

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Publication No. 211780

Second Class Postage Paid At Mammoth Spring, AR

Volume 19

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

June 1985

No. 6

DEFICIENT IN DISCIPLINE

By Bill J. Graddy
North Little Rock, Arkansas

In the educational process, the manner of the individual is paramount. By manner, we mean the nature, behavior, and personality of the student. Let us note some of the characteristics of learners today.

1. Nobody wants to be "preached to."
2. Don't "put anyone down" or "bad mouth" anybody or anything.
3. Not many want to be told anything.
4. Teachers must be so open that learning is strictly voluntary, not even suggestive.
5. The attitude (what the student brings to the subject), the atmosphere (adaptation to the environment), and the association (ability to get along) must be just right before the people are receptive.
6. The positives are in the negatives are out.

If the above is typical of the average learner, why? The breakdown of authority is the culprit. We see this deterioration in the home, school, church, and place of employment. Why has this breakdown permeated our society? Perhaps the number one reason is the failure of parents to teach their children corrective and punitive discipline. Self-discipline is the direct result of parental instruction. "As the twig is bent so grows the tree." The affect of this deficiency in discipline spills over into spoiled brats in divorced homes, rowdy and resentful students in school, irreverent and unbelieving youth in the church, and uncontrollable and rebellious employees. Thus, we are reaping what we have sown - a divorce rate of one out of two marriages, discipline is the number one problem in school, church attendance is low, especially among the young (a congregation is a poor credit risk because financial institutions know they will not assume responsibility), and a dedicated

employee is in the minority. Our prisons are full nationwide.

To correct the situation, we must start at home. Fathers must be the head of the house. Mothers must be willing to do the work of housewives. These two must consistently function together as a team teaching their children respect for themselves, their parents, and others. As a result, this will develop appreciation for authority, learning, and a reverence toward God. Study Deut. 6:4-8; Hosea 4:6; John 12:48; Eph. 6:1-4; Titus 2:1-8.

How To Become A Christian

By Mike Pace

A person "sins" when he disobeys God. There is no man or woman on earth who has lived a totally sinless life. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23).

Sin separates us from God. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1).

Unless the guilt of a man's sins is removed while he is living on earth, his soul will suffer eternal punishment - agony and separation from God forever (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48). The Bible uses the word "death" to describe the severity of this unending punishment. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23).

God wants us to be free from sin so that we can have fellowship with him. No

man can remove his own sins. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us". (Romans 5:8). Jesus Christ lived a totally sinless life. Therefore, he was the acceptable sacrifice for our sins. He was innocent, but he took our place suffering death on the cross for our sins, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just (righteous) for the unjust (unrighteous), that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit," (1 Peter 3:18).

How can a person receive the benefit of the death of Jesus Christ?

HEAR: The sinner must hear the gospel. The word "gospel" means "good news". Jesus has "... brought life and immortality to light through the gospel", (1 Tim. 1:10). The gospel includes the facts about the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

BELIEVE: The sinner must believe in Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The words "believeth in him" do not mean that it is enough if we merely agree in our minds that Jesus is the Son of God. If a person believes in Christ in his own mind, but never obeys Christ, that person will still be lost. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees that did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God," (John 12:42-43). Our belief (faith) in Christ will save us only when it is obedient faith.

REPENT: The sinner must repent of his sins. "Repentance" is a change of mind. It is a decision to turn from sin and turn toward righteousness. The Lord is "long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

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FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
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FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
 P. O. Box 251

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554
EDITOR Mike Pace
 Publication No. 211780

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

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CONFESS: The sinner who has repented should confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. In the very first gospel sermon after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, Peter said, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"*, (Acts 2:36). We should confess our faith in Christ, *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"*, (Romans 10:10). The Ethiopian eunuch confessed, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"*, (Acts 8:37).

BE BAPTIZED: When a sinner has heard the gospel, believed, repented, and confessed, he must then be baptized for the remission (forgiveness) of his sins. *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"*, (Mark 16:16). The word "baptize" means "immerse". Baptism is a "burial" in water. To people who had already obeyed the gospel, 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"*, (Romans 6:3-4). The sinner goes down into the water and permits someone to briefly "bury" him in the water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of his sins, then lift him up out of the water. If he has truly "obeyed from the heart", (Romans 10:17), his sins have been forgiven by God. He is now a Christian, a child of God.

