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Calling On The Name Of The Lord True Happiness

By Harold Turner

By Mildred Turner

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" Acts 2:21.

The Bible continually assures us that God desires to save the lost. This desire is magnified in the sacrificial death of Jesus for our sins. Since man cannot call upon his own goodness to save himself, he is without hope apart from Christ (Eph. 2:12). Too, God expressed his desire to save man in giving him the gospel to instruct him in the way of salvation. Salvation depends upon our doing the will of God (Mat. 7:21). Jesus said, "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" John 6:45. Through the gospel, God teaches us everything we need to know to be saved and live the Christian life.

In evaluating any subject relating to our salvation, we must be careful not to make hasty conclusions. God warns us to prove all things (1 Thess. 5:21). The apostle Paul wrote, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). Satan does everything in his power to confuse man, and thereby keep men from believing and following the simplicity of the teachings of Christ. How foolish it would be to follow unquestionably any teaching that cannot be proven by the gospel.

The above statement in Acts 2:21, is a condition of God's will to our salvation, hence we need to understand its meaning. What did the apostle mean by "calling on the name of the Lord?" The immediate reply of many is that it means to pray for forgiveness. This is an interpretation of the statement, and interpretations are sometimes wrong. Does this interpretation find support from the gospel? Do we find any place where God's word teaches the alien sinner to pray for forgiveness or salvation? A few verses following this statement, in Acts 2:37, these people asked, "What shall we do?" They were not told to pray, but rather to "Repent and be baptized" for the remission of sins. What then does it mean to call on the name of the Lord?

It might be profitable for us to first ask, what salvation does the apostle have reference to? In Exod. 14:13, Moses said,

"stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Salvation from what? Obviously, from Egyptian bondage. 1 Pet. 3:20 states, "eight souls were saved by water." Saved from what? Obviously, from the flood. In Luke 18:35-42 a blind man asked Jesus to heal his blindness. Jesus said, "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee." Saved from what? Obviously, his blindness.

A failure to understand what salvation is being considered in a statement, could certainly lead us to a wrong conclusion. To interpret the statement, "calling on the name of the Lord" to mean praying for forgiveness, is to begin with the assumption that the salvation referred to is salvation from sins. Can we determine what salvation is considered from the context of this statement?

Acts 2:21 begins with the word "And", a conjunction that links it directly to the previous statement. Verse twenty states, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come; AND..." In Mat. 24:29-31, Jesus describes these events as occurrences to happen at his return. Hence, the salvation referred to by calling on the name of the Lord is at the time when Jesus returns. The context doesn't support that it refers to salvation from sin.

The word, call, as used in this statement, is translated from the Greek word, 'epikaleo'. The translation of this word in Acts 25:11, may help us to grasp its meaning. Here Paul said, "I appeal (epikaleo) unto Caesar." Paul was facing the challenge to a trial of injustice. He could not appeal to the local courts for justice, therefore, he called upon Caesar for a just trial. Paul had the right to appeal to Caesar because he was a citizen of Rome. Had he not been a citizen he could not have so appealed. As Paul called upon Caesar for protection and salvation, so we, as Christians, call upon the name (authority) of the Lord for our salvation.

When the end comes, only faithful citizens of the kingdom of God will have the right to appeal to God for salvation from eternal destruction. Those outside the kingdom will have no such right. Jesus described just such a people in Mat.

(Continued on page 2)

Without question, the desire of every heart is to find real happiness in life. Either directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, we are searching for such a life. Most of us have experienced moments when our hearts seem almost to burst with joy. It would be impossible to put into words the depth of such emotions. However, true happiness is more than a moment of excited emotions.

True happiness comes from living a life in harmony with God. It involves enjoying and appreciating the little things of life. Have you really stopped to look at all the beauty in the handiwork of God? Have you ever, as the song states, stopped to smell the roses? Our life here is so brief, and how often we rush through life without really appreciating the wonderful beauty of God's work and power around us. How frequently we find ourselves asking God for so much without realizing the need to be so thankful for the wonderful things of life that He has so freely given us.

One of the biggest problems we have in finding true happiness is in learning to accept and like ourselves for what we are. Our talents may not be as great as others, but when we do our best, we have done all any person can do. It is wrong to belittle and dislike ourselves. The Bible teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves. How can we love our neighbor if we dislike ourselves? We must learn to like and accept ourselves, (not to the point of being arrogant) before we can love and accept others for what they are.

True happiness involves living for and serving others, rather than just ourself. Many times we women think there is little we can do. But there are many many things we can do both in serving our Lord and in doing for others. Have you ever, while feeling low, decided to visit a shut-in, or take food to someone who is unable to cook, or do some other small friendly jester? Every time we do something nice for others we feel uplifted and wonderful. I will never forget hearing a preacher say that if someone has done you wrong and you are feeling badly toward them, just bake them a pie or something and take it to them. Your ill feelings will leave you, and probably them, and you both will feel better.

