Esteem others better than self. (Phil. 2:3; John 13:3-17)
    - b. Humble yourself before God. (1 Pet. 5:6)
  - 2. Self-control. (Prov. 16:32; Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6)
  - 3. Self-sacrifice. (2 Cor. 8:5; Rom. 12:1)

### Conclusion

- 1. The religion of Christ is one of service, surrender and sacrifice.
- 2. Someone has suggested that, for all practical purposes, the one great question in judgment will be “Did you win the battle over self?”
- 3. God wants self relegated to the background. Christians are to:
  - a. Put on Christ, put off self.
  - b. Glorify God, not self, by their lives.

# Five Reasons to Be Baptized

## Introduction

1. Baptism is one of those subjects that even religious people do not want to discuss.
  - a. Many erroneous views exist as to what baptism is and whether or not it is essential to salvation.
  - b. Some people do not know what to do having been told that they need not be concerned with being baptized.
2. Quite often when someone is asked to do something they should do but do not want to do or see no need to do, they often respond by saying, "Give me one good reason why I should!"
  - a. This lesson will apply that kind of thinking to the subject of baptism.
  - b. All I ask is that you give the lesson a fair hearing.
3. But I am not going to give you one good reason.
  - a. I am not going to give you one but five.
  - b. I am not going to give them to you.
    - 1) What I say or do not say does not make any difference in what you must or must not do. (See Matt. 21:23-27; 15:9)
    - 2) I am going to let the apostle Paul do it.

## I. Paul's Credentials

- A. He was specially chosen by God. (Gal. 1:14-16a; cf. Isa. 49:1,5)
- B. He was chosen to be an apostle. (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; etc.)
- C. He had all the authority of an apostle. (1 Cor. 9:1-2; 2 Cor. 11:5)
- D. He received His teaching by revelation. (Gal. 1:11-12; Eph. 3:1-5)
- E. His writings are the commandments of the Lord. (1 Cor. 14:37)

## II. Paul's Reasons for Being Baptized

- A. Reason one: to be in Christ. (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3)
  1. It is in baptism that one enters into Christ.
  2. It is important to be in Christ because that is where one has:
    - a. All spiritual blessings. (Eph. 1:3)
    - b. Salvation. (2 Tim. 2:10)
- B. Reason two: to enter the death of Christ. (Rom. 6:3)
  1. It is in baptism that one enters into the death of Christ.
  2. It is by Christ's death that one is reconciled to God. (Rom. 5:10)
  3. It was in His death that His cleansing blood was shed. His blood provides:
    - a. Forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1:14)
    - b. Redemption. (Eph. 1:7)
    - c. The key to 1 Peter 3:21. (cf. Heb. 9:14)
- C. Reason three: to enter the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:13)
  1. It is in baptism that one enters into the body of Christ.
  2. It is important to be in His body because it is:
    - a. The only one for which Jesus died. (Eph. 5:25)
    - b. The only one recognized by heaven. (Eph. 4:4)
    - c. The one true church. (Col. 1:18)
    - d. The only one Jesus will save in the final day. (Eph. 5:23)

- D. Reason four: to be made a partaker of the one Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:13)
1. It is in baptism that one is made partaker of the one Spirit.
  2. One cannot belong to Christ without being made a partaker of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:9)
  3. The Spirit gives assurance of our sonship through the word He delivered. (Rom. 8:16)
    - a. He has given the plan of salvation.
    - b. When my spirit can truly say I have obeyed all of that plan then His spirit bears witness with my spirit that I am saved.
  4. In “the washing of regeneration” one is made to drink of the Spirit thus becoming a partaker of Him. (Titus 3:5-6)
- E. Reason five: baptism allows one to put on Christ. (Gal. 3:27)
1. It is in baptism that one puts on Christ.
  2. The example of Paul.
    - a. His life magnified Christ, therefore, he had hope. (Phil. 1:20)
    - b. He had put Christ on, had lived within his Lord and could thus say, “Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20)
  3. One cannot be clothed with Christ until he has put Christ on in baptism.

