

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

VOLUME 9 - NO. 1

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

MAY - 1967

What Must I Do to Become a Christian?

HEAR— "If any man have an ear, let him hear." Rev. 13:9 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom 10:17

BELIEVE — Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 8:24 "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." Heb. 11:6

REPENT — "I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Lk. 13:3 "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts 17:30

CONFESS — "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:32 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:9

BE BAPTIZED — "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mk. 16:16 "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38

"THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: AND THE SAME DAY THERE WERE ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS." Acts 2:41

If you have a meeting coming up this summer, please let us have the date and the speaker.

The Eldership No. 7

James Knight
Pineville, La.

This will conclude our study of the eldership. I trust these lessons have been helpful to you in gaining a better understanding of what the Bible teaches in this regard. I have tried to present only the truth concerning the eldership.

I now invite your attention to one other qualification which one must possess if he is to serve as an elder in the Lord's church. In I Tim. 3:6 Paul says, Not a Novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Just what is a novice? A novice is a **NEW CONVERT**, one who has just recently obeyed gospel. There seems to be a tendency today for some churches to appoint men to the eldership who have not been Christians but just a short while. I do not intend just here to try to say just how long, or the exact number of years a man must be in the church before being appointed as an elder. I do not know of any scripture which tells us this either. I do believe that there is some criterion we can use in determining whether a man is no longer a new convert.

I believe Paul teaches, that a man must have been a Christian long enough to understand the intergal workings of the Lord's church. He must know truth well enough to be able to defend it a-

gainst false teachers. He must know the congregation well enough to know how to deal with each members problems. A new convert can not know these things.

Paul gives a reason for a new convert not being appointed as an elder. He says, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. All of us have a proud streak in us. We want people to notice us and what we do and are. Paul knew this, thus he advised not to appoint novices to the eldership.

Paul also says in I Timothy 3:7, "That an elder must have a good report of them that are without. For an elder to serve effectively he must not only be respected by the church, but also by those outside the church. An elder can have this kind of report only by proper conduct at all times. He must deal fairly with those outside the church. His business life must be above reproach. His home life must also be what God wants it to be.

Again as we bring these lessons to a close I want to remind you of the great responsibility which rest upon the elders of the church. I want to encourage every young man in the church to aspire to serve as an elder when grown to manhood. There is a crying need today for good elders in the local churches.

Silence is sometimes the best answer to slander.

FULTON CO. GOSPEL NEWS
Mammoth Spring, Ark. 72554

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**PUBLISHED MONTHLY
FREE SUBSCRIPTION**

**SUPPORTED BY:
CHURCHES OF CHRIST
IN THIS AREA**

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The Christian's Guarantee

Clovis Ragsdale

In the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, the author, Paul, deals at length with the resurrection of Christ from the dead. He presents proof of that event. Furthermore, he states that if God raised Christ, he could raise all men. Man's victory over the grave was made possible through our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul concluded this great chapter with the following statement: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." The last part of this verse could be called the "Christians Guarantee", because it tells us that if we are steadfast, unmoveable, and if we abound in the work of the Lord, our efforts will not be lost.

When we buy a new car or a new appliance we demand a guarantee that the product will give service. This protects the purchaser from paying out his money and not receiving value in return. He knows that he will not lose. The Bible guarantees that if we are steadfast, unmoveable, and if we abound in the Lord's work, we can

triumph over the grave. To win the victory over the grave is to win over sin. Sin was introduced by one man, Adam. Victory over sin and death was made possible by one man, Christ. Jesus Christ stands behind this guarantee. Let us notice some of the conditions that the individual must meet to receive his guarantee. The first condition is that we must be steadfast. The meaning of his word is to stand firm, fixed, and constant. The Christian life is a continual way of life, with no places for quitting, or to take time out to indulge in sin. It may be compared to a ship which sets sail across the ocean to another port. A course is chartered and the ship must keep the course else it will miss the port. It must not allow storms or error in navigation to move it from its chartered course. Christians are attempting to reach Heaven. The Bible makes known the way. We must not allow false doctrines or the wiles of Satan to draw us from that way. To do so is to make shipwreck of our faith and to be lost. Man has no right to compromise or change God's way. Remember, the guarantee says that we must be unmovable.

The third condition is that we must abound in the work of the Lord. The word abound means to be very prevalent, to have or possess in great quantity, and to overflow or enlarge a boundary. This would mean that a Christian is expected to grow and increase in Christian living. As we grow older in the Lord's service we should learn more of our duties and be able to do more for his cause. If all Christians grow as we should, then the church will grow and reach more and more lost souls. This would set in motion a chain reaction which would result in reaching all people. This happened in the first century of the church's existence, where the gospel was preached in all the then known world.