EMPHASIS ON THE COMMUNION

By Dennis R. Smith

The church of Christ believes that **five specific** things make up the worship services of the early church, and these five things must be present in the services of the church today. They are: praying, singing, preaching, giving of our finances and the observance of the Lord's Supper. We now call them the "five acts of worship". At every service three of these must always be present and all five must be observed at the service on the first day of the week (Sunday), in order to meet the examples of the early church. The early church met for the purpose of observing the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), and to give of their means (I Cor. 16:2). During the past years there has been some discussion as to which of these five acts is the most important. To say that anyone of these is more important than the other would be like asking, "who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Each act is equal in importance or otherwise the Lord, through the divine examples of the early church, would not have given them to us. But as important as they all are, it goes without saying, the Lord's Supper (communion) must be the most sacred. It is a time in our worship that all minds **must** be on Jesus Christ. It is also the only part of the worship where any **visible objects** become a part of the worship. All readers should note that worship in the New Testament church never consisted of visible objects other than those we are presently discussing. The apostle Paul stated in the seventeenth chapter of Acts, *"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."* Visible objects such as light fixtures, candles, public address systems, church pews, instruments of music, and even the containers holding the elements for communion, do not have any part of the worship; the elements of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine do. These are the visible elements necessary to scripturally partake of the Lord's Supper. The five acts of worship (on Sunday) reaches its crescendo when the visible elements of unleavened bread, representing the body of Jesus, and the fruit of the vine, rep-

resenting the blood of Jesus, are partaken of by faithful Christians.

The communion, if it is to be the most sacred, must be entered into with great solemnity. It is not a time of joke making nor is it ever to be referred to in that sense. While it is not the most important, much emphasis needs (especially now days) to be placed on the sacredness of this act of worship.

What is the the purpose of the communion; The following scriptures will clearly answer that question:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." I Cor. 11:26

"The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ; the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" I Cor. 10:16

In keeping with the above, everyone who partakes, is not only showing to the world that they really believe that Jesus died for their sins, but they are also reassuring themselves that he did. They also in this love feast, are reassuring themselves that Jesus will help keep them safe within his everlasting arms until he returns again, or until their life has ended. Each partaking individual must reflect back to the cross of Christ and remember, with all their might, the account of his death as recorded by all four gospel writers.

But there are additional purposes in the communion which are often overlooked. Notice the following:

"For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." I Cor. 10:17

The communion, then, is not only a source of communication with Jesus Christ but it also serves as a source of communication (fellowship) with each other. Notice the above passage states, *"we are all partakers of that one bread"* and that we are, in fact, **"one bread, and one body."** A careful study of the above passage would have to leave the reader with a thought something like this: Each Christian, as they observe this memorial, is being fed spiritual food from each other and are being sustained by the strength that they each receive one from the other as they also communicate (commune) with Jesus Christ. But in addition to the aforementioned the communion symbolizes the spiritual unity that Jesus prayed

for in John seventeen. Our "being many, are one bread, and one body" certainly verifies that thought.

As we observe the Lord's Supper, the fellowship of each other could easily be compared to a time when a member of our family has passed away and the presence of every member gives strength to each other. As we surround the Lord's table each member of the family of God is remembering the "death" of another member and is reaching out to support and give strength to fellow members. The Communion is a vital part of the Lord's Day worship and much emphasis needs to be placed upon it, especially when Christians are looking for added strength to assist them in the many trials of this age. If it was important for Jesus to die, it is important for us to remember that death, and if the early Christians observed this memorial each first day of the week, equally so, we today, must be no less tardy in our observance.

Turning The World Upside Down

By J. C. Choate

In apostolic times the Lord's people made such an impression upon mankind that the enemy spoke of them as being those who had turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6).

They used no carnal weapons and neither did they force themselves upon anyone. Although they were not political in nature, they marched as an army. Their leader was Christ and their power was in the gospel they preached.

The world needs another turning. As a matter of fact, it is long overdue. Far too long has man been steeped in his own selfish ways. Far too long have the religions of man had control of all humanity. Far too long has the church been content to remain little and insignificant. How long shall we permit this to continue?

The church needs to awaken from its sleep and stand up on its feet. It needs to open its eyes and ears to what is going on. It needs to clean itself up. Then it needs to look around about itself and observe all that needs to be done. And finally, it needs to go to work, practicing what it has been preaching all along.

The body of Christ may be in the minority with reference to number but that does not mean that it has to stay in the minority. It may be small but that should not keep us from taking the gospel to the world. Look at the early church. Starting with a dozen men, it grew and grew until its influence for good was felt the world over. Now we have almost two million members. Do you mean that we can not take the world for Christ?

Moreover we can fulfill the great com-

mission any time we want to. We belong to the Lord, we have the truth, we have divine assurance that we can do it, we have the promise of Christ Himself that He will be with us. So, why not convert the world? With all of these assets in our favor it seems that we ought to be able to do anything we want to do as long as it is the Lord's will.

