

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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Permit No. 1

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Mammoth Spring, Ark.

Dec. 15 1954

"SAUL OF TARSAUS"

By Clovis Ragsdale

The life of Saul of Tarsus, later known as Paul the Apostle, is an illustration of what Jesus Christ can do for a man. Saul, the brilliant and educated young Jew, put forth much effort in persecuting and attempting to stamp out the movement of Christianity. One thing that can be said in Saul's behalf, he was no slacker but gave his best for the cause he believed to be right. This, however, did not justify Saul's opposition to the truth. He often referred to himself in later years as having been the "chief of sinners". I Tim. 1:15. This proves false the teaching of men today that honesty and sincerity is all that is necessary to live pleasing unto God.

Before his conversion, Saul took a belligerent attitude toward those he opposed, Acts 9:1. His conversion to Christianity caused Paul to become a meek and humble servant of Jesus Christ. Before the event on the Damascus road Paul hated the name of Christ, but after he saw the light and heard the voice of Christ speak unto him, he was constrained to call him Lord.

After his conversion Paul became the greatest proclaimer of Jesus Christ that the world has ever known. His ability and tremendous energy was put to work preaching "Christ and him crucified." The great contrast or change in his life was brought about by his acceptance of Christ.

No matter how sinful and degraded one may be, if he will accept Christ as his savior and confirm his life to the teachings of our saviour his life and his out look on life will be changed.

His goal in life will be to live pleasing unto God in this present world so that he may live forever with God in the great forever more.

Then we can say as did this battle scarred soldier of the cross as he neared the end of life's way, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not

to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:7-8.

NOTHING TO DO?

Boyd E. Morgan - Mammoth Spring

Most denominations teach that there is nothing that the sinner can do to be saved; in fact, they teach that he cannot do anything that in anyway will result in his salvation.

There are at least four times in the scripture that inquiring souls came questioning what to do. Mt. 19:16 "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" If the answer should have been that there was absolutely nothing that he could do, then Jesus made a mistake for in verses 18 through 21 he told him what to do. Of course our saviour had not yet learned the doctrine of unconditional salvation for Satan had not yet started a creed or a church to foster it.

In Acts. 2:37 we have an instance of sinners who asked what to do. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? If Peter should have answered that there was nothing they could do, he made a big mistake for he gave them an answer of something they could do. He said, "Repent and be baptised everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Verse 38. It's evident that Peter spake as the spirit gave utterance so neither Peter nor the Holy Ghost knew that there was nothing a man could do to be saved. They both believed and commanded that the sinner do something.

Once more we heard of a case in Acts 9:6. "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt have me to do?" Here's the question and this time it is asked by the one who called himself the chiefest of sinners. Saul of Tarsus, later Paul the apostle. Paul wanted to know what to do. He asked the one who above all ought to have known if truly there was nothing that he could do. It takes a modern preacher preaching man-made doctrine to tell a man that there is nothing that he

can do to be saved. If they are right, they need to tell the Saviour because he didn't know it. He told Paul to "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." In the city he arranged for a preacher by the name of Ananias to tell him and Paul told us in Acts 22:16 what Ananias told him to do. Ananias was sent by the Lord. No doubt about that. But he had a different story than our preachers today who claim that they are God-called and God-sent. You can read about everyone of God's truly called and sent preachers in the Bible and not one of them told people that there was nothing that they could do to be saved. If you want to hear that you have to listen to some baptist, Methodist, Pentecost, Nazarene, or denominational preacher that knows (?) more than any of the Bible preachers ever knew. If you have read this far and need some salve for your conscience you can add some more of their teaching, "Oh," well, it doesn't make any difference what you believe, anyhow."

Now the fourth case I call attention to is in Acts 16:30. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The Phillippian jailer asked of Paul and Silas this all important question. Here would have been the ideal chance for the preachers to have said. "Why, there is nothing you can do." But instead they told him what to do. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." This was what to do. Here the preachers who preach nothing to do really ball up and holler 'only believe' and you can't do anything. When Paul said 'believe on the Lord' the very next verse says "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house, and he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." The jailer had to believe to be saved. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17. The jailer heard the word and believed on the Lord. I know for he did what the Lord said do. Jesus said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be sav-

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Fulton County Gospel News
Mammoth Spring, Ark.