People gladly invest their money and efforts in projects that are guaranteed to return benefits. Should we not even more gladly invest time and efforts in the Lord

service having a sure guarantee that our labour will not be in vain?

The Relevance of Biblical Preaching

By Eugene W. Clevenger

The future of the Lord's Church depends upon its preachers who serve it and the preaching it is served. Much of what I hear today from our pulpits, lecture-ships, and radio programs is different from the biblical preaching of men like C. R. Nichol, N. B. Hardeman and others of their conviction.

Seemingly, some of our younger preachers are trying to impress their audiences with their knowledge of contemporary theology instead of emphasizing plain biblical truths. This was my impression recently as I listened to an outstanding radio evangelist as he quoted the scholars to substantiate a very obvious point he was making. It is one thing to make an argument on a controversial passage and substantiate it by quoting an authority, and quite another to say something which nobody denies and then quote the theologians.

To be sure, it is good for a preacher to keep abreast of what is going on in the religious world by reading theological journals and books. However, if one of my preaching brethren is more familiar with Jesus and Paul than with Bultmann and Schleiermacher, I certainly will not think less of him for that fact.

What the twentieth century needs is exactly what the first century needed: the preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified! It may be that we have too many "intellectuals" in the pew who are offended at the simplicity of the gospel, and too many "scholars" in the pulpit who put themselves in front of the cross instead of hiding behind it. The Bible is still relevant.

"The Story that Lives Forever"

O. L. GRISHAM

The Bible is Eternal. The many prophecies of the Bible are sufficient to authenticate its claim to be eternal. We read in Deut. 28:, of the promised blessings of God upon the Israelite Nation, if they would obey his laws and keep His commandments. In the same chapter we read of the consequences of their disobedience, it was fulfilled hundreds of years later. God told the Israelite people that the most delicate mother would turn against her husband and her children, even to the extent that she would eat her own child for food. We learn in history of this great prophecy being fulfilled. When Jerusalem was destroyed in about the year A.D. 70, some villains came through the city and smelled the smell of meat cooking. They entered a house and found a mothers' little baby in the oven. God's word is just as true and eternal today as it was four-thousand years ago. We read in I Pet. 1:22,23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth forever..." In the words of our Lord we read, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away." (Mk. 13:31) Religious bigots and atheists have tried to destroy the Bible by sword and flame, but it is now printed in every language of the earth and it is the "best seller." Though it be translated a million times and written in one billion languages, it has stood for centuries and decades and will continue to stand the tests of time, the attack of the infidel, and the wringing of the religionist.

The reason the Bible is Eternal, it is Divinely Inspired. The birth of Jesus is sufficient evi-

dence to prove that the Bible is the divine revelation from God. His birth was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet almost eight-hundred years before He was born. (Isa. 7:14) Peter the Apostle, wrote: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Pet. 1:21) When Jesus lived, walked and talked with his chosen twelve, He told them that He would send them another Comforter. (Jno. 14:16, 26) This Comforter was the Holy Spirit. (Jn. 14:26) The purpose of this Comforter being given to the Apostles in the baptismal measure, was to guide them into all truth, or teach them all things the Lord had said unto them. (Jn. 16:13).

Just before our Lord ascended back to the Father, he told the Apostles to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they receive the promise of the Father, or the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit. (Lu. 24:49; Acts 1: 5, 8). Accordingly, we find the Apostles in the city of Jerusalem, on the first Pentecost Day after the ascension of Christ. We read in Acts 2:4, "And they (the Apostles), were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues (or languages), and the Spirit gave them utterance, (or, guided them). Thus, as the Lord had said; the Holy Spirit was guiding and teaching the Apostles into all truth. Peter later wrote "According as His Divine Power that given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness..." (II Pet. 1:3) Paul wrote about the Divine Revelation, in these words: ".... How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His Holy Apostles and prophets BY THE SPIRIT..." (Eph 3: 3-5). Again "All scripture is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for amendment, and for moral discipline, to make the man of God proficient,

(or complete), and equip him for good work of every kind." (II Tim. 3:16, 17) Will you let God's Word guide your course in all matters of religion?

Thanks to You - -

The circulation of the FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS continues to grow. With this issue, we will mail out approximately 1,900 copies to most of the continental United States. Letters are received almost every day from readers who encourage us about its worth. From the first printing of the paper over eight years ago to this day, only one time were the contributions short of the expenses. When we had to add the ZIP code to all addresses, which required purchasing an addressing machine, many helped make it possible to do so without anything lacking. As we have increased the number of papers printed, even the printers (THE THAYER NEWS) helped by increasing the cost ever so slightly. We give our thanks to you all for supporting this work so generously.

