

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Second Class Postage Paid at Mammoth Spring, Ark.

VOLUME 12 Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

DECEMBER 1976 7

NUMBER 83

You Can't Live Wrong and Die Right

By Ordell Heavin

Tragically, there are many people who are on the road to eternal ruin but who expect to go to heaven some day. They desire to live in the pleasures of sin, yet stand justified before God in the day of judgment. But you can't live wrong and die right. In Galatians 6:7-8 the Bible states, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life." A misspent life can never end well. There is no good reward for bad conduct.

No wise person will deliberately choose and pursue a life of sin while knowing its terrible destiny. Many have suffered because they were taught to believe that, "All young people must sow their wild oats." This falsehood has led many of today's young people into rebellion against decent conduct, because, after all, they are justified in sowing their wild oats. This attitude leads to a throwing off all restraint and defying social restrictions as well as the word of God. And this course of action will bring upon them both dishonor and shame. Solomon shared wisdom for youth in his writings, saying, "Rejoice O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccl. 11:9) No person can escape that confrontation with God. Those who have sown wild oats will waste their prayers while praying for a crop failure when death comes. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Young people, you can't live wrong and die right.

Wrong living can't pay off in right rewards. Today's newspapers, radio, and TV's are screaming about all the crimes and violence and lawlessness. Many young, middle-age, and the aged are alcoholics, drug addicts, thieves, fornicators, and you can throw in the whole catalog of sin. Why? There is a breakdown in the home, and men have become lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God and righteousness. Parents are so permissive with the precious souls of their children, seeking an easy way out. When God is forgotten, the study of

His word will be neglected, and the standards of right will grow weak.

The cost for wrong living is high. This nation pays more on crime and its effects each year than it does on hospitals, schools, and churches. We spend more on crime than on food. What's wrong with our society? One little three letter word, SIN. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34) But the cost of sin is not just in dollars and cents. Homes are being broken apart because of sin. Divorce has nearly doubled in the last decade, leaving in its path broken hearts, wrecked lives, and bitter attitudes.

But the greatest cost for wrong living is God's judgment. Take a moment and consider God's attitude in the matter of wrong living. Think of it, every hurt, pain, tear, disappointment, sickness, and death are all the rewards for man's sins - his wrong living. A just God will not reward sin with blessings. You just can't live wrong and die right. Many, no doubt, are like wicked Balaam, a prophet of the Old Testament, who sought to curse Israel for personal gain, but before his death he cried, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last days be like his." (Num. 23:10) Balaam lived wrong, and he couldn't die right without changing his life in obedience to God's will.

Let's notice a few examples of the results of wrong living. Adam and Eve chose the wrong course, and thereby forfeited rights to the tree of life, bringing about death. The people of Noah's time chose the wrong life, and brought upon themselves the flood in which they perished. The children of Israel sinned and suffered death from the fiery serpents. The wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah caused their destruction by fire. Ahab and Jezebel's wrong living brought them to a terrible end, dogs devoured their remains. We could go on and on, but the truth is clear, you can't live wrong and die right.

On the other hand, let's look at the rewards for right living. There are great rewards for righteous living. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psa. 116:15) "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6:9)

(Continued on Page 2)

Songs In The Night

By Ross W. Dye

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." (Hab. 3:17-19)

It has been said that if the nightingale sang by day it might be thought to sing no more sweetly than the wren. It is easy to sing when everybody sings, but it is hard to sing in the night.

Habakkuk's statement is one of the most beautiful exhibitions of the power of true religion to be found in the Bible. This was the night of the Chaldean oppression, but it was much better to sing than to weep. Singing tends to cheer up the singer as well as others. Elihu observed that God "giveth songs in the night." Thus all can sing in the night, for when every earthly stream has dried up, we have an infinite supply in God's boundless fulness.

Habakkuk saw the shadows of night gathering. His words are clearly a description of woe and adversity, but he resolved to sing in spite of circumstances. What a mistake he would have made had he neglected to repair to God or if he had dwelt on his miseries! Habakkuk knew that God was still on the throne, and he trusted him enough to sing in the midst of trouble. This was not a natural reaction. Sorrow is not the parent of gladness. There is no earthly supply of such songs. It would be easy to sing in the day or when the cup is full, but only God can give songs in the night.