(Continued on Page 3)

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen
and Harrold Turner.

CALLING ON THE NAME (Cont.)

7:22, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" To these Jesus answered, "And I will profess unto them, I never knew you:" "I never knew you" indicates that these had never been citizens in the kingdom of God. These people were appealing to their own goodness for salvation, rather than to a life of dedication to doing God's will.

When you face the judgment, upon what will you appeal for salvation? Your moral goodness, and good works? None will be saved on such basis. Some, like those in Mat. 7:22, will appeal to their religious life, a religious life that is not totally based upon God's word. Only those who have lived in total dependence upon Jesus, by trusting and obeying his will, will have a basis for appeal. "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" Mat. 7:21.

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"Be friendly and you will find yourself among friendly people."

Love Not The World

By Coy Walters

The Holy Spirit, through John, gave us this prohibition: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 John 2:15-17).

What is this "world" and the things that are in it that we are not to love? Is it the earth on which we live? this could not be what John referred to. God created the earth and all things in it. After God's creation of the earth and the things in it, he looked, and "Behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31).

Could John have referred to the population of people in the world? It could not be this either. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son . . . (John 3:16). We, as does God, are to love mankind and try to bring them to salvation.

What then is John referring to? Thayer's Greek English Lexicon describes it this way: "Worldly affairs; the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc. which stir desire, seduce from God, and are obstacles to the cause of Christ."

Thus it seems that John uses "the world" to describe all that causes one to become separated from God. It is the love of these "worldly affairs" that robs God of the love which should be manifested toward our Maker, thus showing our own self-centeredness. It also robs mankind of the love and mercy that God has provided for us through His Son.

John very clearly listed the three things that make up "the world" of which we are prohibited to love: (1). "The lust of the flesh" - the thoughts and actions which show our deliberate and willful desire for sensual satisfaction: (For a list of the "works of the flesh" see Gal. 5:16-24). (2). "The lust of the eyes" - This is a warning against evil sights that tempt man such as; immoral plays, books, magazines, and movie pictures. The person that is outwardly the spectator of these things, becomes inwardly the actor of them. (3). "The pride of life" - This is becoming arrogant and self-willed, because one thinks too highly of himself.

Thomas Warren summed up what "the world" is when he said, "The world is not so much a place as it is our own spiritual surroundings - it is the place which we make for our own souls."

Watch For The Souls - 1

By W. R. Smith

"The church is on the march" is an expression often heard these days. The church is truly growing faster than it has for quite some time. Current evangelistic efforts are very effective in bringing an ever-increasing number of souls into the body of Christ. This is a source of great joy to every person who is interested in the eternal welfare of men and women.

We must keep in mind, however, that with the growth of the church goes a corresponding increase in responsibilities. New members entering any sort of group must be conditioned or indoctrinated. If they are not, the institution into which they go will soon realize it has just so much dead weight -- too many liabilities. This is especially true in the church. It is imperative, therefore, that the leaders of each growing congregation step up its rate and effectiveness of indoctrination. Preaching on Godly living and Christian service helps in this task, but much more than preaching is needed to meet the divine requirements. Those who are neglectful in this sphere of service will come to sorrow.

In recent years the leaders have been busy providing adequate material facilities. These aids are necessary and should be ample to enable a congregation to achieve fully its objectives. But, unless extreme caution is exercised there are strong possibilities the brethren, so much absorbed in serving tables, will neglect the weightier matters with which they are charged; namely, watching for the souls of the sheep under their oversight. Achieving a high degree of spiritual health in the congregation must take precedence over supplying facilities. It must be remembered in this connection that ample and superior facilities may be had without, at the same time, having a congregation with a high spiritual temperature. Unless all members are effectively taught, kept busy, and pure, their coming into the church is more of a handicap than a help. It is, therefore, the weighty responsibility of elders, or the congregation in the absence of elders, to prosecute a program by which every member of the congregation under their oversight will be watched, kept strong, and fruitful.

The watchmen in God's plans are charged with feeding or teaching the members the sound doctrine. Plans have been made but poorly executed in many places to include all the sheepfold. Attendance in the Bible classes and

(continued on Page 3)

The Lord's Anger

By G. K. Wallace

Jesus became angry (Mark 3:5). We usually think of anger as a vice and not a virtue, and yet Jesus became angry. We usually regard anger as littleness and not bigness, but Jesus became angry. The angry man is the likely man to sin. Anger is strictly forbidden in God's word. In Psalm 37:8 the writer says, "Cease from anger and forsake wrath." The teacher of old said, "He that is slow to anger appeaseth wrath." Too, it is said, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;" and we are exhorted, "Make no friendship with the man that is given to anger." In Eccles. 7:9 we read, "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." Jesus said, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgment." One of the qualifications of an elder is that he be not soon angry (Titus 1:5).

