

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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Something to Think About !

By Clovis Ragsdale

One of the biggest problems in this area facing the many small congregations is how to get people to attend gospel meetings. Many meetings are held each year in which excellent speakers present the truth in an able way but with no results. In most cases the audience will consist of people who are already members of the church. We must face the fact that we can no longer set a date, hire a able preacher, strike hand bill, and announce the meeting far and wide, and get any appreciable number of people to attend who are not christians.

Why has this situation developed? There are several reasons. People are too usy to attend church. Entertainment is to be had on every hand. People have become more worldly minded. Biblical knowledge is lacking. Christians have set the wrong example of the meaning of christianity. The idea that moral goodness will take the place of being a member of the church. There are no doubt other reasons but these are quite representative of the whole problem.

The situation exists in many parts of the country as well as in our area. Some big campaigns have been held by several congregations who pooled their resources and have made some progress in reaching people, but this has been only partially successful. The medium of radio and television have been used to good advantage but further contact has to be effected to achieve the desired results of leading those who hear into the Lord's kingdom. Dedicated christians will always be able to influence some to come to Christ and

News and Notes

Brother Burl Curtis of Greenville, S. C. recently held a weeks meeting at Viola. Brother Curtis worked with the church at Mammoth Spring and held several meeting in this area during the nineteen fifties. During the past ten years he has been engaged in establishing congregations in and around Greenville. Readers of Fulton County Gospel News may remember appeals that were printed a few years ago. Brother Curtis informs me that this effort has resulted in a strong church being established and that he will soon be planning a new congregation in a different location of this fast growing city.

I believe this will be the most successful method in keeping the numbers of the church strong enough to carry on in places like Fulton County. It may well be that with better roads we will have some relocating their places of assembly. This will require time.

In New Testament days when a work did not achieve the desired results we find the apostles moved on to another place where people would hear them. Paul did not remain long in Athens, although some who heard did believe. We need to be sending more preachers to preach in places where they can find lost people who will listen to the gospel. It well may be that to find those who would listen we would have to go to people of other nations and whose color may be other than white. There are reports of hundreds of people in Asia and the Phillipine islands who are becoming christians and we have only a handful of men preaching over there. Could it be that we should spend more of our money and time preaching to people who

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have never heard than to those who have heard, but because of prejudice, worldliness, and general lack of interest in things spiritual, do not respond? It is something to think about.

Call for Help

The boy called out "WOLF, WOLF" and the villagers came out to help him. A few days afterward he tried the same trick and again they came to his help. Shortly after this, a wolf actually came, but this time the villagers thought the boy was deceiving them again and nobody came to his help.

"A Liar will not be believed, even when he speaks the truth."
Aesop

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MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.**

SUPPORTED BY:

**CHURCHES OF CHRIST
IN THIS AREA**

EDITORS:

**CLOVIS RAGSDALE
RICHARD ENGLAND**

He Would Not Drink

Sometimes we are so critical of the religious people of Jesus' day. We criticize them because their religion was cold and ritualistic. These people had adapted into their religion many of the nations manners and customs. By so doing, they had rejected, and perverted many of the teachings of God's law. Our Lord's denouncement of this should stand out as a warning to us today. One of the outstanding ways of our country, is seeking for ease. In every phase of life, man is seeking for an easier way. The industrial world is turning from hard labor to automation, and electronic devices which are able to do the work for them. The farming world is rapidly changing from man power to the machine. In the homes we are constantly seeking for greater comfort and ease, the woman also has many automatic machines which do her hard labor for her. Everywhere we look we see progress being made for greater ease. These things within themselves may be good, but we must take care, for it is so easy to adapt this attitude into our religion.

In Matthew 27:33, 34 we read where Jesus was brought to the

place of Golgotha to be crucified. Before Jesus was nailed to the cross it states "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall; and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink". H. Leo Boles describes gall as a bitter infusion, that had the effect of stupefying the mind and nerves, and shortening the life. This was believed to have been offered Jesus by some friend to shorten the agonies of the cross. How many of us would gladly have drunk this? Yet we might ask, what meaning would the cross have to us today, if Jesus had have taken the easy way? The cross would have little meaning, if the suffering Jesus experienced there was taken away, or deadened by some drug. In viewing the life of Jesus, one cannot help but notice, Jesus never sought the easy way of life. As Jesus began his ministry, he was first driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Jesus took nothing with him to make this an easy task. In facing the cruel religious leaders of his day, Jesus never sought to compromise to make things easier.

Nowhere did Jesus promise that christianity would be an easy life. When one pursues a life so diametrically opposed to the world as Jesus described the christian life to be, he could hardly expect it to be all ease. The man who proposes to become rich in worldly goods, knows that to succeed he cannot be indifferent about this matter, he knows that he will have to sacrifice to obtain his purpose. What greater gain could man make than to save his soul in eternity? Jesus assures us that to do this, effort, self denial, and sacrifice is required. In Luke 13:24 Jesus stated, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Many are not willing to pay the price of a dedicated life. Many like the rich young ruler, want eternal life, but they want it free from sacrifice. The devil is still offering us an easier way, that is, what might seem to be an easier way. He seeks to drug our minds in every phase of

the Lord's work, causing us to become indifferent, and unconcerned.