Let us remind you that this paper is sent to any who desire to receive it without charge. If you have friends who would like to receive it, simply send us their names and addresses. Be sure to include the ZIP code number in that we cannot add them to the list without it. Those who regularly contribute to the paper do so that we might send it to any who might benefit by it.

He that never changes his opinion, and never corrects his mistakes will never be wiser on tomorrow than he is today.

The ability to deal with people is as purchasable a commodity as sugar or coffee. And, I pray more for that ability than for any other under the sun. - John D. Rockefeller.

The crosses we make for ourselves, by anxiety as to the future, are not the crosses sent by God.

- Fenelon.

Miracles in Our Day?

Richard England

Do you believe in miracles? If you believe the Bible you do. One cannot read much of the Bible without finding record of miracles. When God revealed truth to men He accompanied that revelation with such manifestations as would show its origin to the divine and not human. Man is aware of the things about himself having been created by a power much greater than himself. He is further aware that these things function in accordance with dependable, established laws that cannot be superseded by the power of mankind. Such laws govern all things with which we come in contact. The storms come and go in accordance with established law which man can observe and know. When Jesus could simply speak the word: "Peace, be still" and the storm immediately subside, men knew that He was more than mere man, for only He who established these laws could set them aside and cause things to happen beyond the natural law. Men knew the process of growing grapes and from them making wine. When Jesus caused water to turn to wine without regard to the natural established law, these people knew He had to be Deity. Any event which occurs in the natural world that does not conform to the natural established law is a miracle.

Miracles had a purpose. The purpose is implied by the use that is made of them throughout the Bible. It is specifically stated in John 20: 30, 31; Hebrews 2:4. They were to give assurance that the things revealed were from God and that the men performing them were doing so of God. When all the truth had been revealed and confirmed as being from God, miracles ceased. This, too, was according to God's plan as is seen in 1 Corinthians 13:10. Miracles were not intended to accomplish just the miraculous feat itself. If the only purpose in stilling the storm was to avoid the storm Jesus could have made it so that there

would never be a storm again. If wine itself were the purpose of the first miracle of Jesus, He could have caused a spring to appear that would flow with wine from that day to this. If the physical healing of sick bodies were all the Lord had in mind with miracles of healing, He could speak the word and destroy all germs and thus eliminate all disease. The purpose in miracles was to demonstrate power over this world, power and authority to speak to man that which man must do, and cause man to believe in the divine origin of the message. Now that the message has been given and proven to be from God, there is no more need for miracles. As for the desire of man to be free of storms, sickness, and the like, God wants man to have such freedom, but not in the world here. God promises such in the life to come. That perfect life without sorrow, tears, and troubles is to be had by those that love the Lord and not to be granted to those who do not love the truth and will not give praise to God. Therefore, such is reserved for that time when the good shall be separated from the evil and ushered into the presence of God in heaven.

There are no miracles today! To pray to God for such is to waste one's breath. One may pray for a thing to occur, and then go about doing what he can in accordance with established law to accomplish the thing for which he prayed, and he may receive it. The receiving of it is of God, for God made the law by which it was received. We pray for our daily bread and then get up and go to work. When we sit down at the table to eat that for which we have worked, we give thanks to God for providing it because we know that it was He who made it possible for us to have it. Yet, we realize it was received by means of an established law. We pray for the sick to be healed, then we take them to the doctor. When, after having given them the medicine prescribed, they recover from their illness, we give thanks to God for we know that he made it possible through His established laws. Men today who believe

that miracles are still being performed are void of an understanding of miracles and their purpose. The so called "divine healers" are fooling the people. If they do anything at all, it is merely a psychological accomplishment, which is quite adequate in some cases in that many illnesses are psychological and not organic in the first place. But, notice this: the psychological accomplishments are in accordance with the established natural law and are not miracles at all.

If you believe that miracles are being performed today, read Mark 16:17,18 and see what real miracles were performed by the men of the New Testament and then compare that with what man claims to be doing today. THERE ARE NO MIRACLES TODAY!

Meetings in the Area

Cave City - May 29 to June 4,
Speaker: Boyd Morgan.

Viola - June 5-13, Speaker: Clifford Dixon.

Mammoth Spring - June 14-21,
Speaker: W. A. Bradfield.

Gatewood, Mo. — June 23 - July 1, Speaker: Dwight Holland.

Delhalf — July 2-10, Speaker: Dwight Holland.

Agnos — July 2-10, Speaker: Dwight Holland.

Agnos — July 6-15, Speaker: Wesley Hylton.

Contributions - -

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