

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Second Class Postage Paid at Mammoth Spring, Ark.

Volume 12

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

June, 1972

Number 18

## The Psychology of Prayer

## I Peter 3:21

This writer has been made acutely aware of the sad frustration existent within the hearts of many people especially dear to Christ. Christian men and women have been counseled by well meaning counsellors that they must "keep the commandments" of God in order to be saved. This impossible-to-be-kept counsel has resulted in serious problems within and not a few defections from the ranks of Christ.

The counsel: "keep the commandments," smacks of a Judaistic concept of Christianity. Judaism was a commandment-keeping religion (Mtt. 19:17); Christianity is a faith religion (Gal. 3:23-27). Paul pointed out that a commandment-keeping religion is an impossible religion (Rm. 2:13; 3:20; 6:23); and he furthered pointed out that those subject to commandment keeping were under a curse (Gal. 3:10). Paul's solution to this curse of death upon the commandment-keepers is realized when he states: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13a).

Why anyone would segregate the commandments in the New Covenant from the mediator of the New Covenant and renew the curse of commandment-keeping is beyond comprehension of this writer. Of course, the commandments of the New Covenant are to be kept by Christians, but they are kept in relation to Christ and not just because they are commandments. Commandments themselves frustrate and kill; commandments in relation to Christ fulfill and animate.

This commandment-keeping, legal, concept of Christianity is evidenced from various sources—one specific source being in the psychology of prayer. A short while ago this writer was told by a counsellor-preacher that he could not, and would not, counsel the parents, of a child who had been injured, had been taken to surgery and whose life was in jeopardy, to pray to God beseeching Him for the life of that child with any expectancy that God would intervene in any way. The counsellor-preacher did say that the benefit of such a prayer would only be a psychologically relaxing of mental anxiety on the part of the parents, but the prayer would have no effect whatsoever upon the welfare of the child.

The counsellor-preacher further indicated that he had counseled parents and others to similar conclusions in similar and not so similar circumstances.

The relegation of prayer to a psychological relaxative misses the mark of New Covenant prayer; it negates the very breath of a Christian; it dethrones the Spirit from His temple; it destroys the mediatorial need of Christ; and, it is deficient of New Covenant authority. Even with the former remarks the question should be asked: Does the New Covenant teach that a prayer's benefit is purely a psychological relaxative?

First, a brief examination of the four Gospels and Acts is necessary to our purpose: Jesus prayed in the garden when alone (Mtt. 26); Jesus sought out a solitary place to pray (Mk. 1:35); Jesus prayed in a mountain with His disciples (Lk. 9:29); Jesus gave thanks at the institution of His supper (Lk. 22:34); Jesus prayed privately in the garden (Lk. 22:41); Jesus prayed on the cross for His murderers to be forgiven (Lk. 23:34); Prayer was made by the church for Peter (Acts 12:5); Paul prayed with the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:36); Paul prayed with women and children on a seashore (Acts 21:5); Paul prayed in the presence of others at mealtime (Acts 27:35); and, Paul prayed for a sick man (Acts 28:8). Does the conclusion follow that these prayers were prayed only to receive a psychological relaxation?

Second, a brief examination of the epistles is an "eye-opener" concerning prayer and its benefits: Paul asked the church at Rome to pray that he might be delivered from the disobedient in Judea, that the Jerusalem saints might receive his ministrations, and that he might be privileged to come to Rome (Rm. 15:30-32); Paul asked that prayers be made for him in order that utterance might be given him in his preaching and that he might preach, with boldness, the mystery of the Gospel (Eph. 6:18-20); Paul prayed for the Philippians that their love might abound in knowledge and all discernment (Philp. 1:9); Paul challenged the Philippians to pray in order that the peace of God might guard their hearts and thoughts in Christ (Philp. 4:6, 7); Paul prayed for, the implication is apparent, a restoral of Epaphroditus'

(Continued on Page 4)

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." You should at this time read I Peter 3:18-22. This is from the King James Version. "Which also after a true likeness doth save you even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (Revised Version).

The antecedent of water in Verse 20, is not the water of the flood, but "water" in general. Noah was saved by "water" during the flood, and in some way (figure, likeness) man is saved by water today.