His songs were partly supplied by his recollection of a glorious yesterday when Israel walked upon the high places of the enemy (Deut. 33:29) and he believed God would enable him again to walk upon high places. Also, the night, itself, contributed to his song. In the midst of tribulation the Lord's strength was his. There is something good about the night. Just as the night of natural day stirs holy thoughts (Psalm 8:3-4) so does the night of temporal affliction (Psalm 119:67,71) Such a night brought forth songs from

(Continued on Page 2)

**FULTON COUNTY
GOSPEL NEWS**

... is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name be SURE to include the Zip Code Number. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know of its financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request.

EDITORS: Erwin Cowen
and Harold Turner

You Can't Live Wrong (Cont.)

Near the close of the apostle Paul's life he could say, "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 life, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8) The final reward alone for Christian living is worth it all. The apostle John wrote "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13) But one cannot die in a state or relationship which he has not had in this life. One cannot die in Christ without faith in Him (Heb. 11:6), repenting of past sins (Luke 13:3), confessing His name before others (Rom. 10:10), and being baptized into Him for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Rom 6:3). And beyond these one must be faithful to Christ until death (Rev. 2:10, 1 Pet. 1:5). Remember, to die right you must live right, you just can't live wrong and die right.

"When the heart is full of love, the life will be full of service."

"Often an argument has two sides - and no end."

"One room that is never overfilled is the room for improvement."

"One good habit is that of breathing through your nose. It keeps your mouth shut."

Songs in the Night (Cont.)

Paul and Silas, and it may give us new occasion to sing. In addition, he thought of the day that was yet to come. He believed that God would enable him to overcome. Yes, "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) Habakkuk knew that there was One who "turneth the shadow of death into the morning" (Amos 5:8)

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15:8)

These words are spoken by Christ in the parable of the vine and branches in which we are shown the close relationship which exists between Christ and his disciples. Christ is the vine and individual Christians are branches in him.

The branch in Christ is expected to bear fruit. The Christian is expected to live a life of usefulness and helpfulness for others. The branch which does not bear fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. One does not have to commit a crime in order to be lost. Righteousness, according to Jesus, is more than refraining from doing wrong. One may never be guilty of the sins of lying, stealing, or murder. This is fine, but one must also do good; he must bear fruit to be pleasing to God. The psalmist said of the blessed man, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." (Psalm 1:3) Jesus also taught the importance of fruit bearing in the parable of the barren fig tree in Luke 13: 6-9. When the fig tree, which grew primarily for the fruit it bore, failed to produce, it was destroyed.

The branch of a tree loaded in fruit bends low. Likewise, the Christian who bears much fruit is willing to bend low in his service and devotion to others. A Christian cannot bear fruit apart from Christ. He receives spiritual strength from Christ just as a branch receives life from the vine. By daily living with Christ through prayer, Bible reading, faithful attendance in worship, we receive power to bear fruit. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, we bear fruit of the Spirit in our lives, namely: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. 5:22-23)

Those who are outside of Christ cannot bear fruit for Christ. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) Baptism of a penitent believer puts one into Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:26-27)

Jesus warns us about the consequences of not bearing fruit in these words: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (John 15:6)

Three Salvations

By Basil Overton

Some people think that when one is saved he is saved in such a way that he can never be lost. However, the New Testament teaches three salvations.

SALVATION OF THE ALIEN.

One is saved from past, or alien sins when he by faith does what God requires of him. That is the salvation Jesus was talking about when He said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) It is the same salvation that the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of the apostle, referred to when he told believers to "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:39) It is the salvation of Acts 22:16 where Saul was told to "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." After one is thus saved from his alien sins, or after one thus becomes a Christian, he can still sin.

SALVATION OF THE ERRING CHRISTIAN'

When a child of God sins, he must ask the Father in heaven to forgive him. A child of God who sinned was told by the apostle Peter to repent and pray that he might be forgiven. (Acts 8:22) Of Christians the New Testament says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

Some preachers tell alien sinners to confess their sins and ask God to forgive them, and then quote 1 John 1:9 as a proof text for such instructions. But this passage sums up the responsibility of erring children of God. Alien sinners were told by inspired preachers to believe the gospel, repent of their sins, and be baptized for the remission of their sins. When the child of God errs from the truth he must turn from the error of his way back to the Lord if he expects to be saved in heaven. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James 5:19-20)

ETERNAL SALVATION

Jesus said: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." (Matt. 10:22) Being saved in heaven is the third kind of salvation under consideration. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:10-11)

That Form of Doctrine

By Harold Turner

In Romans 6:17, 18, the apostle Paul wrote, "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

In the context of these words Paul has shown that through the grace of God these had been delivered from a life dominated by sin. The emphasis of the lesson was that they "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." By doing this he pointed out that "Sin shall not have dominion over you" for they were now made free from sin, and were living under grace.

