

HOW TO REMAIN SAVED

The Old Testament is a wonderful book and God has preserved it so man can study it. It is true that all living today are subject to the teaching of the New Testament, but the apostle Paul admonishes all in saying, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope"* (Rom. 15:4). We can learn and benefit from the eternal principles contained in the Old Testament.

Joshua was a great and faithful servant of God. His last message to Israel contains principles that will help us in our journey through this life. Joshua reminded the people, *"Ye have seen all that Jehovah your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for Jehovah your God, he it is that hath fought for you"* (Josh. 23:3).

The Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage by God. The power that held them captive had to be broken before they could claim the land flowing with milk and honey in Canaan.

So it is with folks today. Those old enough to be accountable for their sins must be delivered from the shackles of sin before they can have their hearts set on things above. The Gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 6:23), but Christ's shed blood makes it possible for redemption to be a reality for all who are willing to **believe** and **obey**.

As a new creature in Christ (2 Cor 5:17), one can set his sights on the Heavenly Canaan. As the apostle Paulo enjoins, *"If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on things that are upon the earth"* (Col. 3:1-2).

Satan used the world and the lust of the flesh in an attempt to hinder our inheritance in Christ just as the Canaanites were used to hinder the Israelites. We must place our confidence and trust in God today as did Joshua who said, *"And Jehovah your God, he will thrust them out from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as Jehovah your God spake unto you"* (Josh. 23:5).

How were the Israelites to keep the possession God gave them? After obeying the Gospel, how are we today to remain in a saved state? This is the heart and core of the study before us. Let us observe three major principles that will help us keep saved.

There must be NO going back! Joshua told his people, *"Else if ye do at all go back...know for a certainty that Jehovah your God will no more drive these nations out of your sight..."* (Josh 23:12-13). Israel could not return to Egypt and those today who become Christians must not return to a life of sin. The old man must be crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20) and never again resurrected.

There must be no fellowship with the enemy! Joshua warned his people to *"come not among these nations"* (23:7) and make no *"marriages with them"* (23:12). Fellowship with the Canaanites only caused misery and **never** benefited God's people. When Christians join in worldly fellowship with folks today it will always lead to their ruin! *"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion hath light and darkness...Wherefore Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord"* (II Cor. 6:14,17).

There must be NO division of heart! A divided heart will never be victorious. The principle of putting God first in one's life has always been true. *"Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might"* (Deut. 6:5). Jesus said, *"He that is not with me is against me..."* (Matt. 12:30).

Lot's wife continues to be a great teacher. She was unable to purge Sodom from her mind. The result was a divided heart that led her to look back and become a *"pillar of salt"* (Gen. 19:36). In seeking to remain saved, may we *"remember Lot's wife"* (Lk. 17:32).

Marvin Weir,
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BELVEDERE BEACON

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)

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KEEP YOUR MOUTH CLOSED

There once was a frog who talked two friendly geese into flying him down to Florida for the winter. The frog prepared for the trip by tying the ends of a long stout cord to each of the geese. With his strong jaws, he grabbed the cord at its middle and the trio took off. The journey was going well until someone on the ground looked up and observed the unusual flight formation. "Hey, this is terrific!" the astonished spectator shouted. "Whose idea was that?" In his anxiety to take full credit for the performance, the proud frog opened his mouth to say, "Mine!" And then the man on the ground had frogs legs for breakfast.

From the very beginning, disastrous events have occurred because human beings, opened their mouths to feed their own egos. In fact, this particular human folly was man's first and foremost, as we know from the story of Adam and Eve. In the Garden of Eden the snake called up to them, "The moment you eat of the forbidden fruit, you will become like God." And they both opened their mouths to take a bite.

Holy Scripture condemns pride because it stems from lies and self-deceit through which a person credits himself with something he either does not possess or cannot possess of his own power. In the words of the apostle Paul, *"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself"* (Gal. 6:3). *"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth"* (II Cor. 10:17-18). Jesus said, *"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted"* (Lk.14:17).

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:		WEDNESDAY:	
Bible Classes for all ages	10.00 am.	Bible Classes for all ages	7.00 p.m.
Morning Worship	11.00 am.		
Evening Worship	6.00 p.m.		