The way we are "saved by water" today is identified as "water baptism." Thus Peter shows that to be baptized in water is a "likeness" of how Noah was "saved by water". Now we ALL KNOW that GOOD SAVED NOAH, but God gave Noah a PLAN, whereby he could SAVE HIMSELF, just as Peter told the Jews of Acts 2, AFTER GIVING them GOD'S PLAN for salvation (Acts 2:38) by saying, "SAVE YOURSELVES FROM THIS UNTOWARD GENERATION", Acts 2:40. No, man can NOT SAVE HIMSELF BY HIMSELF, BUT HE CAN SAVE HIMSELF BY DOING WHAT GOD TELLS HIM TO DO TO BE SAVED! This Noah did, Heb. 11:7. NOAH BELIEVED GOD! This belief (faith) in God's word "MOVED" Noah to BUILD THE ARK TO SAVE HIMSELF. God SAVED him, but through a PLAN which INCLUDED WATER, which WATER RAISED THE ARK TO SAFETY! THE SAME WATER DESTROYED ALL THOSE OUTSIDE THE ARK.

In other words the WATER of the flood SEPARATED the SAVED from the LOST! THE SAME IS TRUE TODAY! ONLY EIGHT PEOPLE BELIEVED GOD DURING THE FLOOD AND THUS WERE SAVED! ALL OTHERS WERE LOST, BECAUSE THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT GOD WOULD ALLOW

(Continued on Page 2)

**The 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 James E. Henley.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:**

Agnos Church of Christ	.....\$5.00
O. T. Russell	..... 2.00
Viola Church of Christ	..... 5.00
Ring Church of Christ	..... 5.00
Wheeling Church of Christ	..... 6.50
Sturkie Church of Christ	..... 5.00
McIlroy Church of Christ	..... 5.00
Dellhalf Church of Christ	..... 5.00
Banner Church of Christ	..... 7.50
Leon Childers	..... 2.00
Bethany Church of Christ	..... 5.00

**NEWS!**

Gospel meeting Poughkeepsie Church of Christ June the 12th through the 18th. Brother Jaems E. Henley will be the speaker.

Gospel meeting Mammoth Spring Church of Christ July the 24th through the 30th. Brother Charles White will be the speaker.

There will be a Teacher's Workshop at the Mammoth Spring Church of Christ August the 7th through the 11th. All congregations are urged to send their teachers.

**THEY FORGOT?**

A little shoeshine boy, with ragged clothes and worn out shoes, was shinning the shoes of a wealthy man one day. While he worked, he sang, "Jesus loves me, Jesus Loves me..."

The man stopped the boy and asked, "If Jesus loves you so much, why doesn't He tell the people to buy you some shoes and clothes?" The little boy with tears in his eyes, replied, "Jesus did tell them Mister, but they forgot."

**I PETER 3:21 (cont.)**

THEM TO BE LOST JUST BECUASE THEY WERE NOT IN THE ARK! WAS NOAH PREACHING ARK SALVATION? NO, IT WAS NOT ARK SALVATION, BUT THE ARK WAS THE PLACE OF SALVATION AND THE PLACE PROVED AS IMPORTANT AS THE SAVIOUR!

It has PLEASED GOD today to place salvation IN Christ, Eph. 1:3. To ADD the BAPTIZED believers to THE CHURCH, Acts 2:38-47. ONLY THE BAPTIZED WERE ADDED TO THE CHURCH, WHICH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST, Col. 1:18.

We notice that Naaman was healed AFTER he had dipped seven times in the Jordan River, 2 Kings 5, so here too, God HEALED, but the JORDAN was the PLACE and WATER was the element. Naaman could NOT have been healed ANY OTHER place, or by dipping any other liquid! This we know! Then why is it so strange, that today God has chosen the Lord's church as the PLACE of salvation and WATER as the element? YES INDEED, WHY IS THIS SO UNREASONABLE TO SO MANY PEOPLE? THE WORLD DID NOT ACCEPT GOD'S WAY IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, YET GOD DID NOT CHANGE HIS PLAN OF SALVATION! WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL CHANGE IT TODAY BECUASE MANY REJECT HIS PLAN?

