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(Only churches and individuals receiving bundles are listed)

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ROBERTSDALE — Church of Christ; Brodie Plyler, Evangelist; General Delivery.
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Brownsville Church of Christ
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Clovis Caudle, Evangelist

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

Oakland Church of Christ
Ninth Ave. and Creighton Road

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10:00 - 11:00 A.M. — 7:00 P.M.

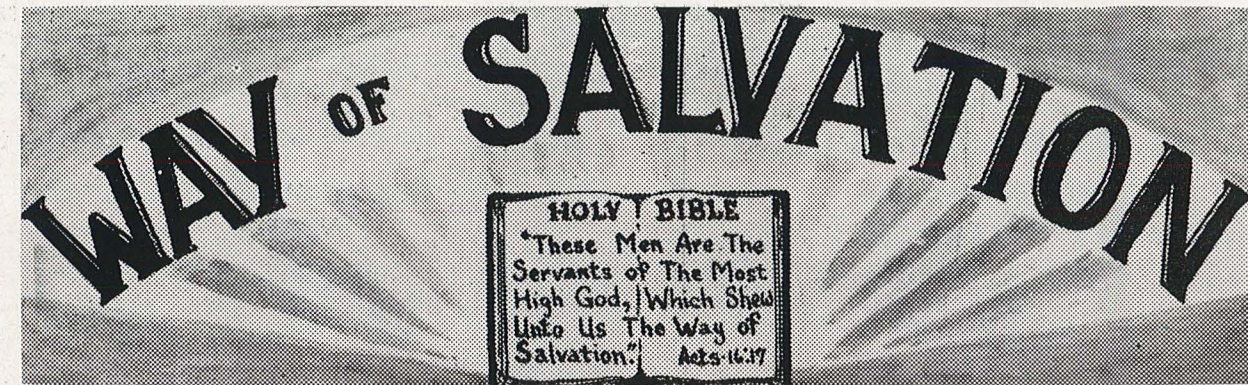
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Radio Program — WMGY

Monday thru Saturday

7:00 A.M.

Rex A. Turner, Evangelist



Volume 3

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA — SEPTEMBER 1955

No. 3

This Man Receiveth Sinners

By TOLBERT F. VAUGHAN

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." These first two verses of the fifteenth chapter of Luke seem to form an introduction of that chapter. In the audience on this occasion were the publicans and sinners, on the one hand, who drew near unto him to hear him, and the scribes and Pharisees on the other hand who murmured against him. The criticism they offered was in reality not a criticism but a statement of the mission of Christ to this earth. They said: "This man receiveth sinners." Jesus used the remainder of the chapter to explain his attitude toward sinners. In each of the parables he relates there is something that is lost.



First, there was the lost sheep. It was not lost in that it was dead, but it was lost in that it was away from the fold and had no shepherd. It is possible that it did not intentionally drift away from the fold, but, nevertheless, it was lost.

The shepherd left those sheep that were safe and went to find the one that was lost.

Then there was the woman who had lost a coin. The coin was not lost because of anything it had done itself but was lost solely because of someone else. It was not lost in that it had ceased to exist or in that it no longer represented value but it was lost because it was out of circulation. The woman began to seek diligently by lighting the candle and sweeping the house, and, when she had found the coin, called her neighbors in to rejoice with her.

The story of the prodigal son tells of two sons, both of whom were lost. The younger went into a distant country and squandered his wealth while the older son remained home and continued to work with his father. The younger son was lost in that

he was away from home and was a waster rather than a worker. But, he came to himself and returned home asking only that he be put to work as a hired servant. At this point we realize that the older brother is also lost. He refused to welcome his brother home and would not forgive him. He had no sympathy for either his father or his brother.

In each of these stories something is lost that must be found. Sinners are lost but can rejoice with the knowledge that Jesus came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). It may be that, as the sheep, we have just wandered away from the fold and have lost contact with the shepherd. It may be that, as the coin, we have fallen under the influence of others who have caused us to forget God. It may be that, as the younger son, we have rebelled against authority and have left our Father. Or, it may be that we are as the older brother who was hard-hearted and cruel and had no love or concern for his brethren. In any case, where there are those who are lost, there are those who need to be found. We should rejoice that "this man receiveth sinners."

