

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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Who Needs Restoring?

A question of no little importance which faces the church today centers around the identity of those who need to be restored. That the Bible teaches the necessity of restoration should go without saying. Nevertheless, there are some who feel that there is no Scriptural basis for such. Galatians 6:1, teaches that brethren who are overtaken in trespasses are to be restored by the Spiritual, and James tells us that we are to confess our sins one to another and pray one for another (James 5:16). I John 1:9, further declares that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins. It should be readily seen that it is God's will that men be restored, that sins need to be confessed to God before He will forgive, and that sins are to be confessed before the brethren, who in turn, pray for the erring brother.

A brother whose sins are between him and his God should go to his Father and pray for forgiveness. A brother whose sins are known but to a few should go to those involved, and they all should go before the Father in prayer. If all are Christians the matter will stop there. They will not repeat what they have heard confessed. A brother whose sins are generally known, and which reflect on the entire congregation, will want to correct the matter before the entire congregation, and the entire congregation will go with him in prayer to God's throne, begging forgiveness in his behalf.

It is a sin of the most public nature to absent oneself from the assembly week after week. Such a one needs to see the error of his ways and return to confess negligence, and thus be restored to ac-

tive duty and fellowship in the church. We pass through this life but once! We had better make it count! "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10). You cannot die wrong and be raised right on the Judgment day.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Corinthians 13:5).

The Reminder
Springfield, Missouri

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

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One should never be ashamed to own he has been wrong, which is but saying in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday.

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The Severity of God

Clovis Ragsdale

Man takes many attitudes toward God. Some think of him as being good, just, and compassionate. This is true. He is also said to be severe by Paul in Romans 11:22. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity, but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shall be cut off." Many other passages sustain this teaching.

The severity of God is noted in the driving of Adam and Eve from the garden, the flood, destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and on many other occasions. In every case of his severity being visited upon man it was because of man's sins. Because of this Solomon said in Ecc. 12:13 that the whole duty of man was to fear God and keep his commandments.

In the christian dispensation the severity of God continues. Consider the warning of Heb. 10:31, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Romans 12:19, "vengeance is mine saith the Lord, I will repay." The statement of Paul in 2 Thes. 1:7, and 8, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on

them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power". This statement should create fear in the hearts of all who do not believe in God. Notice, two classes are mentioned as being displeasing to the Lord, those who do not know him, and those who do not obey his gospel or word. The infidel does not know or accept God as being the supreme being, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all things therein. God's vengeance will be heaped upon this kind of person. Also, he will take vengeance upon those who obey not the gospel, suggesting that some will know of God but will refuse to obey or do what they know they should.

We believe there are many more people in this group who believe that God does exist but never get around to becoming a christian. James has some good advice for people of this kind when he said "be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. James 1:22. This plainly teaches that one must obey the gospel to become a christian in order to be saved and to escape the wrath of God. Some people obey only part of the gospel and jeopardize their chances of being saved. Paul said in 2 Tim. 2:5, "If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. In our time the New Testament is our law. We must live by its teachings if we are to escape the vengeance that is to be meted out to those who will not obey his will. Christ said in Matt. 7:21, "Not everyone 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." To do God's will we must know his will. We know his will by studying the Bible. Human reasoning often leads men astray because God does not think as man thinks. We must be careful to think and do as God says. In all of God's dealing with man, both in the old and the new covenants,

God has warned of the need for strict obedience.

Having noted the severity of God, we can appreciate the statement of Paul in Philippians 2:12, in which he says for us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Learning God's will and complying our lives in obedience with that will is to work out our salvation. We should be anxious and concerned as we strive to please the Lord. It is the most serious matter that we shall ever be concerned with. It will determine where we spend eternity.

I'd Do Something About It, If I Belived in God

1. I would do all that was necessary to mend my life.

2. I wouldn't cling to things temporal and forsake things eternal.

3. I couldn't hold to "situational ethics" where the "you shall not" becomes a "pershaps you can".

4. I couldn't believe in a preacher who leaves unsaid what God declares.

IF I BELIEVED IN CHRIST

1. I would want to know Him more clearly and follow Him more nearly.

2. I would count all things but loss; I couldn't rest until I saw all life in the light of His redeeming action.

3. I would be for Him and not against Him.

4. Having found Him, I would share Him.

IF I BELIEVED IN A FUTURE JUDGMENT

1. I would make preparations.

2. I would make immediate preparation.

Ronald Milton

A hypocrite is a person who is not himself on Sundays.