We notice that baptism is a spiritual plan for a spiritual healing, and is NOT for putting away "the filth of the flesh", or to CLEAN the body of a person. This baptism is not just a BATH. This baptism is the "answer", or "interrogation" of a good conscience. Paul had a GOOD conscience toward God (Acts 23:1), but he did not KNOW, nor had he OBEYED God's plan, so he was ignorant of God's will. When he was told to arise and be BAPTIZED AND "WASH AWAY HIS SINS" (Acts 22:16), this he had to NOW do to CLEAR an enlightened conscience! You too, when you LEARN that baptism is for the "remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), will have to arise and be baptized and WASH AWAY YOUR SINS (IN THE FIGURE THAT NAAMAN WASHED AWAY HIS LEPROSY) IN ORDER TO HAVE A CLEAR CONSCIENCE BEFORE GOD! WHY DON'T YOU DO THAT?

Glynn V. Purdy

\*\*\*\*

The noblest contribution which any man can make for the benefit of posterity is that of a good character.

**Love of the Brethren**

Love is a command, but in a very real sense this is a contradiction. If the only reason we live is "to obey a command," it cannot be genuine love, but would be artificial to the core! It is the nature of love to be spontaneous, unselfish and outgoing, and to exist for its own sake only.

Love is to heal, not hurt, and genuine "love of the brethren" means that we are deeply distressed and grieved when tensions arise between brethren or with reference to an individual, and it should be our fervent desire to heat tensions and to help individuals who may be in trouble. Never should we get a personal delight out of abetting a brotherhood cleavage or of kicking someone who is down, with a view of keeping him down.

Selfishness and pride are the opposites of love, but they are also enemies of our souls. Somehow it seems when brotherhood tensions arise over problems of interpretation or other matters, selfishness and pride have a way of coming to the forefront. "Brethern, these things ought not so to be!"

Genuine love "from the heart fervently," which is a clear-cut command (if we are going to refuse to love without a command), will cause us to be tolerant of each other and will allow a liberty in opinions, until we have made the teaching of the scripture absolutely clear on the point.

"In essentials unity;  
In opinions liberty;  
In all things charity."

This brotherhood slogan is not bad and we should strive to live up to it. Perhaps too many of us, however, are prone to pronounce with finality before the evidence is really in. When brotherhood issues get hot, not enough of us are willing to do research and obtain the full facts before we go ahead and make open charges against an individual or group. This is not the way of love. If any of us are motivated by jealousy or selfishness or pride, we ought to reread I Corinthians 12 and 13 and be reminded of the fact that we are "many members but one body" and that "we all have not the same office" but that every office serves the good of the whole body. Also, it may be in order to remind ourselves that love is greater than faith and hope (I Cor. 13:13), since it will never cease being a part of the Christian's spiritual make-up. "Let love of the brethren continue."

J. D. THOMAS

Head of Department of Bible,  
Abilene Christian College

# I PETER 3:18-20

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water".

Here it is stated that Jesus "in the spirit", preached to "souls in prison" at the time Peter wrote, and that these souls belonged to those who lived while the "ark was a preparing". SO REGARDLESS OF WHAT THIS DOES, OR DOES NOT MEAN, IT APPLIES ONLY TO THOSE WHO LIVED AT THAT TIME. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY DID, OR DID NOT, HAVE A "SECOND CHANCE", YOU AND I, ARE NOT PROMISED A SECOND CHANCE!

Let us examine this in the light of similar example found else where in the Bible, and understand it in a way that will not conflict with other PLAIN passages of Scripture.

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse", Malachi 4:5-6. Here it is stated that Elijah WOULD COME TO EARTH BEFORE CHRIST CAME IN THE FLESH AND JESUS CONFIRMS THIS MEANING, Matt. 17:11. Therefore the disciples of Jesus KNEW that the Scriptures taught that Elijah must FIRST come, then the Christ would come. So when God acknowledged Jesus as His Son and told the disciples to HEAR HIM, Matt. 17:5; they were CONFUSED, for this could not be the Christ, for Elijah (Elias in the New Testament, Greek) HAD NOT COME, if so they would have KNOWN IT! YET JESUS TOLD THEM THAT ELIJAH HAD COME FIRST! BUT ELIJAH WAS JOHN THE BAPTIZER, Matt. 17:10-13. How can this be? John came in the power, mission and SPIRIT of Elijah! Thus fulfilling the Scripture that said that Elijah must first come.