#### **Conclusion**

1. For all these reasons one must be baptized.
2. They ought to cause you to want to give obedience to the Lord and His gospel culminating that obedience with baptism in water for the remission of sins.

# “Here We Are But Straying Pilgrims”

Text: Hebrews 11:13-16

## Introduction

1. While the chorus of the song “Here We Are But Straying Pilgrims” entreats us to lift up our eyes to the mansions “yonder over the rolling river,” the verses describe our present state.
2. By considering the adversities of this life, we develop a "longing" for heaven and courage to overcome life's trials.
2. In this lesson we will:
  - a. Define and illustrate *pilgrim* and *pilgrimage*.
  - b. Show that the Bible reveals that our life on earth is to be considered a pilgrimage.
  - c. Examine some of the consequences of being a pilgrim.

## I. Pilgrim and Pilgrimage Defined and Illustrated

### A. Pilgrim.

#### 1. Definitions.

- a. “One who journeys in alien lands: Wayfarer.” (*Webster’s 7th New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 641)
- b. “PAREPIDEMOS (παρεπίδημος), an adjective signifying ‘sojourning in a strange place, away from one’s own people’...is used of O.T. saints, Heb. 11:13;...of Christians, I Pet. I:I...; the word is used metaphorically of those to whom Heaven is their own country, and who are sojourners on earth.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 865)
- c. “παρ-επί-δημος,..., prop. *one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives; hence stranger; sojourning in a strange place, a foreigner,...; in the N.T. metaph. in ref. to heaven as the native country, one who sojourns on earth: so of Christians, I Pet. i.1;...*” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 488)

#### 2. Illustration: Abraham. (Gen. 12:1ff; 23:1-6; Heb. 11:8-9)

### B. Pilgrimage.

#### 1. Definitions.

- a. “1 :a journey of a pilgrim, *esp* : one to a shrine or a sacred place 2 :the course of life on earth.”(Webster)
- b. “magur,...in the sense of *lodging*: a temporary *abode*; by extens. a permanent *residence*: —dwelling, pilgrimage, where sojourn, be a stranger.” (*Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*, p. 61)

#### 2. Illustration: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Ex. 6:1-4)

## II. The Bible: Our Life Is to Be a Pilgrimage

### A. We are not to look upon our life on this earth as the totality of our existence.

1. It is but a brief, transitory period that takes us from our birth to our death and then on to our ultimate destiny. (Jas. 4:13-15)

2. We should understand that as pilgrims we are aliens on earth.
    - a. The patriarchs. (Heb. 11:13-14; 13:14)
    - b. “In the anonymous Epistle to Diognetus, an apologetic letter, probably of the second century, and one of the gems of early Christian literature, occur the following words concerning Christians: ‘They inhabit their own country, but as sojourners: they take part in all things as citizens, and endure all things as aliens: every foreign country is theirs, and every country is foreign.’” (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, p. 523)
- B. This life is temporary.
1. The physical body is but an earthly *tent*. (2 Pet. 1:12-15)
    - a. SKENE: “a tent, booth, tabernacle,...” (Vine, 1126)
    - b. Our physical dwelling is temporary. (Psa. 90:10)
  2. Consider Paul’s desire to “depart.” (Phil. 1:23)
    - a. “The word ‘desire’ is in the Greek ‘a passionate desire.’ ‘To depart’ is from a Greek word used of loosing a ship from its moorings or of striking one’s tent. Probably, the latter figure was in the apostle’s mind. He was a tent maker by trade, he spoke of the human body as a tent, and he was a prisoner at the barracks of the Praetorian Guard. The phrase ‘abide in the flesh,’ has the idea, ‘to cling to this present life with all its inconveniences and to stand by a mortal body.’ Translation: *Rather, I am being held motionless by an equal pull from the two (namely, life and death), so that I cannot incline either way, having the passionate desire towards striking my tent and being with Christ, which is by far better, but still to remain with my flesh is more needful for your sake.*” (*Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, Vol. II, p. 46)
    - b. “‘My desire is to depart,’ says Paul, and the phrase is very vivid. The word he uses for *to depart* is *analuein*.
      - “(i) It is the word for striking camp, loosening the tent ropes, pulling up the tent pins and moving on. Death is a moving on. It is said that in the terrible days of the war, when the Royal Air Force stood between Britain and destruction and the lives of its pilots were being sacrificially spent, they never spoke of a pilot as having been killed but always as having been ‘posted to another station.’ Each day is a day’s march nearer home, until in the end, camp in this world is for ever struck and exchanged for permanent residence in the world of glory.” (*The Daily Bible Study Series, Rev. Ed., The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, p 28)
    - c. “PAUL WAS a tentmaker. He like every Jewish boy learned some manual trade in addition to his chosen profession. The great scholar made tents for a living while preaching Christ (Acts 18:3). Writing to the Philippians (1:23), he tells them of his conflicting desires, to depart and be with Christ, or to remain with them for their benefit. The words ‘to depart’ are from a military word meaning ‘to take down one’s tent and be off.’ Paul wrote this in a military camp. Paul’s human body was the tent in which he was living. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Heb. 11:9), lived in tents. A tent speaks of a pilgrim journey. They were looking for a permanent place of abode.” (Wuest, Vol. III, p. 39)