Observe how he offers an easier way to professed christians on the first day of the week. To many he offers the cup of ease before they get out of bed, and they just give in and use the Lord's day as a day of rest for the body. To others he numbs the mind to the seriousness of worship, causing them to reason they live too great a distance to be regular in worship, causing them to think it would be impolite to leave company to go worship. To others the devil hands a cup of ease when they enter the place of worship, how easy it is to let the mind wonder during the sermon, or to doze off into sleep. Yes, it takes effort to concentrate upon the worship services. To others, when asked to help in some church work program, how easy it is to say, I am too tired, I don't have time, or I don't know how.

Jesus would not drink, we are to follow in his footsteps, but it is easier to give in to the lusts and passions of the flesh. Many church members fit the description of Israel as described by Amos in chapter six. Solomon said we could learn a lesson from the ant Prov. 6: 6-11, which would open our eyes to the dangers of ease.

It was our Lord's intentions that Christianity be a mighty moving force. Where is our force? Do those words of the wise man answer this question? "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Prov. 6: 9-11. When christians learn to push aside the cup of ease, and refuse to drink from it, then only can christianity be the mighty force it was intended to be.

Harold Turner
Cabool, Missouri

"Juvenile delinquency is proving that many parents are not getting at the seat of the problem."

A Little Boy - -

The other day I read a story of a little boy who lived in an epidemic stricken community. His kind father died, then little brother and last to go was his loving mother. His mother, however, was a faithful Christian. She believed in a God who lives, loves and sees us every moment. Before she died she realized that life could not linger much longer in her suffering body. Since she had no living relatives or close friends, the troublesome thought continued to flash before her mind, "What will happen to my little boy left all alone in this cruel world?" Finally she called her dearly loved little boy to her and pressed him close to her bosom and whispered, "I will be leaving now son, but do not worry one minute for God will take care of you". Then the little boy's mother slipped into eternity.

A short time later a man of unusual kindness happened along the street and noticed a ragged, hungry, sick but bright eyed boy hovering against a building. He walked over to him and gently laid his hand on his shoulder, and asked, "What are you doing sonny?" The little boy answered, "I am waiting for God to come and get me". With a surprised look the man said, "What do you mean by that?" The little boy murmured, "Well, here I have no home, nobody to love me, no where to go, nothing to eat and God has sent for mommie, daddie and little brother, so I am just waiting for God. Now He will come won't He? Mother never told a lie". These words were uttered as tears streamed from the boy's eyes and dampened his pale cheeks. "Yes," said the man, "Your mother was right, God sent me to you to take you home with me and care for you".

The ragged little boy then was taken into the arms of the gentle man and the boy put his arms around the man's neck and hugged him saying, "I knew God would come and get me."

As I completed the story, I thought what a faith, what a truth, what a lesson for all of us.
D. K.

Keeping the Saved Saved

JUST WHAT IS OUR BIGGEST JOB? Is it seeing how many people we can baptize? NO! Is it seeing how big we can make the church? NO! We are too prone to count heads and responses when there is really only one count that matters — how many people die in the Lord. Only when the journey is ended and heaven gained have we achieved our purpose. Our job is to help people get to heaven. Nothing is more tragic than the falling away of a child of God. Yet, we give so very little thought to this problem — or we face it only after it is too late to do our most effective work. What do we do when we baptize someone? Do we give them the special attention and teaching that any babe in Christ needs or do we just drop them and let them shift for themselves? Many religious "fall-outs" could be prevented by more love and timely concern. What have we gained if we lose the saved as fast as we save the lost? Here are some things we can do:

1. Let us see that all members are thoroughly taught.
2. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is not possible without prayer and Bible study in the home.
3. Let's not discourage him by criticizing the church, its leaders or its members.
4. When we see that he needs help let us put him on our prayer list just as we would if he were physically ill.
5. Let us not put a stumbling block in his way by careless words or deeds. Brethren, let us not lose, through carelessness, the souls the Lord has saved.

(B. R.)

Character is what a man is in the darkness when he thinks that no man on earth sees him.

It is not your background, it is your future aim that fixes your destiny.

What Price Foolishness?

What some will pay for a moment's reckless folly is recorded again and again in the book of ages. Do you think these got their money's worth?

1. Adam and Eve, for one bit of luscious fruit when they were hungry, brought sin, suffering, shame, and death upon themselves and the human race.

2. Lot's wife, revealing her longing for the things that pertain to earth, took one look back at Sodom and became a pillar of salt.

3. Esau, to satisfy one day's fleshly appetite, lightly esteemed his birthright and forfeited his right to the ancestry of Christ.

4. Achan, for a garment he could not wear, and silver and gold he could not spend, paid with all his possessions, his family, and his life.

5. Samson, for the caress of a hypocritical woman, lost his will, his strength, his liberty, his eyes, and finally his life.