News Bits

By CLOVIS CAUDLE

MEETINGS — Sam Binkley of the East Hill Church of Christ, Pensacola, closed a meeting at Crestview, Fla., August 24 with two obeying the gospel. — Pervie Nichols closed a successful meeting at the Crichton Church of Christ in Mobile, Ala., with five being baptized and six restored. — The West Hill Church of Christ is to have a meeting beginning Oct. 2, 1955, with C. W. Bradley of Statesville, N. C., doing the preaching. — Tolbert F. Vaughan, Jr., of Christ is to have a meeting beginning September 19, 1955, with Farris Smith of Birmingham, Ala., doing the preaching. — Tolbert S. Vaughan, Jr. of the West Hill congregation is to conduct a meeting in Statesville, N. C., beginning Oct. 30, 1955.

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Conflicting Voices

After the children of Israel were delivered from Egyptian bondage God ruled over them by judges. They finally demanded a king to be like the nations around them. (1 Sam. 8:19-20). God then gave them Saul, who reigned forty years. Then



David reigned also forty years. The great reign of Solomon, David's son, also lasted forty years. Then Rehoboam became king, and the united kingdom became divided, ten tribes going off with Jereboam. (1 Kings 12:1-20).

To hold his subjects Jereboam instituted an easier religion. He made idols and kept the people from going to Jerusalem, the place where God had said for them to worship. (1 Kings 12:26-33). He told the people that "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" (1 Kings 12:28), thus leading them to believe that they did not have to do what God said.

God broke up Israel's sinful worship by sending a prophet from Jerusalem to cry against the altar of Jereboam. (1 Kings 13:1-4). The prophet refused to dine with sinful King Jereboam because God had instructed him to neither eat nor drink in that place. (1 Kings 13:7-10). An old prophet lived there, but had not lifted his voice against the king's new religious system. When he learned what happened at the altar he went out and overtook the young prophet and told him that God had instructed him to bring him back to his house. But he lied to him. In going back the young prophet gave up what God had confirmed by three miracles for the unconfirmed word of a liar and reprobate. Listening to the conflicting voice of this old prophet caused him to disobey God, and also lose his life.

Conflicting Voices Now

God speaks to us through His Son Jesus Christ (Matt. 17:1-5; Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 1:1-4). Christ appointed apostles and gave them the Holy Spirit to enable them to reveal and confirm His will.

(Jn. 14:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4). To hear the voice of God and Christ is to hear what those inspired men wrote.

There are those now who contradict and try to set aside God's word as did the old prophet of 1 Kings 13. (1 Jno. 4:1-6).

Examples

God says that Christ died for all men (1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:9; 1 Jno. 2:2). But man says no, He died for only a selected few. This Calvinistic doctrine of a limited atonement conflicts with the word of God.

The voice of God informs us that the kingdom or church was established by Christ on Pentecost day following His ascension in A.D. 33. (Matt. 16:18; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 24:46-49; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-47). Man says it was built by John the Baptist, or during the personal ministry of Christ. Man also says it is still in the future.

God's word says that there is but one body, one church, one kingdom of Christ. (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 1:22; 4:4; Col. 1:18). Man contradicts this truth by saying that all religious bodies belong to Christ; He has many churches.

Jehovah says that the gospel is His power to save the lost. (Rom. 1:16; 1 Pet. 1:22, 23; Jas. 1:18, 21; 1 Cor. 1:21). But the voice of man declares that the gospel is insufficient; it takes something else; the Holy Spirit must operate directly upon the sinner, apart from the gospel, to convict him of sin.

The word of God declares that man must do something to be saved. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 9:1-6; 16:30-33; 22:16; Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8-9). Man denies this and says that man is completely passive in his salvation; there is nothing he can do to be saved; God does it all.

God says that salvation or justification is by an obedient faith. (Rom. 16:26; Gal. 5:6; Jas. 14:26). But man says that salvation is by faith alone, "faith, plus nothing, minus nothing."

God tells us that the believer must be baptized in water to be saved. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet 3:21; Acts 8:12; 18:8). The voice of man is heard to declare that baptism is not necessary to salvation, that a sinner can be saved and go to heaven without ever being baptized.