3. “The word became flesh and *dwelt* among us.” (John 1:14)
  - a. “Second, He ‘dwelt among us.’ ‘Dwelt’ (*eskenosen*) really means ‘to pitch tent.’ ‘He camped among us.’ His stay was temporary, but not illusory. This verb is used only five times in the New Testament: in this passage and four times in the Apocalypse (Rev. 7:15, 12:12, 13:6; 21:3). Two of these instances refer to God. In the Greek Old Testament the word is largely confined to use with reference to the Tabernacle where the presence of God ‘dwelt.’ Perhaps John assumed that the reader’s knowledge of the Septuagint would connect this statement with the Old Testament doctrine of the presence of God which guided the Israelites, and ‘dwelt among them’ by day and by night. The cognate noun (*skene*) which is almost wholly used to refer to the Tabernacle appears in connection with this verb in Revelation 13:6. The invisible, indefinable God has been brought down into daily life through the incarnation.” (*John: The Gospel of Belief*, p. 70)
  - b. “‘The Word became flesh and dwelt among us’ (John 1:14). The word ‘dwelt’ in the Greek is not the ordinary word which means to ‘abide,’ but a verb whose root is our word ‘tent.’ Literally, ‘the Word took up his residence in a tent among us.’ Out of the ivory palaces, the King of Glory came to live in a tent among a people who lived in tents. What condescension.” (Wuest)

### III. Some Consequences of Being a Pilgrim

- A. Separation—alienation—from the world. The Christian must view himself as a foreigner in the world.
  1. The Christian is to be in the world not of the world. (John 17:11-16)
  2. The Christian must always answer to the law of his *homeland*. (Phil. 3:20)
    - a. It is the law of heaven, God’s law. (Acts 5:29; Psa. 119:49-56)
    - b. The Christian must pass the time in “*fear*.” (1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11-12; Eccl. 12:13-14)
- B. A realization of the brevity of life. The Christian must understand and emphasize the transitory nature of life.
  1. “Now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. 6:2)
  2. He must awaken to his responsibilities **now**. (Rom. 13:11-12a)
- C. A focus on the end of the journey. The Christian must never lose sight of heaven.
  1. The example of the patriarchs. (Heb. 11:13-16)
  2. The desire of Paul. (Phil. 1:23)
  3. The daily goal of the faithful child of God. (Col. 3:1-4)

### Conclusion: The End of the Pilgrim's Journey—Home! (Rev. 21:1-3)

1. Revelation 21:1-3. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.’”
2. “God is to make His *dwelling-place* with men. The word used for dwelling-place is *skene*, which literally and initially means a *tent*; but in religious use this word had long since lost any idea of an impermanent and a passing residence. There are two main ideas in it here.