In Ephesians 2:17, it is stated that Jesus "came and preached peace to you that were afar off (Gentiles) and to them that were nigh" (Jews). Yet Jesus, in person, DID NOT preach to the Gentiles but ONLY through those WHOM HE

SENT! Jesus teaches that whatsoever we do, or do not do, to his followers, we do, or do not do, it TO HIM, Matt. 23:40,47.

Then what does this passage REALLY MEAN? It means simply that Jesus (by the spirit, like John in the spirit of Elijah) preached to those who were lost during the flood THROUGH THE AGENT OF NOAH! Peter said that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness", 2 Peter 2:5. So Noah DID PREACH to these people. These SPIRITS WERE IN PRISON WHEN PETER WROTE, BUT HE DID NOT SAY THAT THEY WERE IN PRISON WHEN THEY WERE PREACHED TO!

If we take another view we CREATE PROBLEMS. We contradict other PLAIN Scriptures. We make God a respecter of persons, which he is NOT, Acts 10:34-35, if we give these a SECOND chance. We know that God gave the ones of Noah's day time to repent while Noah BUILT the ark, which seems to have been 120 years, Gen. 6:3. The "spirits" were in the Bodies the, but at the time Peter wrote, the LOST SOULS (spirits) were in the Devils prison where lost souls CAN NOT LEAVE, Luke 16:26, AND NO ONE CAN GO TO THEM! THIS IS THE ONLY WAY THAT THIS SCRIPTURE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AND NOT CONFLICT WITH THE REST OF THE BIBLE! ANY TIME THAT A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE SEEMS TO CONTRADICT ANOTHER, IT MEANS THAT WE NEED TO STUDY AND UNDERSTAND IT, SO THAT THE WHOLE BIBLE IS IN HARMONY! DO YOU DO THIS?

Glynn Purdy

## The Church of Christ

1. You may read about it in the Bible. Rom. 16:16.
2. It has no creed but Christ, and binds no name on its members except the Divine. Acts 11:26.
3. It speaks where the Bible speaks and is silent where the Bible is silent. I Pet. 4:11.
4. It exalts Christ as the only head of the church. Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22-23.
5. The church of Christ pleads for unity of all believers in Christ. John 17:20-21. I Cor. 1:10.
6. It is not a denomination, nor a group of denominations, but simply the body of Christ. Col. 1:18, Eph. 4:4-5.
7. Its founder is Christ Himself. Matt. 16:18.
8. Its aim—to save souls by preaching the Gospel. Ro n. 1:16, Gal. 1:6-8.

## Are You Willing?

"Are you Willing?", for example, to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you?

To ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world?

To put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground?

To see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are, to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy?

To own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life, but what you are going to give to life?

To close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness?

Are you willing to stoop down and consider the needs and the desires of little children?

To remember the weakness and loneliness of people who are growing old?

To stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough?

To trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you?

Are you willing to do these things even for a day?

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world—stronger than death—and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of eternal love?"

Henry Van Dyke

## What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Hear the Gospel. Jno. 20:30, 31. Rom. 10:17.
2. Believe the Gospel. Heb. 11:16, Rom. 1:16.
3. Repent. Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30-31.
4. Confess Christ, Matt. 10:32, Rom. 10:10.
5. Be baptized. Rom. 6:1-6; Col. 2:12, Acts 2:38.
6. Continue Faithful unto death. 2 Pet. 1:1-11.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PRAYER  
(cont.)

# What Can I Do?

John P. Shero, Jr.

health (Philp. 2:25-27); Paul prayed for the Colossians that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's Will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding (Col. 1:9); Paul challenged the Colossians to continue steadfastly in prayer for him in order that God might open a mission field and enable him to speak the mystery of Christ (Col. 4:2-4); Paul prayed exceedingly, night and day, that he might see the Thessalonians and perfect any shortcoming in their faith (I Thess. 3:10); Paul challenged the Thessalonians to pray for him and those with him that their preaching might be successful and they they might be delivered from unreasonable and evil men (II Thess. 3:1, 2); Paul expected that through Philemon's prayer he would be enabled to come to Philemon's home (Phil. 22); James taught the twelve tribes of the dispersion to pray for wisdom (Jas. 1:1-7); James taught the suffering to pray (Jas. 5:13a); James submitted an example of a man, of like nature with the men of the twelve tribes fo the dispersion, pointing out that his prayer changed things, physical things (Jas. 5:17, 18); and, John taught that Christian's prayers, prayed according to the Will of God, were heard (I Jh. 5:14-15). Does the conclusion follow that these prayers were prayed only to receive a psychological relaxation?