There is a conflict of voices on the action of baptism. God says baptism is a burial, a planting (Rom. 6:3-5). (See Matt. 3 Acts 8:36-39). Man says it is sprinkling and pouring as well as immersion.

Conclusion

In our religious activities we either follow the voice of God or the conflicting voices of man.

Since God's word furnishes us completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17), and we are to be judged by IT, and not man's word (Jno. 12:48), it is useless and folly to accept the uninspired word of man in preference to the word of God. The tragic end of the young prophet was the result of such a choice. (1 Kings 13). To make such a choice today is to be lost in hell, a tragedy far greater than the physical death of that prophet.

MORE — NATURE OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Continued from Page Six)

hither and yon. The Jewish leaders, still uneasy in spite of their seeming victory, demanded that Pilate set a guard. The women wept and made plans to visit the tomb.

Three days of silence ended with an empty tomb to the embarrassment of the guards and their masters. For forty days Jesus was reported to be here or there. Then silence for a week. His disciples said He had ascended to heaven. They waited in Jerusalem. Then about nine o'clock on a Sunday morning multitudes of people were brought together to hear the disciples speak in languages which they had never learned, and to hear Peter declare that this was the fulfillment of David's prophecy, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool" (Acts 2:34, 35.) Never before had a king been enthroned with only a promise to defeat His enemies!

In his kingdom every citizen is a soldier (2 Tim. 2:4) and a priest (1 Pet. 2:9), who serves because he wants to (Rev. 22:17) and fights a spiritual warfare (2 Cor. 10:4,) looking forward to the destruction of death as the last enemy of the kingdom (1 Cor. 15:16.)

CHURCH OF CHRIST WINS BATTLE WITH ITALIAN POLICE

The Church of Christ for a long time in the news, won a decisive victory over the police in Rome, Italy, achieving its right to operate and to place signs on its places of worship.

A decision by Rome's tribunal sharply criticized the police for tearing down signs from the church's place of worship. According to the same decision the church of Christ, headed by Cline R. Paden, is protected by the provisions of the Italian Constitution guaranteeing religious liberty to all sects.

The church has endeavored vainly since World War II to secure recognition from the Ministry of Interior, which supervises non-Catholic sects.

The court emphasized the fact that the Italian Constitution, though challenged by Roman police, "has established the principle that all religious confessions are equally free before the law and that non-Catholic confessions have the right to organize according to their statutes."

Commented Paden: "It seems as if we have won. We hope so."

(The above article is from the Converted Catholic magazine of May, 1955. Of course, Bro. Paden is NOT the "head" of the church of Christ, in Rome or anywhere else. He is one preacher in the church there, and has had continuous trouble with the Catholic dominated police force. He was tried before Judge Bruno Bruno of the Tribunal in the Palace of Justice and according to this article in the Converted Catholic magazine, he was finally able to get the courts of Italy to rule on his case. We are all indeed thankful.)—Tidings.

Sermon Outline

By THORNTON CREWS

WALKING WITH THE MASTER

"For hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow (Walk—T. C.) in his steps." (1 Pet. 2:21).

- I. Note the text—Christ suffered for us—we should walk or follow in His steps. Have the same care one for another.
 1. See Rom. 12:25; Matt. 7:12; Heb. 5:8, 9, 1 Pet. 4:1.
- II. Abiding in Christ—continuing in, fixed n, remaining in Him.
 1. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk." (1 Jno. 2:6).
 2. "For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done." (Jno. 13:15; 1 Pet. 5:8; 1 Cor. 11:1; John 1:28, 39).
- III. If any man come after me, let him follow me. (Lk. 14:26, 33; Matt. 10:37).
 1. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself." (Matt. 16:24; 10:28).
- IV. If any man serve me, let him follow me. (Jno. 12:26; 14:1-3; 17:24; 2 Cor. 5:8).
- V. But we cannot abide in, come after, serve Him, until we have first entered into Him, or put Him on. (Lk. 5:11; Gal. 3:26, 27; Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12).
- VI. Walking with Christ is separating in its very nature and purpose. (Matt. 10:35; 2 Cor. 6:13; 7:1). "Be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ also loved us." (Eph. 5:1-2; Matt. 5:27-28).
- VII. To walk with Christ we must agree with Him. Amos 3:3; Levit. 26:23; 2 Thes. 2:10-11).
- VIII. To walk with Christ we must live for Him. (2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 3:12).
- IX. In walking with Christ, one becomes so absorbed that he loses sight of his own safety. (Jno. 20:21, 22).
- X. In walking with Him, we become more and more like Him and finally see Him as He is. (Matt. 8:19; Lk. 9:57, 61; Jno. 3:2).
- XI. If we walk with Him, we will go with Him, be where He is. (Mk. 12:37; Jno. 14:1; 17:24; Rev. 3:21). Friend if you would go to heaven, where He is now, you must come to Him, get into Him, and stay in Him while here you dwell!