“(i) *Skene* is the word which is used for the *Tabernacle*. Originally in the wilderness the Tabernacle was the *skene par excellence*. This, then, means that God is to make His tabernacle with men for ever and ever. That is to say, God is to give His presence to men for ever and ever. Here in this world and amidst the things of time our realisation and experience of the presence of God is a spasmodic, a fleeting, a transitory thing, which comes and goes, at the mercy of our own changes and of the chances and changes of life. But life in heaven will be nothing other than life permanently in the presence of God.” (*The Daily Study Bible, The Revelation of John*, Vol. 2, p. 259)

3. “Thus, beautifully the everlasting marriage-feast of the Lamb, Christ, and of his bride, the church, is pictured to us...It is the climax of that entire process whereby God comes to his people. So close is this eternal communion between God and his elect that he, as it were, dwells with them in one tent—*his tent*, the glory of his attributes—, Rev. 7:15.” (*More Than Conquerors*, p. 240)

# The Millennial Reign

## Introduction

1. Premillennial doctrine is so prolific that it has affected the beliefs of nearly everyone the Christian attempts to teach.
  - a. It is a theory that is not only highly speculative but also very dangerous.
  - b. It is not a threat to the church that has been relegated to the past. Brethren are once again embracing it.
2. It is a subtle form of infidelity very much like the theory of evolution.
  - a. It is only a theory—unproven and unprovable.
  - b. Some, even in the church, feel it makes no difference whether one believes it or not.
3. All Christians need to have a basic understanding of its teachings and dangers.
  - a. To keep from falling prey to it.
  - b. To teach others of the fallacious nature of it.
4. This lesson will seek to inform each listener, not of highly speculative theories, but of what the book of Revelation *really* teaches about the millennial reign.

## I. A General View of the Book of Revelation

### A. The introduction to “Revelation.” (1:1-6)

1. It is addressed to the seven churches of Asia. (1)
2. Notice two facts of special interest:
  - a. “Show His servants—things which must *shortly* take place.” (1)
    - 1) Any interpretation of the book of Revelation which eliminates the saints of 1:9 by nineteen centuries has to be false.
    - 2) The saints to whom it was written were in immediate need of its message.
  - b. “He sent and signified it by His angel.” (1)
    - 1) “Signify:” To set forth in signs and symbols.
    - 2) The symbols of Revelation cannot symbolize themselves. Therefore, the beasts, dragons, famine, disease, etc., cannot be taken literally.
    - 3) A hermeneutic principle: One must not build a religious doctrine by literalizing symbolic language. Such produces conflict with other clear teachings of the New Testament Scriptures.

### B. “Revelation” was written to saints who were in a severe tribulation because of their stand for the truth. (1:9)

1. The focus of the letter:
  - a. Victory over that tribulation if they would remain faithful.
  - b. The persecuting forces would suffer defeat.
2. If the Lord has spoken literally of the persecutions, etc., facing the church then it might have made those persecutions more frequent and severe.
  - a. He spoke in a way that the church could understand but that its enemies could not.
  - b. The purpose of the figurative language of Revelation is very similar to the purpose for Jesus’ use of the parable during His earthly ministry. (Matt. 13:10-11)