Published Monthly
Free Subscription

Sponsored by:

Welcome Hill Church of Christ
Elders; Hubert Taylor
Lester Martin

Supported by Moten, Pilot, Wel-
come Hill and Union Hill
churches

Editors; Clovis Ragsdale
Boyd E. Morgan

EDITORIAL

This December issue of Fulton County Gospel News marks the close of two full years of continuous publication and Free distribution to our readers. We know of no other publication that has reached this achievement. Never, during the two years have we been forced to call upon our readers for either a subscription fee or donation to this work. This is because this work has been backed by men of vision who have provided the necessary funds each month. Nothing is absolutely free, even though it cost us nothing, while salvation given unto us through Jesus Christ was so freely given us by our God it still cost him his son. It cost our Saviour his life.

This paper has been supported by four small (though weak in number, strong in faith) rural congregations. Circulation is very near the 1200 mark and thus far not one single request for the paper has been refused. We have received a few unsolicited contributions from some individuals and for this we are thankful, but the paper has been supported by the Moten, Welcome Hill, Pilot and Union Hill congregations. Neither of these congregations passes forty in number and two has only around twenty in membership. Never let it be said that small congregations cannot do things for they can, and these have proved that they can. The gospel has been preached by the printed page and no one can determine all the good that has been done thereby. A card or letter from our readers of your appreciation for the paper would be appreciated and we hope to be of continued service to you.

This is Christmas season. Make

your plans to do more in the following year for his Kingdom than ever in the past. Put his church on your list and resolve to help support physically, mentally, and financially the greatest work in the world. There never existed a soul so great in his service but that could stoop to the lowest task or a soul so meek that it could not rise to the highest in soul-winning.

We wish for you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year in his service.

—Boyd E. Morgan

INDIFFERENCE IN
RELIGION

Marion Farley — Dallas, Texas
No doubt, indifference in religion, is the most widespread evil of modern times, and it is surely having it's demoralizing effect.

The text is suggested in (Acts 18:17) where a religious persecution was launched against the apostle Paul and being brought before the judgment of Gallio, the deputy of Achai, he was about to open his mouth in defense of himself but was prevented when the deputy would not listen to him or his accusers. Gallio learned it was a question of a religious nature, and drove them away from the judgment seat, allowing them to beat Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, "And Gallio cared for none of these things", showing his attitude of utter indifference.

Some of the fruits of indifference are: (1) A failure to attend religious services. When a person begins to neglect meeting with the Lord's people, it is not long until his indifference is apparent to those on the outside, as well as those inside the church and often it is the first step in the wrong direction.

(2) A failure to study. Paul told Timothy to "Study". If you are ever going to know very much about God's Word, we are going to have to put in a lot of time studying it. We need to study at home, and also in the classes, as often as possible, and if we fail in this respect, we cannot stand "Approved" in the sight of Him with whom we have to do. II Tim. 2:15.

(3) A failure to pray. The privilege of going to Our Father who's in heaven with our daily cares is to me the greatest and most exalted of all privileges and those who cannot, must be Of all men most miserable.

(4) A failure to give. God has wonderfully blessed us with temporal

things of life. Yet so often we are like, as the story goes, the hog under the oak eating acorns, never looking up to see where they come from, never seeming to realize God had anything to do with our prosperity.

(5) A failure to work in the Lord's vineyard. When we consider the parable of the vineyard as given by the Saviour, we readily recognize the fact that only those who WORK will be rewarded in the day of judgment. If we haven't worked we will be denied pay, which is eternal life. Care must be exercised as to whose vineyard we are in, for Jesus said in that day some would be there who thought they were working for Him, saying, "Lord, Lord, haven't we cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works," but will only hear him say, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you."

Some causes of indifference are: (1) Worldliness. Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve two masters . . . ye CANNOT serve God and mammon". A similar statement is found in Jas. 4:4. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." The Saviour also asked the question, "For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Does this sound like the risk is worth taking? Risking to secure this worlds good to the exclusion of our soul's eternal welfare? And yet it is being done daily by far too many.

(2) The impression that the services are intended to please rather than save. From the language of Paul in Gal. 1:10 we learn that we are to please God regardless of what men may think. "For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I pleased men, I would not be the servant of Christ." When we meet in the name of Christ, sing, (NOT PLAY) spiritual songs to his matchless name, eat of the Lord's Supper worthily as we are taught to do, give as prospered and as commanded, hear the Word taught, and pray to the Father who rewards OPENLY, we have the assurance that God is pleased, which should be our only aim.