6. David, to enjoy another man's wife, hands to posterity a tale of his life with adultery, shame and tears, boldly written for all to read.

7. Ahab, coveting another's little vineyard, permitted his wife to have its owner killed, claimed it for his own, and heard his funeral preached in these words: "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, shall the dogs lick thy blood, even thine."

8. Judas, for thirty pieces of silver, which he could not find occasion or conscience to use, took his own life in shame and despair.

These examples could be multiplied but they are sufficient just here. Could these have called back their days after learning their lessons, how different would have been the history of the world. When we consider the price paid for sin, we must conclude that it is not worth it. Surely we do not suppose ourselves smart enough to outsmart God, and get by with sinning and not paying the "wages."

Via - The Reminder.

"Extremists"

In the last presidential campaign the word "extremist" came to be very popular and possibly played a great part in the defeat of a candidate. The word was used as if it were a dirty word. It is now coming into prominence, being denounced by both sides. Too many use the word lightly, disregarding the full significance of its meaning, usually applying the word to someone who disagrees with them. A position you hold regularly becomes extremism when held by the other person. The fact of the matter is that no man ever achieved greatness in the fields of military strategy, politics or religion, who was not an "extremist". This is not a condemnation of all extremists nor a condemnation as they are to be found on both sides of controversial thing.

Let us consider a dividing line, sharply drawn between two ideas, ways of life or courses of action. That line may well be the path of the "middle-of-the-roader". Here walks the one who seeks to please every one, everyone's friend, does not criticize nor can stand criticism and takes no definite stand on anything. He just drifts with the current of the times. Out from this line of center we draw another line. Here walks the "moderate". This man professes a belief, lets his name be linked with it and to some degree supports it. He does not want to hurt anyone's feelings and is very liberal in his judgment about most things. Going out beyond this second line we draw another and here is the path of the extremist, those who have a set goal to attain and will use every power at their command to reach that goal, giving of themselves, their talents and their strength to accomplish their purpose, not turned aside by insult or injury. These are the men who do walk the steeper paths and climb the mountains, never seeking the paths of least resistance. They are men who accept the challenge regardless of the cost.

As stated before, they are not of necessity on the right side of the question, but they are the men who leave lasting impressions in the history of any society.

Leaving the politician and the military planners aside, let us look to the religious field. Here, also are to be found the "middle-of-the-roaders", the "moderates" and the "extremists", and we find them on both sides in the battle between evil and righteousness. These do not have to be cataloged, we can but look about us and see them all. As to where we walk in this category is a matter of choice. We must bear in mind that we as citizens in the Kingdom of God, live in an absolute monarchy. The way of life has been mapped out by the King of Kings, an "extremist" if you please, who leaves no loopholes by which we may escape; obey and live, disobey and die. The king expects his subjects to do all that is in their power and when they have reached their extremity He will come to their aid. God demands all of his people, heart, soul, mind and body. He has established ONE standard and will never offer another. In much of our lives and practices we must observe moderation, but in devotion, loyalty and duty there is no place for it. There is no middle of the road, remember Joshua, "choose ye this day whom ye will serve", as to the moderate, the luke-warm, remember God has said that he would spew them out of his mouth. "Be thou faithful unto death" with all its meaning is not the admonition of a moderate in anyway. Where do WE walk?

R.H.

JESUS OF NAZARETH VS JESUS OF THE CHRISTIANS

By Robert Henly

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."
Hebrew 13:8

A lebanese legend has it that Jesus of Nazareth meets Jesus of the Christians once every hundred years on the top of a high mountain in Lebanon. After hours of discussion, Jesus of Nazareth

says to Jesus of the Christians, "My friend, I fear that we can never agree."

If we use the word "Christians" in the broad sense, that of indication all of the religious world that is separate from the pagan world, we can readily see where the legend might be applicable.

When we turn to the Bible where in we find all that we know about Christ, God, the Holy Spirit and all the revealed word of God, we find that Christ and later his apostles taught "oneness" always. In John 17, one of the most beautiful passages to be found in the Bible, we read, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

It is a bewildering thing when we contemplate all the diversified doctrines afloat in the "Christian" world of today, all attributed, by man, as being the teachings of our Lord and his inspired Apostles. If such were true, Christ would be the most contradictory man that ever lived. But thanks to be to God that such is not so. The varied and confusing doctrines are the products of the minds of men and are not of God.

If all the "Christian World" would, as the Bereans, search the Scriptures and see if these teachings and doctrines were so; if they would let God through His spirit write His laws in their hearts and not look for it in the pages of creeds and dogmas; then they could see and comprehend the ETERNAL purpose God purposed in His Son, (Eph. 3:11) and could all come to that unity of faith as spoken of in Eph. 4:3-13, they could then see Jesus of Nazareth and the Jesus of the true Christians as one and the same person, the Same Lord and Christ. He is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow.

If you want to convince folks of the value of Christianity, live it.

An old negro prayer: "Oh Lord, please fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, and nudge me when I've said enuf."