

The Gospel Message

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

Roy Loney

Any sensible, intelligent undertaking must have a definite purpose, and in starting the publication of this paper, I will print this statement from Bro. Wm. Hensley, the author of the article on "What Must I Do To Be Saved."

"A religious journal is of little value to the many unless it clearly implies to the reader what one must do to live the Christian life, as well as to what one who is a sinner must do to be saved. To deal with personalities, or to promote ideas when they do not deal with God's plan, is to defeat the purpose of evangelism and the work of leading souls to Christ."

Wm. J. Hensley.

Our aim is to bring Christ and his message of salvation to both saint and sinner, and to make every scriptural effort to make all realize their great need of Christ, and thus be influenced to follow him in sincerity and truth.

A CHRISTIAN'S MESSAGE

In II Corinthians 4:13 Paul said, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." Deep convictions with reference to the welfare of the human race, are not to be kept locked up in our hearts. They should be made known for the blessing of all. Paul had received a message from God, and not every bitter persecution could keep him quiet. In all places he boldly made known the manifold wisdom of God. When he came to Corinth, Christ appeared to him, saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." And so we have the story of a brave soul who proclaimed his message all over the Roman world. His religious convictions were far more precious to him than life itself. Journeying to Jerusalem, he was informed that great persecution, or possible death awaited him there: but he answered, "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only; but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Convictions are the material of which character is made. The spineless, dissolute character is such because of a lack of convictions to rule and regulate his life. The great men of Bible times were great because they had earth-shaking convictions, and boldly made them known. Jonah was given a message to a sinful and doomed city; but he sought to evade an unpleasant duty by trying to escape to another place. The hand of God reached him and brought him back to deliver his trenchant message of doom. When his message was delivered with earnestness and power, the condemned Ninevehites heard the message of God delivered by Jonah, they repented of their sins with the result that God's anger was turned away, and their city

was spared. Only when the prophet's message was delivered did they know of the great danger to which they were exposed, and so the means were provided whereby they were influenced to change their ways and received God's infinite grace.

We too have a message, and this is why this paper is being published. God has not spoken to us personally, but his message contained in the Bible written by men inspired of God to make known his will, is the message a sinful and unhappy world needs today. We feel that God is most gracious in giving to us this golden opportunity to speak the words of truth and soberness. Paul said of his message, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual"—I Corinthians 2:13. The inspired words of Paul have been preserved for our learning and guidance today. God has not seen fit to reveal a new plan of salvation, and this being true that which God has already revealed is of the utmost importance in effecting the salvation of mankind. Only through the scriptures can one be made wise unto salvation (II Timothy 3:15) and only through that word can we know God's will and be able to make our peace with him.

The young evangelist Timothy was given urgent instructions to "preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2), and we know that this refers to the New Testament. Paul said of the scriptures: "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnish unto all good works"—II Timothy 3:16, 17. This testament contains God's last and final revelation to men; and it is imperative that man should accept in faith the testimony revealed, and obey from the heart all the commands recorded therein. This is man's one and only hope of salvation. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day"—John 12:48. How very important then that all people should hear the word that shall be the divine standard of judgment in that day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

Paul affirmed that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"—I Corinthians 1:21; and so we have this inspired message to give to the world, a message of hope and love. Our message reveals a Savior of infinite compassion and love who came to seek and save that which was lost. We teach and preach this message not with the "enticing words of man's wisdom" but in all sincerity of heart imploring all who read to heed these messages for there is much of eternal importance contained in them.

When the apostles, Peter and John, were imprisoned in Jerusalem, the angel of the Lord freed them from their bonds and opened to them the prison gates with this admonition: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." We, too, have the divine obligation to speak the words of life to all who will hear, and our speaking is the outgrowth of two very important facts:

1) Our love for our Lord who would have all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Nothing can be more pleasurable than to reveal to dying men the fact that in the midst of their troubles, sufferings and grief's that there is a Being of infinite compassion and love who cares for them. We are happy to preach Christ unto you as one who can be of inexpressible help to you as you walk the pathway of life.