## II. A Look at the Millennial Reign: An Analysis of Revelation 20:1-6

- A. Premillennialists use this text to justify their concept of a future reign of Christ upon the earth.
1. Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, pp. 177-178.
  2. They make many bold assertions based on the above text.
    - a. “Christ will reign a thousand years.”
    - b. “Christ will reign on earth a thousand years.”
    - c. “We will reign with Christ a thousand years.”
- B. Some things *not* mentioned in this text:
1. The second coming of Christ.
  2. A bodily resurrection.
  3. A reign on earth.
    - a. “Souls” reigned.
    - b. Can disembodied souls reign on earth?
  4. Christ will reign a thousand years. (*Souls* reigned a thousand years)
  5. Jerusalem or Palestine.
  6. *We* are not mentioned. (“They”—the souls of those beheaded)
  7. Christ on earth.
- C. Further consideration of the thousand year reign.
1. The “reign” referred to is not Christ’s but that of the souls.
    - a. They lived and reigned with Christ.
    - b. The subject is their reign not Christ’s.
  2. The reign of Christ could be any length.
    - a. The passage does not say.
    - b. I might live with you in Tallahassee for one year but that says nothing of how long you have lived in Tallahassee.
  3. If the “reign” is limited to a thousand years, how about the “lived?”
  4. Is the thousand years literal?
    - a. If so, are the red horses, chain, rod of iron and the other symbols literal?
    - b. We must apply the hermeneutical rule of consistency.
- D. For premillennialism to be true, this chapter must be speaking of two bodily resurrections.
1. This chapter does not even mention *one* bodily resurrection of the dead.
  2. New Testament teaching regarding the literal resurrection of the dead.
    - a. John 5:28-29. One resurrection, two destinations.
    - b. John 6:40-44. The resurrection will be at the last day. (John 11:24)
    - c. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
      - 1) The righteous dead are not to be pitied.
      - 2) The righteous dead are compared to the righteous living. There is no mention of the wicked dead.
  3. Is the idea of a resurrection ever used in a figurative way in the Bible?
    - a. Ezekiel 37:1-4. This resurrection means that Judah was to be restored from Babylonian captivity to her own land.
    - b. Isaiah 26:13-14.
      - 1) Though certain wicked “lords” had dominion over Israel, their dominion would not rise—they would not again have dominion.

- 2) The Jehovah's Witnesses use this passage literally to show that the wicked will never be raised from the dead. Other premillennialists, to be consistent, should too.
4. In the text the "first resurrection" evidently is used to refer to a resurrection of the cause of the beheaded saints of 6:9-10.
  - a. In chapter six they are under the altar crying out and asking how long it would be before the Lord avenged their blood.
  - b. In 20:4-6 their cause had been "resurrected" and they were reigning with Christ.
  - c. Those, who through fear, lack of faith in and/or love for Christ, etc., had not been faithful "unto death," were not beheaded and would have no part in the "first resurrection" and on such the "second death" would have power.
5. Compare 20:6 with 2:11.
  - a. Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."
  - b. Revelation 2:11: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

### III. The Second Coming of Christ and Its Meaning

- A. The resurrection of all the dead at the same time. (John 5:28-29)
- B. The passing of everything material. (2 Pet. 3:9-11)
- C. The judgment of all—both the righteous and the wicked. (2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thes. 1:11-12)
- D. The kingdom will then be delivered over to the Father and eternity will begin. (1 Cor. 15:21-28)

### Conclusion

1. The dangerous consequences of premillennialism are many. If premillennialism were true:
  - a. The Old Testament prophets were wrong.
  - b. God selected the wrong time to send His Son into the world to establish His kingdom.
  - c. Christ failed in His mission.
  - d. The church is nothing more than an accident.
  - e. Christ is not reigning now.
2. If premillennialism were true, it would destroy many of the fundamental principles of the religion of Christ.
  - a. The future reign theory denies the present reign of Christ.
  - b. The theory as a whole denies that God kept His kingdom promises.
  - c. It is impossible to believe the premillennial teaching and at the same time believe we are living in the "last days."
  - d. It minimizes the gospel and belittles the church of Jesus Christ.
3. Do not fall prey to the false doctrine of premillennialism!

# The Cycle of Christianity

## Introduction

1. The eternal purpose of God was to save man.
2. To that end He sent His Son to live upon the earth so that His purpose might be accomplished and all could have the opportunity for salvation.
3. Those who come to Christ receive the blessings made possible by His death but they also sustain responsibilities to serve Him and others by acting on His behalf and carrying His message of salvation to the world.
4. This concept, which I term “the cycle of Christianity,” is presented to us in two passages in the gospel of Matthew.
  - a. Matthew 11:28-30 and 28:18-20.
  - b. These passages provide for the perpetuation of Christ’s body here upon the earth.
5. The cycle of Christianity: “Come and Learn,” then “Go and Teach.”

