

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

**August  
30  
2015**

## **ARE YOU LOOKING IN THE RIGHT PLACE?**

Jim Stauffer

A little joke around our house has always been to note when finding something temporarily misplaced, "I found it in the last place I looked." The comeback is, "Why didn't you look there first?" The reason, of course, is we did not know where to look.

Some people seem to have a similar problem with the answer to spiritual questions. There are so many people who claim to believe in God, accept the Bible as the revealed mind of God (**1 Cor. 2:10-13**), and then search elsewhere for answers only He has provided.

One example of such is understanding Jesus, the Son of God. How often do we hear people generalize Jesus as the loving Son of God who could never condemn anyone or anything? The current fad in this regard is justifying homosexuality by the phrase Jesus loves us all and He loves us as we are. That is patently false. **Matthew 23** is a chapter where Jesus strongly condemns the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Why does He say they were hypocrites? Because they professed one thing and did another. They were the religious leaders of their day. They were sticklers for keeping the Law of Moses. Jesus said of them, **Matt. 23:23** *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone.* You see they kept the letter of the law but the spirit of the law such as justice, mercy and faith were not convenient and therefore overlooked. Just the opposite claim is made in the argument in favor of homosexuality. They reason if we are kind and merciful to others we can violate God's laws regarding immoral behavior. But this violates what Jesus said when He stated they should not leave *the other undone*. He was not saying be kind and disregard the commandments of the law. He said obedience to the law involves both the specific commandments and the very spirit of those commandments as well. They need to look to Scripture for their answer or authority and not the approval of men (**Gal. 1:10**). And Scripture has condemned it in every covenant God has made with man (**Lev. 20:10-13; 1 Cor. 6:9-11**). It is interesting that homosexuality is a sin and is condemned along with adultery, incest, thieves, drunkards and extortioners and no one seems to be

trying to justify these sins. I wonder why! If they truly wish to answer the question of how God views homosexuality they need to look in His word, not take the word of friends.

Another example of looking in the wrong place is when people decide to seek the Lord. They will hear many messages from men. Some will tell them to wait for a direct operation of the Holy Spirit to give them faith and then they will be saved, chosen by God before creation. Others will tell them to simply offer the Sinner's Prayer and God will forgive and save. The Bible will tell them, if they look there, salvation is found in the gospel. The gospel that was preached by the Apostles who were commissioned by the Lord (**Mat 28:18-20**), will tell them very specifically what they must do to be saved. They must have faith (**Heb. 11:6**), repent of their sins (**Acts 2:38**), confess Jesus as Lord (**Rom. 10:9,10**), and be baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16**). They do not need to know what Calvin, Luther or even Billy Graham will say. They need to look in the right place, the Bible.

One more example of looking in the wrong place is when people choose a congregation or church to join themselves to for the work and worship of the Lord. Reasons given vary from going where friends go to going to the largest and most popular church in the community. In reality when one has been taught the truth and obeyed it, he is already added to the Lord's church (**Acts 2:47**). It then becomes imperative to choose to work and worship with a congregation of God's people who practice the work and worship God has authorized. Any guesses where we will find that information? Of course, in His word, the Bible. The New Testament church, the one Jesus promised to build (**Mat. 16:18**) and purchased with His own blood (**Acts 20:28**), had a very simple and direct form of worship. God and Christ were the center of their attention and the objects of their affection and praise. They sang hymns of praise and adoration designed to glorify God and edify one another (**Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:15**). They offered prayers of supplication, thanks and praise to God through Christ (**1 Tim. 2:1,2; Phil. 4:6,7**). They kept the memorial feast, the Lord's Supper and gave generously of their prosperity on the first day of every

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week (**Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2**). They taught the word by the use of teachers, pastors and evangelists (**Eph. 4:11,12; Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 2:1,2**). Again, we don't need the word of some televangelist who is making himself wealthy through his preaching and teaching to advise us about the church. We can and should look in the Bible and find God's pattern for the church and identify where and how we should worship.

When we shop for an automobile, appliances or any secular item there are sources with expert advice for what we seek. The expert advice for spiritual answers is the word of God. It was written so each of us could know what God has said without looking through the lens of mankind.