2) We have love for you, and because of that love we wish to bless you with the knowledge of salvation. Ignorance has led untold thousands into the quicksands of sin and error. God's word is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path—Psalm 119:105, and as such its value is greater than rubies or fine gold. Our conviction's are that you will be eternally blest by

these messages, and we are humbly thankful to our Lord for this opportunity to be of service to you.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Wm. J. Hensley

Here is a question as old as the New Testament itself. However, regardless of age, this question and its answer should not be taken lightly.

What must I do to be saved? The answer is: Obey the gospel of Christ. This answer is general in its character; and to fully understand its meaning it is needful to look at the individual points included in obedience to the gospel of Christ. Let us look at a few examples of obedience in the New Testament.

The Keeper of the Jail:

In Acts chapter 16 when this question was asked, Paul and Silas answered clearly. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Here is a general statement much like "obey the gospel of Christ." By reading the complete account in this chapter, it is plain to see that there **are vital, individual parts** required in the plan of obedience. Verse 32 includes preaching the Word. Verse 33 includes the action of baptism. Both are included in the command to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Ethiopian Eunuch:

Acts chapter 8. Philip preached "Jesus" to the man in the chariot—Verse 35. Again the statement is general in its nature. The essential parts included in the Ethiopian's obedience are mentioned in this record of his conversion. He announced his belief by his confession of faith, and he was baptized. Here is a good example of what is included when one does believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Obeying from the heart a form of doctrine:

Romans chapter 6. Here again is a general statement. By reading the text it is plain, that individual acts of obedience are required in the "form of doctrine." Jesus called for the new birth in his talk with Nicodemus—John 3:5. This general statement included both the "water" and the "Spirit" as parts needed for the new birth. In our present day we are required to obey the gospel of Christ. This is a statement that is general in character. The individual, vital parts of obedience are clearly taught to man today, as in the first century.

Dear Readers, let us not be content with just looking at the general headings, or general terms of the gospel. To obtain salvation all men and women must accept the individual, vital parts of obedience in order to be saved. Hearing, believing, confession of faith, and being baptized are vital parts of obedience. When the sinner meets these requirements the gospel is obeyed, a form of doctrine is realized, and the answer to the title of this article is given.

"IT IS WRITTEN"

F. Wilford Landes

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." With this statement Jesus began his defense against Satan. Jesus accepted the authority of God's word. This should also be the foundation of our defense. Satan cannot destroy the word of the Lord: if he could he would have done so many years ago.

The modernists has endeavored to explain or by ridicule destroy our faith that the Old Testament scriptures as being completely true. Jesus respected the Old Testament as being of God, and concluded them to be true. The use of the New Testament includes the acceptance of the authenticity of the Old Testament.

Many doubt the creation story, the events of Noah and Jonah, just to mention a part of their skepticism. But Jesus accepted God as the creator of all things. Mark records his acceptance in these words, "such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created"—Mark 13:19. Again, speaking of the relationship between man and woman—"from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female"—Mark 10:6. If we accept the Sonship of Jesus, can we deny that which he accepted as true?

Jesus accepted the story of Noah as true, and compared it to the uncertainty of the time of his second coming, and the destruction of the unfaithful and unbelieving. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all"—Luke 17:26, 27. Jesus also accepted the Genesis account of the destruction of Sodom, and the death of Lot's wife—Luke 17:28-32.

The modernist and the skeptic have long scoffed at the story of Jonah and the whale, yet Jesus used this very event to foretell his burial of three days. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"—Matthew 12:40. If we accept Jesus as an authority of God, we must in turn accept that to which he referred and quoted.

Jesus accepted God's word as authority. We must do the same thing. Unless we have that which is common authority to all, we have nothing in which to trust or defend. Without finding authority in the word of God for our religious belief we have no foundation for service unto him. Jesus truly gave us an example when he said, "It is written."

Let Us Accept the Old Testament For What It Is.