## I. “Come and Learn” (Matt. 11:28-30)

### A. “Come.”

1. This invitation is:
  - a. Issued by Jesus to those who are weary of the burden of the guilt of their sins.
  - b. Repeated by the Spirit and the Bride at the very end of God’s revelation. (Rev. 22:17)
2. One must come to Jesus for He alone has the words to eternal life. (John 6:60-69; Acts 4:12; John 14:6)

### B. “Learn.”

1. Of God and His love for man. (Heb. 11:6; John 3:16)
2. Of Jesus and His sacrifice for sin. (1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 5:21)
3. Of sin and its tragic consequences. (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 3:23; Jas. 1:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)
4. The value of the soul. (Matt. 16:26)
5. The facts one needs to believe about Jesus. (John 8:24)
6. The commands one must obey to be saved. (Heb. 5:8-9)
7. About the church, the body of the saved. (Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:22-23)
8. How one is to conduct himself as a member of that body. (Titus 2:11-12; Eph. 4:1; Rom. 6:1-4)
9. The blessings one receives in that body. (Eph. 1:3)
10. The rewards of faithfulness. (Rev. 2:10)

## II. “Go and Teach” (Matt. 28:18-20)

### A. “Go.”

1. Following the example of the New Testament church. (Acts 8:1-4)
2. Fulfilling the role of a light in the world. (Matt. 5:14-16)
3. Striving to be faithful. (2 Tim. 2:2)

4. Knowing this task will only end when time is no more.
    - a. The “Great Commission” is a cyclical command.
    - b. The apostles were to teach new disciples to “observe all things” Christ had commanded them.
      - 1) Christ had just commanded them to go and teach.
      - 2) The burden of this command falls upon every disciple of Christ.
- B. “Teach.”
1. Faithful individuals teach. (2 Tim. 2:2)
  2. One is to teach the word of God. (2 Tim. 4:1-4)
  3. One must teach the gospel of Christ without alteration. (Gal. 1:6-9)
  4. People must know the truth if they are going to be free from sin. (John 8:32)

**Conclusion**

1. If you have not yet come to Christ, why not do it now? You have learned of Him, so come to Him.
2. If you have already answered His invitation, now go and teach others of their need for Him.

# Calling On the Name of the Lord

**Text: Joel 2:28-32**

## **Introduction**

1. The prophecy in the text indicates:
  - a. “Whoever” desires deliverance from sin and its condemnation can be saved.
  - b. Salvation is for all. There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile. (Acts 10:34-35; Eph. 2:14-19)
  - c. The Calvinist doctrine of “unconditional election” is false.
  - d. “Calling on the name of the Lord” is essential to salvation.
2. The text does not tell us what is meant by the phrase “call on the name of the Lord.”
  - a. Some say it means that one must only accept Jesus as personal Savior.
  - b. What does the Bible say? That is what this lesson will seek to set forth.
3. We will examine three New Testament passages which deal directly with the concept of “calling on the name of the Lord.”

## **I. Acts 2:1-39**

- A. This text chronicles the day of Pentecost following the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the sermon the apostle Peter delivered that day.
  1. Peter quotes the text from Joel. (1-13)
    - a. Speaking by inspiration of the Spirit, he said the events of that day of Pentecost were a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. (14-21)
    - b. He pointed out that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was a direct fulfillment of Joel. (17-20)
    - c. Thus he acknowledged the fulfillment of the prophecy that “whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (21)
  2. Peter concluded his sermon by telling those present what they needed to do in order to be saved.
    - a. What he told them was the equivalent of “calling on the name of the Lord” since Joel had said one who “called” would be saved.
    - b. He told them to “heed my words” (22) because every condition for salvation is set forth in this passage. They:
      - 1) Had to hear the facts Peter presented about Jesus.
      - 2) Had to believe those facts.
      - 3) Expressed (confessed) their belief (faith) in Jesus by their question directed to Peter.
      - 4) Had to repent.
      - 5) Had to be baptized for the remission of sins.
      - 6) Would then receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the salvation of their souls, as had been promised. (Gen. 12:1-3; vv. 38-39)