The point in emphasis of these passages has little, if anything, to do with a psychological relaxative benefit. Then, certain conclusions are obvious: (1) The Christian may pray in private or in public; (2) The Christian may pray when distressed or not distressed; (3) The Christian may be comforted in knowing that God hears his prayer; (4) The Christian may know that his prayer will be answered; (5) The Christian may know that God can intervene in physical as well as spiritual matters; and, (6) The Christian may pray knowing that God has changed His mind on certain things in the past when beseeched by prayer (II Kngs. 20:1-6a).

Mike Wilson  
Box 175  
Springlake, Texas 79082

WHEN I USE MY HANDS, I am a laborer.

WHEN I USE MY HANDS AND MY HEAD, I am a craftsman,

WHEN I USE MY HANDS, MY HEAD, AND MY HEART, I am an artist.

WHEN I USE MY HANDS, MY HEAD, MY HEART, AND MY FAITH, I am a CHRISTIAN.

We are witnessing the disintegration of the American Home. Divorce, crime and immorality are skyrocketing. Situation ethics, "free love," "the new morality" and parental delinquency are leaving in their wake an unbelievable number of homeless, dependent and neglected children. The almost immediate response to statements like this is "What Can I Do?" The purpose of this article is to suggest what "John Q. Christian" the average man in the pew can do to relieve this situation.

**I CAN STUDY!** Examine the Scriptures and consider the weight of teaching on benevolence. There can be little doubt that God means for the Christian individually and the congregation collectively to be deeply involved in benevolent activities. We are not advocating a "social gospel" but a compassionate church preaching and teaching as Acts 2-5 teaches. Remembering judgment will require more than baptism (Matt. 25.). We will have little concern for the lost when we show no concern for even our brethern (I John 3:16-18).

**I CAN INVESTIGATE!** The child of God because of his high and noble calling should be aware of what is going on in the world. He must be conscious of the needs of those about him and what the brotherhood is doing to meet those needs. To pass through life unconcerned with the needs about him and what the brotherhood is doing to meet those needs. To pass through life unconcerned with the needs of others will cost a man his soul. If we are to profit personally from Jesus' lesson about Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31) we must wake up and see what is going on in this world.

**I CAN PRAY!** We know that our God is concerned. He is able to provide (2 Cor. 9:10-12). The true child of God will find time in his personal prayer life to remember those less fortunate than himself (I Tim. 2:1). However, I must go beyond prayer if my service is to be accepted, (James 2:14-17).

**I CAN INFORM!** In a positive (not critical or destructive) way I can tell my family, class, preacher, elders and deacons of existing needs and suggest ways they can be met. Isn't this what was done in Acts 6:1-7? Only be sure that there is no murmuring in our case.

**I CAN GIVE!** Paul admonished in Galatians 6:10, "...as we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men. The great work being done by our Childrens' Homes across the brotherhood is made possible because so many continue to "visit the fatherless" with

their financial help. Some have given large sums and we are very grateful. Others out of deep sacrifice send the smaller gifts. Thus by working together the good work continues.

**I CAN GIVE MYSELF!** The most pressing need in the field of child care, is not for money, facilities or a better administration. In our efforts to reproduce the home as God made it, the key is loving Moms and Dads. The real need of these broken lives cannot be met with bricks or meals or clothing as necessary as each of these is. Their real need is to become a part of a family where love, concern, correction and encouragement can be found. Perhaps one of the greatest contributions you could ever make to the Lord's work would be in giving yourself as a houseparent. Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:5—"And this they did, not as we had hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God" gives the key not only to any successful benevolent program but to Christianity itself! Every children's home in our brotherhood suffers because of this need! We must conclude it only is because brethern are not aware. Therefore we encourage you to consider prayerfully the work of the houseparents. Perhaps your situation at this time would not permit such a move because of other commitments. Even if this is true and you are interested in this area of work, begin now to contact various homes. Visit on their campuses. Observe how they work. Let them know of your interest. There may even be some other way for you to help now. Your life will be fuller and your reward eternal (Matt. 10:42).

Taken from Childhaven News.

Mrs. Ralph Cochrane  
Instructor, Mississippi  
1675