1. An aid or guide to bring the Jew to Christ, and to establish the deity of Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ"—Galatians 3:24. "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Psalms concerning me"—Luke 24:44.
2. An example of God's dealings with the faithful and the unfaithful of previous eras "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope"—Romans 15:4. Read also I Corinthians 10:11.

Let Us Accept the New Testament for What It Is.

1. The foundation of faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Messiah promised to Israel and the world—"but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name"—John 20:31. Read also Luke 24:44.
2. A revelation to set forth God's terms of acceptance of this Messiah, his Son. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38.
3. A series of letters, inspired of God, to give us guidance in our service and worship of God, through his Son, Jesus Christ. Read II Timothy 3:16, 17; Colossians 3:1-17; I Timothy 3:15; II Timothy 2:2.
4. A picture to invoke in us a desire for that heavenly city, an eternal reward—Revelation 22:1-14.

As Jesus accepted the authority of God's word, and lived according to the law of his day, we in turn must as simply and wholeheartedly accept the word of God, the Bible. We must be able to say, "It is written."

ALL THINGS NEW

Winford Lee

The word new is a vibrant word, and has attractions in many ways. People desire a new car, a new house, or a new wardrobe. Some of the underlying reasons are that "new" represents trouble-free motoring, clean substantial housing, and moth-free durable clothing. In comparison the "new life" is trouble free, clean and substantial living is its strong trait, and the garment of righteousness is durable and mothproof. One definition Webster has for "free" is "renovated or recreated." Let us press this thought further and see the value and responsibility of the new.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; and behold all things are become new"—II Corinthians 5:17. This is but one of the many statements found in the writings of the apostles and in the teaching of Christ, indicating that becoming a Christian and following Christ is much more than a matter of "joining a church," subscribing to its doctrines, and supporting its activities. Elsewhere Paul expresses it thus: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds"—Romans 12:2. "Lie not one to another seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man" . . .—Colossians 3:9, 10. And again; "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Jesus perhaps put the thought in the strongest words when he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"—John 3:3. The terms "crucified" "put off the old" "born again," "transformed," "a new creature," all suggest that a complete transformation must occur in the heart, life, and status of one who truly becomes a follower of Christ.

In the first place, in becoming a Christian, one has attained an entirely new status. Before, he was "without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Ephesians 2:12, 13.

Before that, he, like all the rest of the world, was guilty before God. Now he is in Christ. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"—Ephesians 1:7. He had been the servant of sin, but "ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness"—Romans 6:16, 17. Having now died "to sin," and been "buried with him in baptism into his death" he has been raised with Christ "to walk in newness of life"—Romans 6:2-4. Having washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb he is now clothed with "the righteousness which is of God by faith."

In Christ one has achieved a new relationship to God and to his Son. Having been born again he has become a child of God. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, who were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"—John 1:12, 13. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ"—Galatians 3:26, 27. "And if children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ"—Romans 8:17. Heirs of what? Of "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you"—I Peter 1:4. "In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you" said Jesus. Belief in this promise, confirmed by his resurrection and ascension, gave the disciples new hope in life, and sustained them in all their later trials. Life was no longer circumscribed by the limitations of time and the flesh. Life is eternal! With this thought in mind the child of God will "set his mind on things above, not on things on the earth." He will seek first "the kingdom of God and His righteousness" rather than giving first place to the pursuit of material things.

In every human being there are two conflicting forces, each seeking to control our activities, and to determine our attitude toward life. One is called the flesh the carnal man: the other the spirit, or inner man. The flesh is essentially selfish, seeking satisfaction by gratifying carnal desires, appetites and lusts. Unrestrained, it leads to all manner of excess, greed, malice, hatred, all characteristic of the flesh. Frustration of fleshly desires often leads to acts of violence, sometimes to self-destruction. Paul teaches us that "they that are in the flesh (under the control of the flesh) cannot please God"—Romans 8:8. The inner man aspires to higher things. Its satisfaction is found in acts of kindness and love, in unselfish service to humanity, in bringing comfort and cheer to human hearts, in promoting peace and good will among men; in bringing under control the fleshly nature so it will serve the ends for which it was created. But the conflict between these forces never ceases. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would"—Galatians 5:17. Depressed by this incessant struggle, Paul once asked, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Later he gives a forceful answer to his own question: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (control) the deeds of the body ye shall live"—Romans 8:13. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you...and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—Romans 8:9,10. Here we have three expressions all having the same application. "The Spirit of God dwells in you, have the Spirit of Christ, Christ be in you." We may ask, how does Christ, his Spirit, and God's Spirit dwell in us? Hear the inspired answer: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant unto you, according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his