- B. Conclusions drawn from Peter's sermon.
  - 1. Since those saved had forgiveness, remission, of their sins, then to be "saved," as in verse 21, is no different than "the remission of sins" in verse 38.
  - 2. Whatever was to be done to have remission of sins would be involved in "calling on the name of the Lord."
  - 3. Both "the remission of sins" and "calling on the name of the Lord" involved hearing the gospel, believing in Jesus, repentance of sins, confession of Jesus and baptism for the remission of sins.

## II. Acts 22:16

- A. This text is part of the apostle Paul's iteration of his conversion.
  - 1. As he, as Saul of Tarsus, prayed in Damascus, Ananias, sent by the Lord, came to him.
  - 2. Ananias told him what he needed to do to be saved.
- B. The conditions of salvation found in Saul's conversion are exactly the same as they were on Pentecost. He could "call on the name of the Lord" only in the same way they did.

## III. Romans 10:13-16

- A. The apostle Paul, in writing to the church at Rome, quotes Joel 2:32 and then tells what is involved in "calling on the name of the Lord."
- B. One cannot:
  - 1. "Call on the name of the Lord" until he believes.
  - 2. Believe until he hears the gospel.
  - 3. Hear the gospel without a preacher.
- C. Based on the above, to "call on the name of the Lord" involves:
  - 1. Hearing the gospel.
  - 2. Believing the gospel.
  - 3. Obeying the gospel.

## Conclusion

- 1. "Calling on the name of the Lord" requires obedience to the commands of the gospel for the salvation of the soul.
- 2. No one can be saved without such obedience.
- 3. If you have not done so, why not "call on the name of the Lord" today by obeying Jesus and His gospel for the salvation of your soul?

# “Believe On the Lord Jesus Christ”

**Text: Acts 16:16-34**

## **Introduction**

1. The text is one of many used by those who teach the doctrine of “salvation by faith only” to support their teaching.
  - a. The Philippian jailor: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30)
  - b. The apostle Paul’s response: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (Acts 16:31)
2. Those who hold the view of “salvation by faith only” will combine this text with other passages, such as John 3:16, to show one need “only believe” to be saved.
3. The doctrine of “salvation by faith only” has become the most popular doctrine as to what one must do to be saved.
  - a. “...wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.” (*The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, South*, 1894, Ch. I, Sect. I, par. 9, p. 13)
  - b. Because it is so popular, it needs to be investigated to see if it is taught in Scripture. (Acts 17:11)

## **I. The Contradictory Nature of The Doctrine of “Salvation by Faith Only”**

- A. Only the truth of God frees one from sin. (John 8:32)
  1. No part of God’s word contradicts any other part of it because, by nature, truth does not contradict truth. (John 17:17)
  2. A rule of hermeneutics, the science of Biblical interpretation: “Each passage must be interpreted in harmony with all other passages.”
    - a. When you think passages contradict, your interpretation of one or both is faulty.
    - b. The law of consistency of truth: No doctrine can be true if it is opposed to any clear statement of the word of God.
- B. If the apostle Paul, in Acts 16:31, intended to teach “salvation by faith only,” he contradicts:
  1. James. He said one is not justified by “faith only.” (Jas. 2:20-26)
  2. John. He said in order to know Christ one must “keep His commandments.” (1 John 2:4)
  3. Ananias. He was the man sent by God to tell Paul what he needed to do to be saved (Acts 22:16). Had Paul decided that:
    - a. Ananias was wrong?
    - b. He was saved at the time he saw Jesus and believed?
    - c. Ananias’ visit to him was unnecessary?
  4. Peter.
    - a. On Pentecost he was asked the same question and responded, “...repent and be baptized...” (Acts 2:38)
    - b. He said baptism “now saves us.” (1 Pet. 3:21)
  5. Jesus. He said one:
    - a. Must do the will of the Father to enter heaven. (Matt. 7:21)
    - b. Must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of heaven. (John 3:5)
    - c. That the one who believes and is baptized shall be saved. (Mark 16:16).