## You Better Watch Out

Have you ever noticed that warnings are often ignored? By law, there are warnings on tobacco products, yet the tobacco companies makes billions each year. There are warnings against drinking and driving, yet there are still about twenty thousand deaths on our nations highways attributed to this. Our government wants states to issue prohibitions about electronic devices being used while driving. But somehow, everyone knows that nothing is going to change. People will die, and the only people who care will be those who lost a loved one. Why are warnings ignored?

The only honest answer is found in one word: selfishness. It can't really be attributed to any other reason.

But let us spend a few moments talking about another kind of warning that we should be aware of, yet we see evidence that very few heed this warning. The warning is that which God has given us, so that we will not suffer eternal damnation. Like the other things mentioned above, this warning also goes unheeded for the most part.

One possible reason is because there are not many people who have the courage to warn others. In **Ezekiel** chapter three and also in Chapter thirty-three, we read about God's watchmen. These are those who are commanded of God to warn people of the danger if they will not turn from their wicked ways. There is a burning hell, and people are going there. Yet if we will warn people, perhaps some can be saved from this terrible fate.

The watchman had one of the most important duties of any community. They were to be on the alert and watchful to sound an alarm, and prepare people for impending danger. The watchman found asleep at his post was severely punished, even up to death, because nothing would be more important than the safety of the citizens.

We as followers of Christ have been given the charge to be a watchman. To fail to warn people we know about their doom is no different than judging them unworthy to hear the gospel.

Who among us would not scream and holler if we

saw a child playing with an electric socket, or running towards the busy street? Yet we idly sit by while souls are heading towards certain destruction.

Try to think about a friend or loved one who is lost and in danger of hell. You would do them a great service to warn them of their destiny, and offer them hope of salvation. In the coming year, let us all determine to be the watchman God wants us to be.

By Carey Scott

## HOW DO CHURCHES GROW?

There is a great need today for Christians to remember what their business is in the world. You would think it impossible for disciples of Jesus Christ to forget that He *"came into the world to save sinners"* (**1 Tim. 1:15**), *"to seek and save that which was lost"* (**Lk. 19:10**) -- but it has been managed. Local churches now, as of old, can fall prey to a sterile orthodoxy that lacks both passion and compassion (**Rev. 2:2-5**). Christians who do not "live for the lost" in both their individual and collective lives have become as useless as road dust and can no longer justify their existence. The Lord has not been unclear about that (**Mt. 5:13**).

It is for this reason that my heart has thrilled at what seems to be a resurgence of evangelistic fervor among the disciples I know. It may indeed be yet no larger than a man's hand, but it is there and it is filled with promise. This is as it should be, for there is a desperate need for us to be about our Father's business both at home and abroad, remembering all the while that this will be accomplished not by some institutional scheme, but by the awakened concern of individual saints who have come to know their Savior better and to love Him more.

Given the fragile infant nature of this new evangelistic stirring among us, it may be premature and even risky to be issuing warnings, but memories of the past serve to edge with concern the joy I feel at this emerging sense of compassion for lost souls. I can still remember the ground swell of missionary zeal that arose in the churches following the upheaval of a world war which scattered Christians from their previously narrow circles to new places in their own country and abroad. A rising post-war prosperity joined with a new awareness of the size of the world produced an explosion of evangelism. The churches grew in numbers and wealth, and a heady spirit of self confidence took hold of many disciples as they moved from their modest meeting houses on "the wrong side of the tracks" into larger and more impressive buildings.

It was an exhilarating time, but it was also a dangerous time. From a people compelled by humble circumstances to trust in the Lord, we were transformed into a proud-spirited institution that gloried in its new-found social status. Even as men were fanning out across the world to tell the story of a simple undenominational discipleship, the gospel was in the process of being lost to presumptuous pride. Human wisdom introduced "better methods" of accomplishing God's purposes, and accommodations were made with



the society to which the churches were more closely linked. It didn't have to happen and it shouldn't have happened, but we do well to note that it did happen.

My present joy at every new manifestation of zeal for perishing sinners is undiluted, but how bitter it would be to see this godly earnestness subverted by a repetition of old folly. So, while we are calling our brethren to the harvest field, let us give equal attention to the soundness of our faith and lives. This will happen as a matter of course if we maintain the humble spirit of our Savior and continue to know that the *"victory is of the Lord"* (Pro. 21:31). As we enlarge the place of our tent and lengthen its cords, we need to remember to strengthen its stakes (Isa. 54:2) by speaking *"the things which befit the sound doctrine"* (Titus 2:1) and holding fast *"the pattern of sound words...in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim. 1:13).