The Nature Of Christ's Kingdom

By J. Edward Nowlin

Much error has crept into religion because of a failure to understand the nature of Christ's kingdom. It is the only kingdom of its kind ever known to man and some are prone to judge it by human standards and try to make it fit into the pattern of earthly kingdoms. Men say a thing is "natural" when it occurs in a certain way repeatedly, and anything by the same name which does not follow this set pattern may be misunderstood or denied outright. A case in point is the denial by men of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, because it did not follow the order of natural law. We reply that since the birth of Christ was a case of divinity becoming humanity, and since this was the only case where such ever happened the virgin birth must have been the "natural" way for such to happen! In like manner, we affirm the existence of Christ's kingdom in spite of the differences that exist between it and the kingdoms of men. God never intended that it should fit into the pattern of earthly kingdoms.

Furthermore, just as the unusual manner of Christ's birth has made it the subject of much speculation and dispute; so, the peculiar nature of Christ's kingdom has furnished the materialistic minds of men with a fertile field for opinionism and conjecture. Fanciful theories concerning the second coming of Christ have been formulated. Large denominations have come into being, founded upon such theories. Multiplied millions of people have been misled by the sensationalism of these speculations, and not a few visionary prophets have confidently predicted the date of Christ's return only to be proven liars by the sands of time.

The nature of Christ's kingdom was foretold by the prophets of the Bible. (1) It was to be set up by the God of heaven. (Dan. 2:44). (2) It was to be an everlasting kingdom. (3) It was to be set up under the very noses of the Roman kings. (4) Its king was to be a descendant of David (2 Sam. 7:12; Jer. 23:5). (5) Its king was to occupy David's throne in heaven (Ps. 89:37; Lk. 1:32; Acts 2:29-31). (6) Its king was to be enthroned in heaven after his death (Dan. 7:13, 14; Acts 2:32-36). (7) Its king was to reign at God's right hand (Heb. 2:13; 10:12, 13; Acts 2:33; Rev. 3:21). (8) Its king was to be a priest (Zech. 6:12, 13; Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:17.) (9) Its citizens were to include people of all nationalities (Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:13-17). And, (10) its laws were to be made up of the commands of its king alone (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22-24; Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15, 16).

Israel's failure to understand the nature of

Christ's kingdom was due to two things: (1) The sinfulness of their hearts (Isa. 6:9; Mt. 13:13-15), and (2) The fact that God was not yet ready to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom (Mt. 13:10, 11, 17; 1 Cor. 2:7-10; 1 Pet. 1:10-12.) God has not cast Israel away (Rom. 11:1), but their fall in rejecting Jesus has become the means by which salvation has come to them. God foreknew that they would stumble over Jesus and that the nation would be destroyed with the fulfillment of the Law; but God purposed to bring both Jew and Gentile together in one body and their fall meant salvation to themselves as well as to the Gentiles. Paul shows this to be true when he says, "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" (Rom. 11:12). Their fulness or riches in salvation resulted from their stumbling over Jesus Christ, and Paul shows that both Jews and Gentiles have been brought together in "one body by the cross" and are "fellow-citizens" (Eph. 2:13-19.) Citizenship implies government and God's government in this age is a kingdom.

Kingdoms of men have been set up by the employment of destructive power to vanquish all opposition to the ruler. Victory marches and great outward show have marked the beginning or reigns; but not so with the kingdom of God. The Pharisees came to Jesus and demanded to know when the kingdom of God should come, and he told them that its coming would not be recognized from outward show. He said, "behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk. 17:20, 21.) This does not mean that at its coming there would be nothing to see, however, for he told some, "Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1.) On the day of Pentecost when the kingdom came with power, Peter informed the Jews of the fact that Christ had been raised up to sit on David's throne as David had prophesied, and then stated, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:30-33.)

