

Fulton County Gospel News

Albert Rogers
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"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

VOLUME 8 - NO. 1

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

JANUARY - 1966

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.

"What Must I Do to Be Lost?"

One of the most important questions of life is, "What must I do to be saved?" Three times in the book of Acts this question is propounded. First, by the people on Pentecost (Acts 2:37), next, by Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:6) and then finally by the jailor in Philippi (Acts 16:30). An equally important question that will get some to consider the value of their soul and the solemnity of their decision is "What must I do to be lost?"

Anything that God does not desire must be something terrible. It must therefore be the most terrible thing to be lost, for God does not desire that anyone should be eternally lost. A "whosoever will" is extended universally. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

DON'T DO ANYTHING

If a person desires to be lost, then the way that he can assure it is to do nothing. Some are not unhesitant to proclaim their morality in terms as — I don't drink, I don't curse, I am not a thief. This is like adding several zeros and still having nothing but a sum total of zero. Morality is needed, but morality without Christ has no eternal reward. Jesus said, "he that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Luke 11:23)

REJECT CHRIST

If one has his mind made up to be lost then all he must do is to reject Christ. The Master said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Jesus Christ is man's one and only hope. He is the one mediator between God and man. He is

Acknowledge Contributions

C. C. Baird, Williford, Ark. \$5.00
Bruce Fernimen, English Bluff 5.00
F. E. Howell, Blytheville, Ark. 1.00
Julia Unger, Allandale, Fla. .. 1.90
Orbie Robbins, Elizabeth, Ark. 1.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ 5.00
Wheeling Church of Christ 5.00
Salem Church of Christ 5.00
Viola Church of Christ 5.00
Agnos Church of Christ 5.00
English Bluff Church of Christ 5.00
Morrison Church of Christ
(two months) 10.00

our Savior. All it takes to be lost is to ignore and reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

REFUSE TO OBEY THE GOSPEL

If anyone has his mind made to be eternally lost all he must do is to refuse to obey the gospel of Christ. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 1:8). The Lord shall punish with everlasting destruction those who obey not his gospel. The gospel today is the gospel that still has the power to save the world from sin. It is the sweet redemptive story of how God has interceded on our behalf to save us from our sins. It tells of a God who loved us, of a Savior who died for us and of the necessity of accepting his grace by faith.

Yes, if you have your mind made up to be lost this is all it requires — don't do anything, reject Christ, refuse to obey the gospel.

Ronald Milton
Tulsa, Okla.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY
FREE SUBSCRIPTION

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID
MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

SUPPORTED BY:
CHURCHES OF CHRIST
IN THIS AREA

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RICHARD ENGLAND

Editorial - -

Fulton County Gospel News begins its eleventh year of publication during this new year. We are hoping to make some changes in the editing and mailing of the paper during this year. The zip code number of all who receive the paper outside the county will have to be on each copy beginning the first of next year. We urge all who send in new names to please furnish the zip code number. Send all correspondence to Fulton County Gospel News c/o Church of Christ, Mammoth Spring, Ark. We are grateful to the church at Mammoth Spring for accepting more of the responsibility for the printing of the paper. In the past this has been left to a few individuals. With more people participating in the printing of the paper we can expect a better paper in the future.

The printing of this paper is dependent upon the continued support of the many friends who have contributed the financial support to defray the expense of printing and mailing. We ask your continued help.

Send any item that would be of interest to our readers concerning the work of the church. Announcements of meetings will be

printed.

Everybody is doing it!

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." (Ex. 23:2)

When people want to do something which is questionable they usually justify themselves by saying: "Everybody is doing it". Everybody may not be doing it; in fact, the number participating in the activity may be very small compared to the number not participating; but because people like to think that they are on the side of the majority in everything they do, they make use of the expression. Their use of the expression, however, denotes at least two things: (1) they are willing to do whatever is done by the "multitude" because of popularity; (2) they are weak in reasoning ability and must appeal to public opinion rather than to the proper standards of morality.

The Jews were commanded not to follow a multitude to do evil. Even if "everybody is doing it," we are not to do as they do. The majority is more often wrong than it is right. The majority was lost in the flood. The majority of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed. The majority of the Jews wanted Christ crucified. Sin is never made righteousness, nor is error ever made truth by the number engaged in it. If "everybody is doing it," then special care should be exercised by the Christian to learn the attractiveness of that particular activity.