The last thing I intend to suggest by all this is that we become paranoid about numerical growth. Sometimes I think there are as many Christians who take pride in being few as there are that grow puffed up by being many. It is not the NUMBER that is significant but the PEOPLE. People are lost one by one and they will be saved the same way. If we succeed in recovering every lost person we can, our numbers will of necessity increase, but it will still be the individual souls that are important and the glory and power will still be the Lord's.

A friend of mine recently asked me why I was so skeptical of numerical goal-setting in promoting growth in local churches. It was a new question for me, but he had read me accurately. I have an uneasiness about any great emphasis on statistics in measuring the growth of churches. I am skeptical because numbers can so often mask what is happening to people. The ultimate goal of our Father for His children is both spiritual and personal. He wills that we be *"conformed to the image of His Son"* (Rom. 8:29). Success or failure in this enterprise cannot be measured by mere statistics. A far more important question to raise as numbers change is how individual saints are faring in their effort to be more Christ-like. Churches only truly grow as the individual members of those assemblies grow. What is the glory of our numbers if people are not prepared to go to heaven?

There are no ultimate concrete number goals to be set. God is not willing that ANY should perish (2 Pet. 3:9). If our numbers increase, and God grant that they shall, let it be because we have shown compassion to one more lost soul who needs the gospel with its saving and transforming power, and not because we are trying to build "great churches." This whole thing is about people going to heaven. May we never forget that.

**By Paul Earnhart, via, Weekly News Letter of Hanceville church**

## **MUST ONE BE BAPTIZED TO BE SAVED?**

"Must" expresses compulsion, obligation, or certainty. The Bible clearly teaches that one **must** be baptized to be saved.

1. The Jews On Pentecost Were Baptized To Be Saved:

When they asked, *"What shall we do?"* (Acts 2:37), they were told, *"Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ..."* (Acts 2:38). Those who gladly received his word were baptized (Acts 2:41).

2. The People Of Samaria Were Baptized To Be Saved: When Philip went down to Samaria, he preached Christ (Acts 8:5), and *"both men and women were baptized"* (Acts 8:12).

3. The Man Of Ethiopia Was Baptized To Be Saved: Philip preached Jesus to the man of Ethiopia (Ac. 8:35). Upon the man's confession of faith in Christ (Ac. 8:37), *"both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and he baptized him"* (Acts 8:38).

4. Saul of Tarsus Was Baptized To Be Saved: Saul was instructed, by Jesus, to go into Damascus where he would be told what he *"must do"* (Acts 9:6). Ananias told Saul, *"arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (Acts 22:16). Acts 9:18 shows that Saul arose and was baptized.

5. Cornelius And His Household Were Baptized To Be Saved: This devout man, along with his house, upon hearing the Word of God, were commanded *"to be baptized in the name of the Lord"* (Acts 10:48).

6. Lydia And Her Household Were Baptized To Be Saved: Lydia and her household heard the Word of the Lord spoken by Paul and were baptized (Acts 16:14,15).

7. The Philippian Jailer And His Household Were Baptized To Be Saved: He asked Paul and Silas, *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* (Acts 16:30). He believed (Acts 16:31), was penitent (Acts 16:33) and was baptized (Acts 16:33).

8. The Corinthians Were Baptized To Be Saved: Acts 18:8 says, *"many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized."*

9. The Ephesians Were Baptized To Be Saved: When those of Ephesus heard God's Word, *"they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus"* (Acts 19:5).

Have you been baptized to be saved?

**By Johnie Paul Edwards in Back To Basics, Vol. 1, No. 2, Feb. 2003.**

**Mark 16:15** *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.*

**Eph. 2:19** So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

**1Pet. 2:9** But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

**Psa. 1:1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

## **HOURS OF WORSHIP**

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

**Visitors welcome**

**We conduct in home Bible Studies**

**We offer Correspondence Courses**

**Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer**

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### **NEWS AND NOTES:**

J.R. DANIEL, GRANT CLOTHIER,  
AND JAN PATRICK CONTINUE ON  
THE PRAYER LIST. JESSIE  
GIBSON IS IN REHAB AT  
NOTTINGHAM HEALTH AND REHAB

STEVE WIMP IS AT BROOKDALE-  
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GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK

WEDNESDAY: SCHEME OF  
REDEMPTION - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY AM SERMON: THE ONE  
TRUE CHURCH



## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10