Now the question is: What are we going to do about it? God has assured us that He will do His part, but will we do ours; Regardless of the power of the gospel, it first must be preached in order to get results.

If God depends upon the church to take the truth to the world, the next question is, will it ever be taken? It is true that sometimes we are made to wonder, and especially, if we continue at the pace that we are now going, but we will take the gospel to the world or else be condemned for our failure to do so.

When we wake up to the needs of others instead of thinking only of self; when we begin to give even to the point of sacrificing; when we show our love instead of just talking about it; when we come to realize that souls are at stake, including our own; when we begin to practice Christianity instead of just preaching it; when we begin to live for Christ instead of playing at religion; when we begin to pray and study and take our religion into our home life, our business, and every other activity; when we are ready to do God's will instead of man's; when we are

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OUR RELATIONSHIP IN JESUS CHRIST

"These . . . have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." - Revelation 7:14

JESUS CHRIST IS —

HEAD Eph. 1:22-23
SAVIOR I John 4:14
REDEEMER Titus 2:14
WASHER Eph. 5:26
SANCTIFIER Eph. 2:11
HEIR OF GOD Rom. 8:16
KING I Tim. 6:15
SHEPHERD John 10:11

THE CHURCH IS —

THE BODY Col. 1:18
THE SAVED Eph. 5:23
REDEEMED I Peter 1:18
WASHED I Cor. 6:11
SANCTIFIED I Cor. 1:2
JOINT HEIRS Rom. 8:17
KINGDOM Hebrews 12:28
SHEEPFOLD John 10:11

A CHRISTIAN IS —

A MEMBER I Cor. 12:27
SAVED Rom. 8:24
REDEEMED Eph. 1:7
WASHED Rev. 1:5
A SAINT Phil. 1:1
HEIR OF GOD Gal. 3:29
A CITIZEN Eph. 2:19
IN THE FLOCK Acts 20:28

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

II Corinthians 5:17

no longer ashamed of Christ and His church; then we will take the gospel to every creature.

What we need is more people with more faith, more real interest, more willingness to give all, and more determination to do the will of the Father. We need congregations that will set their area on fire with the gospel, preachers who are dedicated to the propagation of the word, members who mean business when it comes to serving God. With this kind of foundation on which to work nothing can hold us back: we will go out and conquer.

Yes, the world needs to be turned upside down. It needs the truth that will change people, destroy man-made religion, revolutionize a nation, and change the thinking, the actions, and the very goals of mankind. It will better conditions both spiritually and physically the world over.

Let us not say that we cannot do this - let us show ourselves that we can. It is not an impossibility because it is part of the work Christ has commanded us to do and we cannot neglect it. Let us not sit idle, but get up and go to work. There is something that everyone of us can do. We can influence those we know, send out tracts by mail, invite people by phone to attend the services of the church, give as we have been prospered, and pray about the work. In these ways, and countless others, all of us can go - all of us can have a part.

God is depending on us. The world is depending on us. It is up to us, therefore, to get this job done. It is something that must be done. Why wait?

May God give us the vision to see the opportunities before us and the energy to take advantage of them. With Him, all things are possible, and this should be true of His people.

CONTRIBUTIONS

INDIVIDUALS

Clyde and Delphia Smith	\$32.00
Fannie Garner	5.00
Thomas and Allie Waldrum	5.00
Marvin Powell	25.00
Geraldine Bollinger	25.00

CONGREGATIONS

Garfield Church of Christ	15.00
Viola Church of Christ	5.00
Gamaliel Church of Christ	10.00
Agnos Church of Christ	5.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	10.00
Big Pond Church of Christ	12.00
Jeff Church of Christ	10.00
Church of Christ, Marionville, Mo.	10.00

How To Become A Christian

The most important question ever asked is: "*What must I do to be saved?*" (Acts 16:30). Then the **HOW** becomes equally as important. Notice the step by step process. First, we must have faith in the Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. (Heb. 12:2). This faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God. (Rom. 10:17). "*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). With the belief and trust that Jesus is the Redeemer, we must repent of sins. "*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.*" (Acts 17:30). In repentance, we turn from sin, **STOP** serving Satan and **START** serving the Lord. (Matthew 3:8;

Luke 13:3). With this new attitude we are ready to confess our faith, "*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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" (Rom. 10:9-10). Read Matthew 10:32-33. Acknowledging our faith, repentance and confession, the last step into Christ is baptism. "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" (Gal. 3:27). Read Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38. Now that our past sins have been forgiven, the Lord has added us to His church and we are Christians. (Acts 2:47; Acts 11:26).

BECOME A CHRISTIAN

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