(3) Denominationalism, has taught that one creed is as good as another; failing, seemingly, to realize that a creed that is more than is con-

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Indifference in Religion

Continued from page 2

tained in the Bible is too much, or less than the Bible contains is too little. And if it did teach just what the Bible does, why use it at all? Why not take the Bible and be completely SAFE? Denominationalism teaches that faith only will save you — regardless of repeated statements in Jas. that faith without works will not avail . . . That once saved, always saved confuting the teaching of the beloved apostle Paul, who said "Take heed lest you FALL" . . . That if members would pay, everything would be taken care of. Surely they have never read Acts 8:20 where Simon was told that "The gift of God could not be purchased with money . . . And also by "preaching to heaven" the unprepared, just as though a preacher could change the destination of a person. Our destination is determined by the life we live, and not by any words a man or group of men can say over our lifeless bodies.

The CURE for indifference, (1) More Bible study and more faithful attendance at all the services. This will cause a marked increase in faith and knowledge, both of which is sorely needed by all men, whether he be novice or grown up in the Lord . . . Association with devoted Christian people. Gal. 5:9: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" and "Evil communications corrupt good morals . . . Work for the Saviour, the more we work the more interested we become, in the words of one. "It is catching." The more we do, the more we want to do. The business of saving souls is the greatest of all — and many more honest people could be reached if it wasn't for so many indifferent members.

Webster defines indifference as, Unconcerned, Unimportant which describes it exactly, and as long as members continue to display this attitude, the church will fail to have the growth it should have.

I don't believe the Devil could think up any other scheme that would hinder the work as much as INDIFFERENCE or he would surely have started it instead.

And now in the words of Bro. Morgan in his Editorial of last month, "Someone needed to say these things, and it may as well be me"

This may be even more serious than you think, it may be causing someone to STUMBLE.

NEWS

Do not forget to meet with and encourage the young church at Camp. Services are conducted each Lord's day afternoon at two o'clock.

Gospel Singing is one of the Christian's great privileges and a means of offering a sacrifice of praise unto God. Singing is emphasized at special song services at Viola on first Sunday afternoon, and Mammoth Spring on Third Sunday afternoons.

One was restored at Mammoth Spring Nov. 28. A group of our young people visited the singing at Viola Dec. 5 and rendered three special selections. They were well received. Sunday night Dec. 19 the young folks will have charge of the entire services. Bro. Keith Boler will direct song services, Bro. Hubert Finley will make the talk and Bro. Steve Atkins will preside at the Lord's Table. Before the evening worship service begins there will be a special service by the entire group. It is encouraging to see the interest and talents of our young people.

The lectureship announced for February in last month's issue for Mammoth Spring has been changed to March 6th. West Plains will have a lectureship somewhere around February 25th.

SHORTS

The neighbor of an Arab sheik asked to borrow a rope.

"I cannot lend it," replied the sheik, "because I need it to tie up my milk."

"But surely you do not tie up your milk with a rope", said the neighbor.

The sheik answered, "Brother, when you do not want to do some thing, one excuse is as good as another." Selected

Does this excuse sound any more ridiculous than some which are used to excuse absences from the service of the church?

How often have you offered excuses rather than obedience when God has given you some task? Think you that God was deceived?

An excuse filled religion "might" do to live by, but would you want to die by it?

—Taken from the Maryville Messenger

Bro. Hillard Story will begin a series of gospel meetings with the Sturkie church of Christ Sunday, December 26 and continue throughout the week. You are cordially invited to attend.

IF WE TITHE—

—Because the law of Moses required it, we have fallen from grace.

—Because some before the law of Moses did, we should keep the Sabbath (the seventh day, Saturday) because some before the law of Moses did. Ex. 16:21-30.

—Because we ought to do as much as the Jews, we should read that this was not one-half of their giving.

—Because we want to show that the gospel is as great as the law, we should learn that the gospel is infinitely greater than the law, and no percentage of comparison can express the relative blessings

—Because Jesus told the Jews to do so, we should keep the whole law of Moses because Jesus told the Jews to do so.

--Because we want equality, we should observe that any fixed per cent applied universally will increase the natural equality of prosperity.

--Because we think it is the least we should do, we should be ashamed of doing the least We should do

NOTE:

If the Lord's Supper can be taken once a month, quarter, or year, why not just once in a lifetime? The only time element stipulated as to frequency is THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. The sabbath came every week to the Jews. The first day of the week comes every week to the christian.