6. Himself.
  - a. If so, he lied because he said he taught the same thing everywhere. (1 Cor. 4:17)
  - b. In other places he taught:
    - 1) Obedience is necessary for eternal life. (2 Thes. 1:7-9; Rom. 6:17-18)
    - 2) Works of righteousness are a part of salvation. (Rom. 2:10)

## II. The True Meaning of Acts 16:16-34

- A. Perfected faith, i.e., a working faith, saved the jailor.
  1. One cannot be justified without a working faith. (Jas. 2:22)
  2. Paul would not have told him he could be saved by an imperfect, dead faith.
- B. A dead faith is compared to a saving faith in James 2:17-20.
- C. The New Testament contains examples of those who had faith but were lost.
  1. The leaders of the synagogue who believed but were lost. (John 12:41-42)
  2. Agrippa believed but he was lost because he needed more persuasion to become a Christian. (Acts 26:27-28)
- D. Hebrews 11 contains many examples of people who served God by faith.
  1. Not a one of them is described as pleasing God by faith only.
  2. All of them served by faith but each proved his/her faith by works of righteousness.
- E. Works of righteousness which demonstrate one's faith are essential to salvation.
  1. They neither precede nor circumscribe the grace of God.
    - a. God's grace is revealed through His word. (Titus 2:11-12)
    - b. One cannot be saved without doing what God, in His word, has ordained for him to do that he might have eternal life.
  2. One must work God's righteousness in order to be saved. (Acts 10:35)
    - a. This is accomplished by obeying the gospel. (Rom. 1:16-17)
    - b. When one obeys the gospel he is saved by the grace of God through faith. (Eph. 2:8-9)
    - c. The Christians at Rome were made free from sin after they obeyed (worked righteousness) from the heart (faith). (Rom. 6:17-18)

## Conclusion

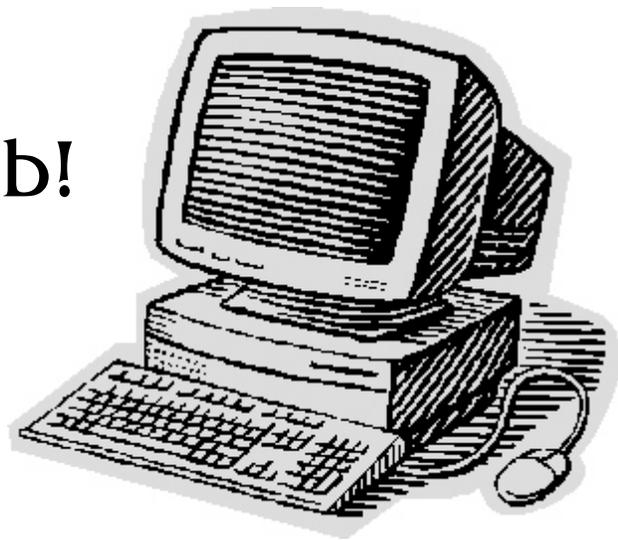
1. The doctrine of "salvation by faith only" is at fault because it requires less than what Jesus and His gospel teach as essential to salvation. Included are:
  - a. Repentance. (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
  - b. Confession. (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10)
  - c. Baptism. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21)
2. The Scriptures affirm salvation by faith (Rom. 5:1-2; Heb. 11:6) but the doctrines of "salvation by faith" and "salvation by faith only" are not the same.
  - a. Faith is an essential part of the saving process but it alone will not save.
  - b. The jailor was saved by faith when his faith was perfected by his obedience to the gospel.

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