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NEGATIVES IN CHRISTIAN LIVING

We hear a great deal about the power of positive thinking. There is an old song that tells us to “*Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative.*” Certainly, no one who thinks clearly would want to take issue with the concept of one thinking and acting in a positive manner. Indeed, it is essential for Christian living that one think positively. No amount of negatives will make one a Christian.

However, it is impossible for us to “*eliminate the negative*” from our lives because there is a negative aspect to Christianity. Those who think that the negative has no place in the Bible needs to read the Bible again. The Ten Commandments of the Old Covenant and the Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament are two of many places where a negative aspect can be found in the Bible’s teaching.

Christians must realize that there are some things that they cannot do and still live lives that are pleasing to Almighty God. As we study the Scriptures, we find that there are long lists of sins which are set forth and we are plainly taught that “*they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*” (Galatians 5:19-21). Someone one time made the statement that it takes “horse sense” to say “nay” to certain things. In order for one to be a faithful Christian, it is necessary to say “no” to some things.

Let us look, for a moment, at that list in Galatians chapter 5. Some of the things that we find mentioned in that list are envy, fornication, strife, hatred, drunkenness and revellings. In the age and time in which we live there is a tendency to look upon these things without thinking about them too seriously, yet God’s word plainly states that those who practice these and other like things will not enter into the kingdom of God.

Men have changed, but God does not change. Wrong practices can become so commonplace that we grow accustomed to them, we have become hardened. Our God is a holy God and thus is so opposed to the unholy that immorality is always an offense to Him. His thoughts are not our thoughts and neither are His ways our ways.

Yes, let us be positive in areas where we can be positive, but let us never forget the negative aspect of the Christian faith and, by so doing, steer clear of those things which God has forbidden us to engage in.

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

This bulletin was being prepared early before the editor left for England. Ken Chumbley should be back today.

THE CHRISTIAN OF MANY YEARS CAN SIN

The Christian who has been in Christ many years is able to sin, just as others are. Oh, yes; this Christian has conquered the sins of youth; but that does not alleviate them from the possibility of future sin. It has been well put that there is within every congregation of the Lord’s church those who have been forgiven of sin, those who are currently in sin, and those who will sin in the future. The congregation also includes those who will be forgiven today, and those who will be forgiven in the future.

The Christian who has been a member of the Lord’s church has heard thousands of sermons, classes and been involved in numerous hours of private study of God’s word, YET, they can fall prey to sin. They are not living for the purpose of sin; but they are trying with all their might to not sin, YET, they still can sin. They are trying to continually examine their life and do better each day; YET, they still can sin. But, “they” should change to “we”. Yes, we can sin; even when we are mature Christians. Some of the ways mature Christians can sin are as follows:

- ** WE CAN BECOME OVERCONFIDENT (I Corinthians 10:12) “*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*”
- ** WE CAN BECOME WEARY IN WELL DOING (Galatians 6:9) “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*”
- ** WE CAN HAVE MISDIRECTED ZEAL (Romans 10:2) “*For I bear record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*”
- ** WE CAN BECOME ARROGANT BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN CHRISTIANS SO LONG THAT WE THINK THAT SIN DOES NOT ENTER OUR LIFE (Whoops! back to I Corinthians 10:12. See the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican as they pray in the temple (Luke 18:9-14).)
- ** WE CAN AS ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, MEMBERS SIN WHEN WE DO NOT CARRY OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16; etc.)
- ** WE CAN BECOME LOVERS OF THE WORLD SO MUCH WE DO NOT CARRY OUT SOME OF THE HARDER CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES (I John 2:15) “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*”
- ** WE CAN ALLOW OUR PERSONALITY/DISPOSITION TO SLIP INTO DEPRESSION, LUKEWARMNESS, NEGATIVISM, HOSTILITY TOWARDS FELLOW CHRISTIANS. See the account of Diotrefes in III John 9.

The inspired apostle Paul taught that he had to keep his body under “*subjection*” (I Corinthians 9:27) continually and would “*examine himself*” (I Corinthians 11:28) on a weekly basis as he was partaking of the Lord’s Supper. Peter gave “*all diligence*” to put on the Christian graces in his life (II Peter 1:5ff); plus he cautioned those who had “*... escaped the pollution’s of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning*” (II Peter 2:20). We that are Christians for many years ought to take heed. As we mature in Christ and conquer some sins, others will come. Christian ... please take the way out of sin (I John 1:7-10) ... NOW!

*Dave Dugan,
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