One of the important questions facing so many people today has to do with the distinct point when we are made free from our sins. At exactly what point is one forgiven from his sins?

In the above Scripture Paul shows that there is a distinct point at which we are made free from sin. It might first be noted that he does not say that we are made free by simply believing in Christ. While our faith in Christ is an absolute essential to our salvation, forgiveness requires more than believing. The above scripture shows that some expressed action is required. Something must be obeyed before we are made free.

Throughout the New Testament obedience is required before one is promised the blessing of salvation. In Hebrews 5:9 Jesus is said to be the "Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." The apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth..." Therefore some expressed action of obedience is required before one can be saved.

Paul's statement shows that one is made free from sin when from the heart he obeys "That form of doctrine." If we can determine what that "Form" of doctrine is, we can thereby pinpoint exactly when one is forgiven of his past sins.

Since we must obey a form of that doctrine - the gospel - it is important to know what was delivered in that doctrine of which we obey in form or similitude.

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul clearly shows what he delivered in the gospel. He said, "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you... I delivered unto you first of all that which I also

received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." The doctrine Paul preached centered upon these three basic facts, Christ died, was buried, and rose from the dead.

To be made free from sins we must obey a form of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. To see just what this form is let's go back to Romans six. Beginning with verse three Paul wrote, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Paul preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. We obey a form of this in baptism. We are baptized into death, buried in baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life. In doing this we are said to be crucified with him, and the body of sin is destroyed, and henceforth (from this time forth) we should not serve sin, for we are made free from sin.

At the time we obey a form of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ in baptism, we are made free from sin, and are raised from the watery grave of baptism to walk in a newness of life. We have been baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:4). "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17)

There is no other act of obedience required that can be pictured in the form of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. And since we are baptized into Christ where we are saved and become the children of God, we can safely affirm that when we are baptized in the manner described in the New Testament we are then made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness. This in no way takes from the importance of our faith and repentance, but pinpoints when salvation takes place.

"Envy is blind and knows nothing except to depreciate that which is excellent in others."

"Conscience may not keep you from doing wrong, but it will keep you from enjoying it."

Keeping Your End of the Bargain

By John Simpson

God divided the mechanics of saving grace into two major parts, his and yours. Two things never change: (1) the love of God and (2) "keeping your end" of the bargain." Since God can never go back on his word, then salvation is strictly within your power to choose. This makes "keeping your end of the bargain" the most urgent order of the day.

GOD DOING HIS PART

Mathematical formulae contain constants and variables; so does God's formula to us in obtaining saving grace. God is the constant and we are the variables. God never leaves his throne and his grace is constant, but we vary in our obedience to be recipients of this grace.

In each dispensation of time God established divine law to which man was to become obedient, thus receiving forgiveness by the grace of God. Though God has changed his laws in subsequent periods of time, obedience required on the part of man has never changed, and never will.

God has done his part in the scheme of redemption through careful planning, intervention, provocation, patience, and supreme sacrifice. In sending Christ "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16).

Christ bore the unbearable and unpleasant, leaving the bearable and pleasant for us. He took the pain out of sacrifice, suffering crucifixion and leaving only the cross of reconciliation. He took the drudgery out of work, transforming it into ministry of love. He took fear out of human weakness, making the obedient acceptable through grace. He took anxiety out of the way, replacing it with trust. He took the sting out of death, leaving eternal hope in the resurrection.

God can do no more and keep his promises. He must wait on you to "keep your end of the bargain."

DOING OUR PART

God has always required that man do his part to receive Divine favor. In the Garden, among the Patriarchs, through Israel, and beyond the Cross, he has always demanded complete submission and genuine obedience.