THE ALTON, MO. WORK

By J. A. Rushing

ed. He that believeth not shall be damned. Now if that jailer had not believed he would not have been baptized. And if he had not been baptized because of unbelief he would have been damned. But he believed and trusted in the Lord. He did what the word of the Lord said do. Takes a lot of preaching about death-bed repentances not found in the Bible, about wrecks out on the highway, about folks they knew who were converted (?) but their stories not found in the Bible or folks likewise who refused to be converted and sometimes even digging up dead kin folks, who perhaps the same preachers deceived to get folks today to leave out the **doings** commanded in the Bible. But these preachers are past masters at the job and if you ever corner one and request that they prove by the bible that they are right, they'll holler that they don't believe in arguing. The Bible they say is not supposed to be argued about, they just don't believe in that. Well, we don't either. We believe though, in arguing about what they teach that the Bible does not teach.

Now just try their doctrine on a few Bible statements. Try to reconcile it to these if you but will.

Matt. 7:21 — "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth** the will of my Father which is in heaven."

John 5:28-29 — "The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have **done** good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have **done** evil, unto resurrection of damnation."

Heb. 5:8-9 — "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that **obey** him."

These scriptures came from a far greater source than just ordinary men. They do not contradict the truth for they are truth and come from the source of truth, but they do a powerful lot of contradicting of those who pervert the truth.

The next time you hear one of these preachers preaching that there is nothing that you can do in order to be saved, just walk right up and say, "Phiffle."

A group of Christians of the Alton vicinity interested in establishing the church of our Lord in this city met during the latter part of last August in the home of Bro. and Sis. Cleo Taylor. Those meeting were members of either the Hickory Grove, Thayer or Mammoth Spring congregations. At this meeting those present donated \$1050.00 toward the purpose desired. A committee of four was appointed to purchase a suitable lot. The lot selected is located in the north part of Alton on U. S. Highway 160 leading to Thomasville and West Plains.

At another meeting we resolved that a building should be erected that would demand the respect of the people of Alton. We could not properly finance such a building without aid and \$4600.00 was borrowed and added to the amount on hand.

We next went to our U. S. Forest Service and they donated us about 15,000 feet of standing timber to be used in the church building. The labor to cut the logs was donated and from the period of Sept. 19 through Oct. 4, interested men contributed 148 hours of labor for this purpose.

When we began building others donated both cash and labor. Up to this writing 80 man hours have been given together with the use of a concrete mixer for 17 hours and three kegs of nails, cash by individuals was given in the amount of 83.81

The Mammoth Spring church gave us a contribution of \$200 and Bro. and Sis. J. E. Kentcheloe of that congregation gave us \$20. All told this makes a total of cash amounting to \$5,953.81. As this report is written we are putting the roof on the building. We believe we will have enough money to get the building far enough along that we can begin meeting in it. At present we are not conducting services in Alton but are continuing to meet with those congregations where we are members and will do so until the house is in such condition that we can begin services in it.

The building is 32'x60' with full basement. The seats and heating facilities are our problem at this time. We have neither and have not enough money to buy them. Anyone wanting to donate toward these may send donations to the Church of Christ, c/o Earman McGibney, Alton, Mo.

We take advantage of this means to thank each one who has helped up in anyway and especially the Mammoth Spring church together with Bro. and Sis. Kentcheloe.

MY CHURCH?

By Howard Green

Formerly at Burk's Chapel
1107 Willow Street
Coffeyville, Kansas

I have heard so many people use the expression "My Church". Does the church really belong to any man on earth? Does it belong to me? Does it belong to you? I do not have a church. I never built one. Let's see who did build the true church. Mt. 16:18. "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Again in I Cor. 3:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ". Again Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Now, we found in Matt. 16:18 that Jesus said that he would build HIS church. In I Cor. 3:11, we found that Jesus Christ is the only foundation that can be laid, and in Acts 4:12 we found that there is no salvation in any other name. If Jesus built the church and he did; and if he is the foundation and he is; and if there is no salvation in any other name and there is not, then any church belonging to you or me (my church or your church) would not be His church. If the church belongs to Christ, why try to claim it?

God will deal most severely with a professed Christian who will not control his language, has to look around and see if there are any ladies around before he continues. Many a man will lie down in Hell and say, "My tongue dammed me."

Some people think they can't be pious unless they are always begging for something.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and will all thy getting get understanding." Prov. 4:7. Peculiar isn't it, that we hear so much about getting religion and the Bible says nothing about it?