When then is anger so severely condemned, and yet we read the startling statement that Jesus became angry? There is a difference between the anger manifested by man and that which Jesus possessed. There is a difference between the anger that is condemned by the Holy Spirit and the anger by Jesus our Lord.

The anger that is ours is often produced by a purely selfish motive. Criticism against others does not make us angry; however, we let out howls of sheer rage when criticism is directed against us. We become indignant when we are not selected as the leader or made the head of a committee. If for some reason we are not invited to a party we feel insulted. Too, if we fail to get the glory or the credit for a deed, we become angry. This indicates that our motive is not proper and right. When Jonah went down to Ninevah and prophesied, "Yet forty days and Ninevah shall be destroyed," the people repented and Jonah became angry. He should have rejoiced that they corrected their lives, but he perhaps felt his reputation as a prophet was ruined. He really did not care for the people; he cared for himself. He was utterly selfish, and nursing his wounded pride, he went out and sat down under a booth that he had made. In the shade of the booth he nursed his injured pride and was angry because he could not have his way. He was not angry because men were sinful and the heart of man was corrupted.

Such anger as we often have and that which was manifested by Jonah is wrong in its objective. The anger that we have prompts us to destroy, to hurt, to give pain. Sometimes we are like Samson when we give vent to our feelings. We destroy not only the building we pull down,

but ourselves. If we see ourselves slighted, we break off diplomatic relations with the church. We resign the Lord's work; and like the elder brother, we stay out at the barn and pout. The elder brother refused to go in and have a part in the feast prepared for his wayward brother. He did not shoot up the town, but he was trying to hurt someone. In his anger he did hurt his father and himself.

Often the type of anger that we manifest is ridiculous and silly. I have seen men who, when playing golf, became angry and threw away a golf club. I have seen mechanics beat an engine and swear when the engine would not respond as they wanted it to do. I have observed farmers cursing their mules when they would not respond to their directions. Jesus was not angry after any such fashion.

The anger of Jesus was born of love and not of hate. He became angry with the people because they were unwilling to help a man with a withered hand. Jesus did not become angry when he was mocked, spat upon, and even when he was crucified. His anger had the right objective. He desired to help someone and not to hurt. He opposed the sin of the people who were making laws to govern the sabbath that God did not make, but he loved the sinner. His anger was a righteous indignation. His condemnation of these people was not born in a fit of madness. His emotion was a holy indignation.

From this we see that any selfish anger must be destroyed. Too, we have an example that righteous anger needs to be stirred. We need to blaze with the zeal for that which is right. Much that passes for tolerance today is indifference. One of the surest signs that the church is running down spiritually is the fact that it has lost its power to become indignant about wrongdoing. Some congregations are very indifferent about Sunday night services. The church building could be completely closed on Sunday evening and Wednesday night, and a vast majority of brethren would know nothing at all about it. Often brethren make the excuse that they cannot come to Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services, yet it is a well-known fact that they do not stay at home. Instead of staying at home they go somewhere else and indulge in that which pleases them. I am sure that if Jesus were here he would do as he did in time of old, "when he looked round about on them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts." We need the type of anger manifested by our Lord.

WATCH FOR (Cont.)

preaching services is optional. Those who absent themselves are weak and are entitled to help, Romans 15:1. If this help is not forthcoming, somebody must answer at the judgment. This will, without doubt, prove to be more than embarrassing. The leaders have at their disposal, but rarely ever use them, ways and means to strengthen the entire membership in this manner.

Oversight requires watchfulness also in talent development. The leaders, in the judgment, will share with members the blame for unused talents. Unless each member finds his place in the program of work and is fruitful in the church, he will be taken away, John 15:2. There is always an abundance of work or jobs suitable and challenging to all-ranging from the one to the five talent folk. The slogan "Use me or lose me" is as true in congregational development as in any other situation. The congregation that is making full use of available talents is truly under the oversight of watchful leaders.

Where a church is "set in order" and under the watchful eyes of scriptural leaders you will find a definite policy by which it detects and doctors moral and spiritual delinquents. This type of leadership can spot covetousness and other kinds of moral leprosy in its midst and it knows how to grapple with it. Since the scriptures furnish us unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:17) there is no choice but to keep the body clean and busy seeking and saving the lost.

There is no challenge which faces the church today more serious than that of watching for souls of church members, Heb. 13:17.

True Happiness (Cont.)

Remember, Jesus said, "do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Bitterness is a burden too heavy; for any heart, neither can one be happy with bitterness in his heart.