Would it not be far better to be on the side of the minority rather than to discover that you have been following "a multitude to do evil"? Remember that many shall travel the broad way to the wide gate and pass through to eternal destruction, while only a few shall find the narrow way which leads to the strait gate through which the faithful shall pass to everlasting life.

FOSTER A. RAMSEY,
"The Watchman"

God Adds the Saved to the Church

When one becomes a Christian like Paul and others of Bible days, he also becomes a member to the church established by Christ. In Acts 2:47 we find that the Lord added those who had obeyed "that form of doctrine" (Rom. 6:17,18) to the church.

We have notice that in order for one to be a Christian like Paul, Lydia and others of the first Century it is necessary for him to have faith in God and in Jesus Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6), and "faith comes by hearing.....the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). When Peter preached to the thousands on Pentecost, Acts 2, the Word had this effect. When they HEARD they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (Acts 2:37).

They believed, but faith alone will not save. James says that "faith only" is dead (James 2:17, 26). Faith must cause action in the individual. The answer Peter gave was, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," (Acts 2:38).

Those who "gladly received his words were baptized." To what church did they belong? Were they then allowed to "choose the church of their choice?" There were no denominational churches then — The Lord added them to His church.

By doing what these early disciples did we will become just what they became — Christians! Neither more nor less, just plain, simple Christians. They were all ONE — they were united as Jesus prayed. We would have that unity if we do what they did, be what they were, and guard against dividing doctrines and commandments of men.

Harold Littrell

Wise men learn by the mistakes of others; fools insist on learning by their own.

Keeping Our Hearts -

By Robert Henly
Church of Christ
Mountain Home, Ark.

It is a fact that we think much of the physical heart, subject as it is to the stress and strain of life, and it is well that we should. However, the heart within us that thinks, plans, reasons, subject to joy, sorrow, love and hate; the heart that plans and executes good or evil, that dwelling place of God or Satan; that heart we should keep with all diligence. It is the fountainhead from which comes good or evil, and we, only, as individuals may determine it's outpouring. In the Child of God, it is the dwelling place of God, or His temple. If we as Christians, our heart's housekeeper, let the temple become defiled, God will surely destroy us unless we clean and garnish it. (1 Cor. 3: 16-17) Unless our heart is filled with the Spirit, Satan will move in and occupy the vacancy. (Acts 5:3)

The heart is the foundation of our character and it need be a sure and solid footing. The wise man said in Prov. 23: 17, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he". From the same passage we may also see that our actions may not always indicate the state of our hearts. From such condition arises hypocrisies such as practiced by the Pharisees, lip service while their hearts were far from Him. The character should be such that the work of the Lord be by desire to do His will, a driving want.

That heart above our shoulders directs our words, our speech, regardless of whether it be good or evil. In Matt. 15:18 we read, "But these things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man." This of course being determined by the condition of the heart. Luke recorded as Lord as saying, "A good man out of the treasures of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasures of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil;

for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh". (Luke 6:45)

In the heart decisions are made. With it we choose or reject, believe or disbelieve. The record of our Lord's work on earth is given us that we might be convinced of His divinity, His power and glory, and believing on Him, find life through His name. John 20:31. In Romans 10:10 Paul states, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The spiritual heart, not the physical, is the very hub of life, and as such should be carefully nurtured and guarded. We used to sing a beautiful song, "Keep my heart and keep my hand, keep my soul I pray. Keep my tongue to speak thy praise, Keep me all the way." A wonderful prayer in song but for Him to keep these things they must first be given Him. Our hearts must be in our keeping as well as His. Again listen to the Wise Man in Prov. 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." How beautiful the promise, that if we in everything, giving our hearts to the Lord and turning to him in prayer, that the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:7)

Let us, by our lives and works, lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, that our hearts may be there also.

The Masquerade of Sin . .

We will be better prepared to overcome sin when we have become more acquainted with its nature.

SIN ALLURES

The Scriptures say that Satan is "transformed into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14). It is no secret that the devil has the power to charm and attract. Many are fascinated into depravity. Adam was not hungry with all of his benefits provided for him. Wh a t

made him eat? Sin allures. SIN DECIEVES

Wrong-doing to many does not at first appear as such because sin subtly exhibits pleasure while concealing pain and shame. Anyone who has ever made a bargain with the devil has found out that he will lie and cheat to break his promises. To Adam and Eve the promise was "Ye shall not surely die." Did they?