Spirit in the inner man"—Ephesians 3:14-16. How will his Spirit dwell in our hearts by faith? We answer, through his word, for "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."—Romans 10:17.

Jesus said, "If any man love me, he will keep my commandments; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"—John 14:23. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life"—John 6:63.

God through Jeremiah foretold the giving of the New Covenant of Christ: "I will put my law in their minds, and write them in their hearts"—Jeremiah 31:33. This was not true of the old covenant, which they came under by fleshly birth. The laws were written on stones, not on the hearts. Men come under the New Covenant by being "born again", hearing the word, believing in Christ, and receiving him into our hearts. They were "born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever"—I Peter 1:23. Thus Christ dwells in the heart by faith, and enables one to overcome life's manifold temptations. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"—I John 5:4.

When a person becomes a new creature by believing the testimony regarding Christ repents of his sins, confesses Christ before men, and is then baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38) he definitely has new responsibilities, and a new relationship. He has a new Father-God instead of Satan, he has a new day, the Lord's day. Mans' spiritual condition can generally be determined by what he does on the Lord's day. The early disciples assembled on that day for worship—Acts 20:7. Let us imitate the apostolic pattern! If you are a new creature, you will give that day to God. It is time to awaken to spiritual realities lest we live as animals, not knowing one day from another.

IS GOD A MYTH?

Roy Loney

In the city where I live there are many churches, a conglomeration of many faiths or beliefs. From the standpoint of soul saving, there is little excuse for some of them to exist, for they make no effort to bring people into a closer walk with God. In a recent edition of a weekly paper published here, the editor tells of a teen-age class at one of the largest and most popular congregations. In this class the question was raised as to whether there really was a God, and after considerable discussion, most of the class, and presumably the teacher, came to the conclusion that God was only a myth: and yet that church asks financial support of the community on the basis that it is a religious institution!

This reminds me of the statement of Paul, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools"—Romans 1:22. Did not David declare "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God?"—Psalm 14:1. If I were to stand before that same class, and hold up an expensive watch and affirm that the watch came into existence by blind chance I would be laughed to scorn. Suppose I would tell a story as to the origin of that watch somewhat like this: "I am a watch-maker, and sometime ago I lost my lease on the building where my business was located; but I was soon able to rent another building; and so prepared to move. On moving day I collected all my possessions, putting them in boxes and baskets. One basket I filled with odds and ends

consisting of many, various pieces of watches, such as springs, wheels and such like. In the process of moving, that basket got badly jarred, and when the basket was opened, there lay this watch, perfect and complete in every detail. I knew I did not place a watch in there, but I accounted for the existence of the watch by theorizing that the heavy jar inflicted on the basket, just by chance knocked all those pieces together to form this perfect watch! It was sheer chance that produced this remarkable watch! Furthermore, this watch was wound up and was running with the hands set at the exact time as the government standard time; and never since has that watch varied one single second in time, and it has never needed winding."

Such a story would not only be improbable, but would be regarded as the fabrication of a disordered mind. Yet the vast universe about us is far more complicated than the best watch or clock ever made. Our sun, the center of our solar system, is surrounded by nine planets that revolve with mechanical regularity around the sun unceasingly. From the remotest recorded time no variation of their speed nor the extent of their orbits has been perceptible to man. If there is no God, what incomprehensible power placed these planets in their orbits where they revolve in their calm mysterious constancy through the ages? We know there can be no movement without a mover, no plan without a planner, no design without a designer. From whence then came all the great demonstrations of nature? David affirmed "the heavens declare of the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge"—Psalm 19: 1, 2. Paul stated that "The invisible things of him (God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, so that they are without excuse"—Romans 1:20.