If a man's conscience is as comfortable as his mattress, he should have no trouble getting a good night's sleep.

Misunderstanding

Clovis Ragsdale

Many of man's problems are caused by misunderstandings. Social, economic, and political problems of the day fill the newspapers and airways. It is difficult for men who speak different languages and live in different environments to understand one another's intentions. This is also true of the divine side of life. Misunderstandings hinder unity among brethren and among all believers in Christ.

When Christ was in the world he was misunderstood by the people of his time. The Jews would have followed him as a political leader, but refused to accept him as the Messiah. His apostles could not understand that he would have to die even though he specifically pointed this out to them. The learned people of his time could not understand how he could claim to be a king because they could think only in terms of earthly kingdoms.

His church that he established has been the subject of much misunderstanding in every age. In our time the hundreds of different churches with their varying doctrines and names prove that his teachings are not understood. The movement of a century and a half past to restore worship to the exact pattern of the New Testament days has been misunderstood by the majority of people who have had opportunity to become a part of the movement. The several millions who have accepted points out that the principal of restoration can be understood.

Let us set forth in a few words the meaning of the Restoration movement. Man, having departed from the original teachings of the church of apostolic days, must return to the pattern set forth in the New Testament for all faith and course to follow. The Law of Moses was fulfilled and was nailed to the cross. True, nine of the original Ten Commandments were rewritten in the New, but we are no longer under the original Commandments as such. The Holy Spirit directed the writers of the

New Testament to reveal God's last will and testament. This testament tells us that Christ's kingdom or church has been established among men. That men can become a part of his church when they believe, repent, confess Christ, and are baptized for the remission of sins. The book of Acts teaches these things in chapters two, eight, nine, ten, and sixteen, and etc. After we become a Christian we are instructed to live clean lives, to assemble for worship on the first days of the week, where singing, praying, studying, giving of our means, and the observation of the Lord's supper is carried out. As an individual and as a part of the congregation we are to help preach the gospel and care for the needy. The amount of our good works is governed by your abilities and opportunities as an individual. No two people have the same talent.

The scriptures warn us against changing his will in any way as this would be rebellion. Gal. 1:8 and 9. We are to live the Christian life until death. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10, 22:14. These are God's instructions through his word which is to be our guide. They are plain and should not be misunderstood. We should submit to God's will and not to seek our own way. To do other than his will is a dangerous course to follow. We must remember we live only once and we must make our calling and election sure.

DO YOU STILL BELIEVE?

The religious world of today is going through a great change. Idealism and materialism has swept its way into the thinking of many men. One of the recently expressed ideas that has come to the fore-front is the teaching that God is dead! Others have doubts about the Trinity, the virgin birth of Christ, and the miracles of the New Testament performed by Christ and his apostles. It is then no wonder that the faith of some Christians is shaken. The Bible has been hammered on by many critics before but it still remains

the best selling book in the world. Prayers have been outlawed from our public schools. Shall the right to express our religious beliefs also be removed? Morality is changing from the code of morals set forth in the Bible to ideas of free love and total expression. The apostle John warns us that those who teach that Jesus, God's Son, did not come in the flesh is the Anti-Christ. Let us beware that we do not deny our living Saviour.

(See I John 2:22-25)

The Radio Program

Ever since there has been a radio station in Thayer and Mammoth Spring, the church has presented a program of Bible study on the air. There are many people who listen daily. Some of these people are not members of the church. This makes this a vital presentation that must be continued. For a number of years many congregations helped financially with the program. Now there are only a few helping in this way. In that Thayer and Mammoth Spring now have separate programs (which has proven to be worth while in having many people reached at the morning hour of 7:45 Monday through Friday who are not at home to listen at 11:45), the cost has increased considerably. Although the financial obligations have been met with certain difficulties. The church in Mammoth Spring will indeed continue the program as is, but would appreciate any assistance that might be offered by sister congregations. If the congregation in your locality is looking for an opportunity to help in preaching the gospel, you might consider this matter. If you should write Mr. Bob Simers, Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554. He is the treasurer for the radio program. We are not by this "begging" for you to "come to the rescue". We are simply informing you of a way you can be doing some additional work that would not cost you more than five or ten dollars each month, but would assist others beyond measure.