SIN ENSLAVES

"Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16)

Too Much Wishbone, Not Enough Backbone

To my mind the greatest of tragedies of life do not result from lack of application; not from ignorance of duty or responsibility, but from neglect and refusal to obey. Read Matthew 7:24-27. Take a look at King Saul and King Solomon. Discern the reason for the punishment of the one pound or the condemnation of the one talent man. The wise man hears and does. The foolish man hears and neglects.

I am persuaded that exceedingly few people actually wish to be mean and sinful. I cannot conceive a person who does not want to be saved. We are defeated by Satan, however, not because we lack the want, but because we lack the will. We do not fall for lack of wishing, but from lack of willing.

The child of God is not to be saved because of what he knows but because of what he does. Nor is he to enjoy eternal life because he is efficient or successful as men count the desirable things but because he has been faithful. And faithful not merely until death, but unto death.

F. B. Sheppard

Eternal Life, and when we Receive It

Orbie Robbins
Elizabeth, Arkansas

Eternal life is the gift of God. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." (Rom. 6:2, 3) The believer has eternal life now, the moment he believes, we are told. The Bible does teach that the believer has eternal life, but eternal life is not non-conditional. Our Lord declared: Verily, Verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath eternal life. Jn. 6:47 In Jn. 5:24 Jesus said: He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life.

It is true that the Lord said the believer "hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation. But I want you to hear Christ in Jn. 3:36 when he said: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the son shall not see life: In Jn. 5:24 we are taught that the believer "shall not come into condemnation". In Jn. 3:36 we are told that the unbeliever "shall not see life". If Jn. 5:24 means that the believer can never become an unbeliever and be lost, then Jn. 3:36 teaches that an unbeliever can never become a believer and be saved. The term "shall not" is as permanent in one passage as the other. In one passage, the believer "shall not" come into condemnation. In the other passage, the unbeliever "shall not" see life. The truth of these two scriptural texts must force us to this inevitable conclusion: If an unbeliever can become a believer and "see life" the believer can become an unbeliever and "come into condemnation". A child of God can therefore be lost.

The Bible teaches that we hope for eternal life, a promise. A child of God has eternal life as a promise. In Jn. 2:25 we are told, and this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal

life. A child of God hopes for eternal life. Paul declared "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." (Tit. 1:2) Again in Tit. 3:7 "being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." "Hope of eternal life" the apostle declared. Question: Paul what are you hoping for? Eternal life? Why Paul don't you know that a child of God actually has eternal life now and can't possibly lose it: and if you lose it, you never had it? Would you say that Paul never taught that it is impossible for a child of God to be lost? Those who teach that if you have it you can't lose it are too modern for Paul. The apostle was still "hoping" for it. In Rom. 8:24, 25 he declared, "For in hope we are saved: but hope that is seen in not hope. For who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

When writing to a gospel preacher, Timothy, Paul said: Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. 6:12 Question: how long does the good fight of faith last? We must know so that we may know when we can lay hold on eternal life. Now hear Paul on this question: For I am already being offered and the time of my departure is come. I have thought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. 2 Tim. 4: 6, 7 John said be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2:10 Now according to both Paul and John, we must fight the good fight of faith throughout life. Laying hold on eternal life comes after this life on earth. Hear him, henceforth "that is after" I have fought a good fight, kept the faith, and finished my course: "henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give to me at that day" Shall we ask what day? The judgment day of course. Question, Paul, when will the rest of God's children, who have been faithful to the end, receive this crown? This is his answer, "and not to me only, but also to all

them that have loved his appearing." Yes, all of God's faithful children will receive eternal life "at that day" after the judgment.

To the Corinthians Paul wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that everyone may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5: 10

May I ask you in all sincerity are you seeking for eternal life? or do you think you already have it? Or are you by "patient continuance in well doing" seeking eternal life? If so you are following divine instruction. If not, then you have been misinformed and misguided. Eternal life in world to come. Our Lord promised eternal life in the world to come. Hear him! "Verily I say unto you there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospels but he shall receive an hundred fold in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come eternal life." (Mk. 10:29, 30) "In the world to come", Jesus declared, God's children must be faithful in order to receive eternal life. The crown of life awaits the redeemed of God's people, who will live on and on in the beautiful city of our God, in the world to come.

The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.

By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.