David once said, "Behold I am fearfully and wonderfully made"—Psalm 139:14. All who have studied the composition or operation of the human body must agree with that statement. The complexity of the chemistry of any living thing will ever remain a source of wonder and astonishment. Sir, George Darwin, the son of the famed Charles Darwin declared in 1905, "the problem of physical life is as inscrutable now as ever." In organic chemistry, or that which deals with non-living substances, is simplicity itself by the side of the organic, or life-originated chemistry. Thus, one atom of hydrogen, one atom of chlorine, and one atom of sodium will make one molecule of sodium chloride, or common salt. These three separate atoms might come together by chance, anywhere these atoms exist, but for any animal on earth, with red blood, it must in order to live, have in its blood cells that definite substance called hemoglobin. Now, a molecule of hemoglobin must contain the following number of atoms in their proportions, namely, of hydrogen atoms, 1, 1304, of carbon atoms, 712, of nitrogen 214; and of iron, 1, or 2,304 atoms in all. Moreover, if that one atom of iron, in its peculiar relation to the rest, were left out, the animal could neither absorb oxygen nor give off carbonic acid, in other words, it could not breathe. In view of the above, who can believe that blind, unintelligent, unreasoning chance could arrange such chemical exactitude? Verily, the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. Once my father, who was an evangelist, was on a train, and he got into conversation with a gentleman who affirmed that he was a skeptic. In the course of their conversation, the skeptic said, "If you have a god, trot him out and let me have a look at him." Father asked, "Do you mean to say that you can't believe in anything unless you see it?" After a little hesitation, the man said, "I guess that is my belief." Very quietly Father asked, "Do you believe you have any brains?" The man was offended, and said, "Of course I believe I have brains." Father then asked, "Have you ever seen your brains?" and the man was silenced.

One can well ask, "How can intelligence come from non-intelligence?" What

has produced the intelligence in man that has enabled him to build the greatest steamships, the Jet-propulsion planes, compose the worlds classics, and invent all the many things that are revealed at the Washington patent office? To boldly affirm there is no God, it must be proven that chance made this great orderly universe and all life upon this one planet. The very fact that man has a mind is proof that he came from an intelligent mind, for it is a universal law of nature, that "like begets like." All living organisms "bring forth after their kind"—Genesis 1:21.

In conclusion let me state this: If the modern churches are going to teach that God is a myth then I know of no excuse for such churches to exist. If they are but Temples of Infidelity, then let them change their name to harmonize with their teaching. And furthermore, if our young people are to be weaned away from faith in God, then what shall be the foundation of moral character? If there is no God, there can be no such thing a morality, and this will explain the great increase in juvenile delinquency. If man is only an animal, then he is without restraint except the bloody law of jungle.

Some Church News

C. R. Turner spent several weeks with the Wood River, Illinois congregation. He is now at home at Colorado Springs, Colorado, but will go to California in the early spring for extensive work in that state. ● Wm. Hensley recently closed a meeting at Mr. Ayr, Iowa, and has been laboring in Nixa, Mo. ● The publisher returned December 13th from the far west. His last work was at Albuquerque, N. M. The weather was unfavorable most the time while there, yet we had very good attendance. December 4th was spent at Norwalk, Calif., and that was their anniversary meeting. Many were there from other congregations, and several brethren presented good lessons to the assembled saints. The work in California shows much promise in most places. November 27th was spent at San Jose, Calif., but we drove to Stockton in the afternoon where they were having a basket dinner and a singing afterwards. ● Lee Munger and Russell Hammar were recently appointed elders at San Jose and Kenneth Grantham, Delbert Deister, and Walter Albretch were appointed deacons. ● Rose Elma Seaman and Andy Brady were married at San Jose November 25th. ● Here at home, Lawrence, Kas. we had two good services December 18th with good attendance. Wilford Landes has the oversight of the work here. ● The publisher expects to spend a few weeks in Indiana starting the middle of January. ● Best wishes for the New Year!!