True happiness is within the reach of every person. If we will live in harmony with God's will, learn to accept ourselves for what we are, and learn to take time to live each day, appreciating life as it is, and express kindness to others.

"A closed hand can neither give nor receive a blessing. Selfishness defeats itself."

"Let the man who demands perfection in character make the first demand upon himself."

Parents Love Their Children

By Tommy Exum

Ask any mother or father if they love their children and they would most certainly answer, "Yes, of course." The trouble is that so many have the wrong concept of love. They leave out one of the main ingredients: discipline. After a generation of practicing Dr. Spock's "permissiveness" doctrine, only to find out that it didn't work, even Dr. Spock has admitted publicly that he was wrong.

Anyone who reads the Bible could have told him and all parents who followed him that his theory was wrong. The Bible plainly tells us that love of our children includes discipline. It has been proven that children who receive proper discipline feel the most secure, make the best grades in school, rarely ever run afoul of the law, have a proper respect for all those who have rightful authority over them and most of all, **THEY HAVE A GREATER LOVE AND RESPECT FOR THEIR OWN PARENTS.**

Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6. Paul said in Ephesians 6:1-2: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour they father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise." The burden of these verses is not with the children but with the parents. You see, parents must teach children to obey and honor them. It begins when they are toddlers and not teen-agers. Such children will not be rebellious as they grow into the trying teen years.

Parents do their children great injustice when they give them everything they ask for in the belief that this is the way a child should be loved. Children need to be denied **SOME** things. They need to be answerable to their parents in all things for as long as they live at home with the parents providing the livelihood.

In Ephesians 6:4, Paul continues with, "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Would you refuse to give them food, clothing or shelter? Certainly not! Then why deny them that which is even more important and has to do with their future life?

Wise parents who truly love their children will take the time to provide the moral and spiritual leadership, training and guidance that children so desperately need if they are to become useful citizens of the future.

I Believe In Prayer

By Ted Knight

I believe in the power of prayer. I am convinced that I have seen the evidence that God answers the prayers of His children in my own life. I believe that we should pray more about more things. Prayer brings comfort in the time of need. Prayer encourages us when we are discouraged. The knowledge that others are praying for us often gives us that needed assurance that things will be alright.

I believe that prayer must be accompanied by action if we expect our prayers to be successful. I am reminded of two little boys who were playing in the woods. A bear got after them. They began to run, and continued until they were almost ready to fall. "Hey," said one little fellow, "let's sit down on this log and pray." The other replied, "You can if you want to, but I'm gonna pray while I run." We often pray that our work will be fruitful and productive, but observe that many times we do little toward that end ourselves. We pray that God will take care of the needy, but in most of our budgets only a small amount is allotted for that area of work. We pray that God will help others to see the truth, but do not put forth an effort to take that truth to them. We pray for peace and love, but then stir up trouble because we do not love our brother. We pray that the Bible class teachers will be adequately prepared to teach their classes, but we have not studied ourselves outside of the class period. We pray for the eiders of the church, but fail to encourage them by letting them know of our love for them and our personal involvement in the work which they have planned.

Yes, I believe in prayer. But, as we pray, let us work for those things which we have prayed. God does not promise those things which we could accomplish ourselves. But, He will help us, if we will do our best. Let us learn to pray as if everything depended on God, and then work as if everything depended upon us. That will bring success.

"Being conscious of no sin indicates many."

"What mean ye, fellow-citizens, that ye turn every stone to scrape wealth together, and take so little care of your children, to whom you must one day relinquish it all?" (Socrates)

Compliments

By Lavern Stewart

Our Lord payed compliments sparingly; however, we can learn much from the few times he did praise someone. One person that Jesus complimented was the woman in Mark 14:8, who anointed His body for the burial. He said of her, "She hath done what she could." Beyond any doubt, the word "what" in this passage means "all" -- in fact, three different translations of the New Testament; Williams, Goodspeed, and Moffatt, render the passage, "She has done all she could." Can one do any less than **ALL HE CAN** and still be right with God? If you and I fail to do **WHAT** we can, will we hear this praise and invitation from the Lord at the last day? Matt. 25:21, "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Surely none of us are "good-for-nothing" because Paul said in 1 Cor. 7:7, "For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." God expects us to use whatever ability or resource we have, whether native or acquired, 1 Peter 4:11, "if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth." If a man has no money, God does not expect him to give; on the same basis of fairness, if one has no ability to do a certain thing -- and cannot learn -- God does not expect him to do it. Notice 2 Cor. 8:12, "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Often the Bible speaks of pleasing God -- for example, Heb. 13:21, "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." From the compliment our Lord payed to the woman in Mark 14:8, we see how to please God: Do what we are **ABLE TO DO.**

Rosa Ragsdale
Marmoth Spring, Arkansas