Perhaps the strangest thing about the nature of the kingdom of Christ is the fact that it was set up in apparent defeat. The Jews had tried everything they knew about kingdoms and nothing seemed to fit in with Jesus Christ. They tried to take Him by force to make him a king (Jn. 6:15,) only to have Him spurn their efforts and steal away into a mountainside alone. They seemed nearer their ambitions when he rode into Jerusalem upon an ass and they acclaimed Him to be the son of David (Mt. 21:), but then he permitted his enemies to crucify Him. Compared with all worldly standards His was a lost cause! Joseph, of Armathaea, in whose new tomb the body of Jesus was laid, was said to have been waiting "for kingdom of God" (Lk. 23:51) when He went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Nicodemus brought a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes to embalm the body (Jn. 19:39.) His disciples scattered

(Continued on Page Seven)



Authority in Christianity

By FLETCHER CAUGHEN

God is the primary source of authority. He delegated authority into the hands of His Son the Christ, which Jesus himself teaches in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20). Jesus Christ in commissioning His apostles made it possible for them to receive the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit in baptismal measure for, after all, these men were but humble fishermen chosen for the great work of spreading the gospel of the kingdom of God. Inasmuch then as the human element came into the lives and the work of these apostles, there was the danger of error, hence the assistance of that which was divine, namely the Holy Spirit, to guide them into all truth.

Authority of Apostles Not Transferred

But is there any evidence in the divine record that the apostles who received authority from the Lord ever delegated this authority to anyone else? Their teaching and authority was at first oral. It was later embodied by them for permanency in the New Testament. With the completion of the New Testament, all things pertaining to life and godliness had been given (2 Pet. 1:3). There is nothing essential to Christianity upon which they have not written with authority. There is nothing which can be rightfully added to this complete revelation, and nothing that can be rightfully taken away, for condemnation rests upon the one (Gal. 1:6-10) who would preach another gospel. Also, in Rev. 22:18, 19, the curse of heaven is pronounced upon anyone that would add to the Lord's book of Revelation, or take away from it, and that particular principle cannot be confined just to the book of Revelation, for that principle holds true in God's dealings with mankind from the beginning of time. The apostles are still exercising the authority delegated to them. They are administering the affairs of Christ's kingdom through the New Testament scriptures, for in Matt. 19:28 Jesus promised that in the period known as the regeneration, or the time when men would be regenerated or born again, they would occupy twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Now, under the Great Commission, men are being regenerated. The gospel dispensation is the time when the apostles occupy the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. With the completion of the New Testament, all necessity for special inspiration, or illumination by the Spirit, came to an end. The person who is led by the word of truth today is led by the Spirit, and no man can claim to be led by the Spirit who disregards the teaching of the word. "The word is nigh thee" (Rom. 10:8). Why, then should one expect Christ to come down from above, or a spirit to return from the

dead to bring peace and pardon when it is clearly stated that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. (Rom. 1:16). The transfer of divine authority ended with the apostles.

Our conclusions are that God is the primary source of authority in Christianity. Christ is the immediate source, the apostles the executive source, and the New Testament the permanent source. All are in perfect agreement as they emanate from the one perfect source, who is the embodiment of perfect love, wisdom, and justice.

Extent of Authority

What is the extent of Christ's authority in His kingdom as administered by the apostles and revealed in the New Testament? He prescribes how we shall get into His kingdom and how we shall conduct ourselves as citizens of His kingdom. (Matt. 28:18-20). Those that are taught are to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but these baptized believers ought to be taught to observe all things whatsoever He commanded us. In Gal. 5:22, 23, we are told something about the fruit of the Spirit. In 2 Peter 1:5-7, we are commanded to add to our faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

To surrender this authority in one point means that it is to be surrendered in all, hence we must not allow anybody to claim the authority that Jesus Christ gave to His apostles without we point out the error in that claim. Remember, too, that claiming something doesn't mean that the claim can be demonstrated. It doesn't even mean that the claim is true. It is one thing to claim to possess the authority of Jesus Christ given to His apostles; it is another thing to demonstrate it.