God's call to men of old and on this side of the Cross - "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you; and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty"

(Continued on Page 4)

Topical Bible Lessons

By Harold Turner

INTRODUCTION:

1. John 4:23, Does God desire that we worship him? _____
2. John 4:23, What type of worshipper does he seek? _____
3. John 4:24, In what two ways must worship be expressed to be acceptable? _____

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT:

1. Hebrews 12:28-29, Must we approach God in a spirit of reverence before we can serve him acceptably? _____
2. James 4:10, Is a spirit of humbleness necessary before worship is acceptable? _____
3. Ephesians 5:20, Is a spirit of gratitude important as we worship God? _____

WORSHIP IN TRUTH:

1. John 17:17, What is truth? _____
2. John 1:17, Through whom did truth come? _____
3. John 16:13, Were the apostles to receive all truth? _____

Keeping Your End (Cont.)

(2 Cor. 6:17-18) is a call for man to do his part.

Jehovah called Abraham and made great promises if he would "keep his end of the bargain." Abraham gave complete submission and genuine obedience; in good time he received the promises. (Genesis 12.) God called Naaman through Elisha to be cleansed of leprosy, but he had to "keep his end of the bargain." After wrestling extensively with his own devices, he was made to see that God cannot be "bargained" with to forego obedience, so he gave complete submission and genuine obedience by dipping in Jordan seven times as prescribed by Jehovah, and he was cleansed. (2 Kings 5).

God calls sinners to obedience through the gospel and only the obedient receive forgiveness. (Mark 16:15-16). God calls upon baptized believers to build upon the foundation of faith with sturdy materials of "virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity." (2 Peter 1:5-7). Then the promise is made; "for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:10-11).

This is what is involved in "keeping your end of the bargain." God has done his part - are you doing yours?

4. Acts 1:2, Who was chosen to receive and make known the truth? _____
5. Must we follow the pattern of worship set by the apostles of Christ to please God today? _____

THINGS THAT HINDER WORSHIP:

1. Matthew 15:9, Worship based upon the doctrines of men is what kind of worship? _____
2. Acts 17:23,30, Can one worship God acceptably in ignorance? _____
3. Luke 9:23, Does everyone have a right to their own opinion about how they choose to worship God? _____

THE ACTS OF WORSHIP:

1. Acts 11:25-26, What did Barnabas and Saul do in the church assembly? _____
2. Acts 20:7, What did Paul do when the church assembled? _____
3. Acts 20:7, For what purpose did the church come together? _____
4. Luke 22:19, Why are we to break bread? _____
5. Luke 22:19-20, What does the bread represent? _____
What does the cup represent? _____
6. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, What were these ordered to do upon the first day of the week? _____
7. 2 Corinthians 9:7, How are we to give? _____
8. Ephesians 6:18, What was the church at Ephesus taught about prayer? _____
9. Philippians 4:6, What was the church at Philippi taught about prayer? _____
10. 1 Corinthians 14:15, What two things did Paul say he would do with the spirit and the understanding? _____
11. Ephesians 5:19, What were these taught to do in their heart unto the Lord? _____
12. Colossians 3:16, How was the singing to be expressed unto the Lord? _____
13. List the five acts of worship from the above Scriptures.
(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____

(5) _____

CONCLUSION:

1. Hebrews 10:25, What does God warn us not to do? _____
2. 2 John 9, What is the result of going beyond the doctrine of Christ? _____
3. Matthew 7:21-23, To please God we must be careful to do only what? _____

CONTRIBUTIONS

Churches of Christ

Viola	\$ 5.00
Jeff	10.00
Mammoth Spring	200.00
Big Pond	10.00
Elizabeth	5.00
Sitka	10.00
Agnos	5.00
Sturkie	5.00
Garfield	15.00
Williford	5.00

Individuals

Clyde & Delphia Smith	5.00
Joe & Edith Robinson	25.00
Mrs. Ira Atkins	4.00
Mr. & Mrs. Glen Cotter	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Luther Kersey	10.00
Jack & Becky Howell	5.00
Robert & Sharlene Ball	5.00
A member of the church	5.00
Roger Helon	5.00
A friend	2.00
Mrs. William F. Glade	2.00
Mrs. Mabel Osborn	4.00
Mrs. Carl Danielsen	2.00

72557 Mammoth Spring, Arkansas
 Route 3
 Clovis, N.M.