What Are the "Fundamental" Principles

Wm. Kay Moser

We have all heard year after year regular sermons on primary principles of the gospel. These sermons deal with a four or five finger exercise that seems so simple to New Testament followers and so narrow-minded by many who are not. We have ever heard baptism expounded upon and we pin the ears back on the non-baptized, and they go away as in a rage many times.

I don't believe Heb. 6:1-2 is describing what we have come to know as a four or five point sermon outline dealing with these things which are said to lead up to baptism.

If one has no understanding of the principles and attitudes taught in the 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew it will matter none at all if he believes baptism to be essential or non-essential for salvation. Not only must one understand these he must believe and practice them. If one does not he will get just as far toward Heaven without baptism as with it.

There have been far too many among us who have violated the very principles and attitudes taught in the Sermon on the Mount in argument about baptism. Jesus was, above all, a Friend to sinners. He came to seek and save them. When they saw this they accepted baptism taught by him readily. The yoke the saint is to carry does not consist of a carefully-worded argument about baptism or any other single aspect of the gospel. It is a whole life lived in true devotion to our Savior and with a love for sinners that characterized Him who died for us all.

When we won't stay out of court over where a fence should be between us and a fellow member in Christ, and not only are we not turning the other cheek but demanding that he stand still while

we hit him back, it seems to me that we either never obeyed the gospel or else we have fallen away from it. Where in the Bible, and on what basis, can we say one has not obeyed the gospel regarding baptism, and at the same time totally disregard his obedience of the gospel regarding praying for enemies and loving them?

I'm not trying to cast any reflection on baptism. I am saying that the fundamental principles of the gospel are taught in the Sermon on the Mount as well as in Acts chapter two. When one knows and believes the teaching contained in Matthew, for example, and then comes in the course or study or hearing to the teaching of the book of Acts baptism will be readily received. Could it be that the reason division seems so hard to the student is because he has not learned to multiply and subtract and add?

I'm trying to say that the teaching of Christ as given in Matthew will teach one to add, subtract and multiply in spiritual arithmetic and then the teaching of what to repent of and from, and what to be baptized in view of and into, will be taken care of for the most part by the time the sinner is brought face to face with Acts 2:38.

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Three 'C's' for Young People

1. Let us restore the Curfew. Silly mothers and dads who shove their 12 and 13 year olds into dates, and late ones at that, are reaping some of the saddest harvests of their foolhardiness.

2. Let us restore the Chaperone. Before you shout "ridiculous, antiquated, or horse and buggy thinking", talk to the doctors, judges, and policemen about what this generation has gotten its kids into.

3. Let us restore the Chores. 'Tis always true that an idle mind is

the devil's workshop. Chores have a way of making children appreciate home life, the world of their parents, the value of time, and the necessity of work in our world. "If all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," then "all play and no work will make him a jerk."

Christian parents, remember, you need not allow an item just because your neighbors do. Teach your child to stand up for decency by being firm in your own morality. All of us want to be popular, but we want even more eternal bliss. "As you sow, so shall you reap."

(Gal. 6:7, 8). C. P. Findlay

The Heart and the Hands

A story is told of a man who came to a watchmaker with the two hands of a clock, saying, "I want you to fix these hands. They haven't kept time correctly for the last six months." "Where is the clock?" asked the watchmaker. "Why, I left it at home," was the answer. "But I must have the clock," insisted the watchmaker.

"Why, I tell you, there is nothing wrong with the clock except the hands," the man replied.

As we read this story we think, "What a foolish man that was." He did not realize that when the hands of a clock don't work, the trouble is not in the hands, but in the heart of the clock. And yet we sometimes make the same mistake in diagnosing our own spiritual illness.

When we fail to attend church regularly, the problem is not in our feet, or our automobile, but in our hearts. When we fail to give as we ought to give, our hands are not at fault, but our hearts. When we do things which we should not do, we cannot blame our arms and legs, because the trouble is in the heart. When we say things which we should not say, we cannot blame our tongues, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Via Camden Bulletin.