Think what sweeping changes would be achieved by the restoration of the authority of Christ throughout all the world. It would destroy Catholicism with a single blow; it would strip Protestant denominationalism of all its human elements; away would go human creeds and ceremonials; it would bring about Christian unity; it would bring about the speedy evangelism of the world. Jesus Christ is the King who rules with all authority. He shall reign on David's throne at the right hand of God where He now sits and reigns until every enemy shall be abolished, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Today, my friends, you ought to obey the Christ that has all power on earth and in heaven. You ought not to procrastinate longer, understanding that procrastination can be the thief of time. Jesus Christ is the Hope of the world.

ATTENTION

SEND

THE WAY OF SALVATION
TO A FRIEND AND HELP TEACH HIM
THE TRUTH

Man's Greatest Question

By E. V. SRYGLEY, JR.

Implications

Man's greatest concern should be salvation; vitally related to this is what should be man's greatest question: "What must I do to be saved?"

When any sober-minded person seriously and intelligently asks, "What must I do to be saved?", he implies his consciousness of certain truths.

In this article are discussed implications of the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

Man Is Responsible

The question under consideration implies that man is responsible before God for his deeds done on this earth. Indeed, if there is not coming a day of reckoning, from what does man need to be saved? Or, why should man be concerned with "sin" if he doesn't have to answer for what he does?

In II Cor. 5:10 Paul teaches that man must be judged on the basis of deeds done in the body. Hence, wrong is any theory that destroys man's responsibility before God.

Two Positions

"What must I do to be saved?" implies two positions: a right one and a wrong one.

The question would never be asked by one who assumes that ALL positions concerning religion are right. One who assumes that ALL views regarding religion are RIGHT, will never inquire about some PARTICULAR way; hence, will never seriously ask, "What must I do to be saved?", because he doesn't believe it makes any difference WHAT he does.

Knows His Position

One who seriously asks, "What must I do to be saved?", implies his consciousness of the error of his present way. He who believes confidently that he is secure before God is not at all concerned about doing something to be saved, for he believes he IS saved. In Bible times men wanted to know the way of salvation because they were convinced they were lost, Acts 2:37.

Hence, only when we are convinced of guilt, will we ask, "What must I do to be saved?"

Knows Man Can

When someone sincerely asks the question under consideration, he implies his knowledge of man's ability to respond, unaided by a miracle, to the invitation of Christ.

Some religious people think the unregenerate sinner is so depraved there must be in conviction and conversation a miracle of the Holy Spirit separate from and in addition to the written or spoken Word of God.

They affirm the alien sinner cannot think a good thought, do a good deed, or meet any condition

in order to his salvation, without a disposition given him by the Holy Spirit in a miracle. However, Paul affirms in John 5:24 that by hearing and believing, the sinner can pass from death unto life.

And in Rom. 1:16 Paul teaches that the Gospel is God's power unto salvation. If the Gospel is GOD'S POWER, it isn't just SOME of God's power, it is ALL God's power.

Knows Man Must

When a person asks, "What must I do to be saved?" he manifests his awareness that salvation depends upon something man MUST do; not upon something God will do for man.

Those who believe the sinner is totally depraved believe and teach that salvation depends WHOLLY and ENTIRELY upon God. They try to make people believe they teach repentance and faith as CONDITIONS of salvation, but in reality they don't even believe the sinner CAN repent and believe until and unless GOD GIVES him those dispositions. Saul of Tarsus was told what he HAD TO DO, and he did it. Acts 9:6, 18; 22:16.

Is Willing To

The sinner who conscientiously says, "What must I do to be saved?" manifests his complete willingness to do what he knows he can and must do.

It would be a marvelous thing if the people who actually know the truth of the plan of salvation possessed enough backbone to step out upon the promises of God and to do what their hearts tell them is right.

Must The Young Die Too?

The story of Roger Scott, written by Wyatt Sawyer, minister of the Pecan Park Church of Christ, Houston, Texas, endeavors to answer the question, "Must the Young Die Too?" Roger Scott is a fictional name but the story is based on the real life of a young criminal.

It is the story of a young boy who, like most American boys, thought, "It can't happen to me." Roger experienced the usual problems of a growing boy. His life is potentially the life of any boy or girl today who clamors for freedom from the home too early and who demands the right to do all his thinking before he has acquired mature judgment.

The reader will laugh with Roger in his humorous moments and weep with him as he struggles through the transformation from a "hard-headed" adolescent boy to a contented Christian in his prison cell.

This book is a must for young people and should be read by every parent, elder and teacher. Order from the *Way of Salvation*, 1213 E. Jordan Street, Pensacola, Florida. The price is \$2.50.—(T.F.V., Jr.)

How Men Are Saved Today

By BENNETT HANNA

Fitzgerald, Georgia

In considering the plans given by different people concerning the salvation of man, we might come to the conclusion men are saved in an altogether different way than in the early days when the apostles lived and spoke by divine inspiration. From every corner is a different plan presented.

We hear one saying, "Just get down on your knees and pray." Now, prayer is good and it is good to be humble enough to get on our knees and bow before God, but this is something an alien sinner was never told to do. Prayer is not the plan of salvation for the person who is outside of Christ. The person who has not obeyed the gospel and come into covenant relationship with God is never commanded to pray for salvation. Christians are to pray and when they have committed sin they are told to "repent and pray" for their sins to be forgiven. (Acts. 8:22).

We hear someone else say, "Just call on the name of the Lord." But, how is this done? When we consider the Bible teaching on the subject we see that Paul called on the name of the Lord when he obeyed the gospel of Christ. Acts 22:16. Another will say, "Just believe." We are told that faith and faith alone is sufficient. Yet we are told by the inspired James that a person is not justified by faith only (Jas. 2:24). We are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1), but not by faith only.

Again, we are told that a person may believe just anything he wants to—that it makes no difference what one believes if he is sincere. Sincerity also is good but a person may be sincere though sincerely wrong. In Acts 23:1, Paul tells that he had always lived in a good conscience. Yet, in the lifetime of Paul, he had done many things that were wrong of which he also is a witness (Acts 26:9). He was forgiven when he repented and obeyed the gospel of Christ (Acts 22:16, Acts 9:18). It DOES make a difference what a person believes and does in religion. Have you really studied the Bible to see how we are saved from our sins? Men are saved today in the very same way as when the apostles lived and taught on this earth.

How Be Saved?

Let us now consider how men were saved in New Testament times. When we learn how people were saved then we will know how people can be saved today. God still uses the same plan of salvation. That

plan is the gospel of Christ and those who obey are saved (Heb. 5:8, 9). Those who do not obey do not have the promise of salvation.

To be saved a person must be a believer, for only a believer can be saved. Christ said, "For if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24). We are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). We must have faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:9). A person can have no hope of salvation until he becomes a believer. Faith comes by studying or hearing God's word. (Rom. 10:17).

The person who believes is yet to obey the teaching of the gospel of Christ. Salvation is promised to the one who does obey. (Mark 16:6; Heb. 5:8, 9). Obedience is essential (2 Thess. 1:7-9). This obedience includes repentance of which Christ said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3). Repentance is not simply being sorry for something, but it is a complete change in life. Repentance comes as the result of being sorry (2 Cor. 7:10). Repentance means death to the old life of sin. The person who repents quits his habit of sin, turning completely from his old life of sin. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30). God no longer overlooks the ignorance but requires repentance of all mankind. This is a command that must be obeyed.

We are to make the good confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37). Never are we told to confess that our sins are already forgiven but we are to confess Christ. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:10).

This does not conclude the matter of obedience. In Mark 16:15, 16, Christ commanded the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature with this promise, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Baptism is a condition of salvation. The promise of salvation is made to those who believe and then are baptized. The apostle Peter commanded men to "repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38). Baptism is on an equal par with faith and repentance as a condition of salvation. The penitent believer is to be baptized to be saved. One thing that makes baptism so important is the fact that it is the means of getting into Christ. We are baptized unto Christ. (Rom. 6:3). In Christ we have redemption. (Col. 1:14).

The person who believes in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of sins is saved. He is redeemed by the blood of Christ. The life of sin is behind him. A new life of Christian service and godly living is ahead of him. He must be faithful to the author of eternal salvation and grow as a child of the true and living God. (2 Pet. 3:18).