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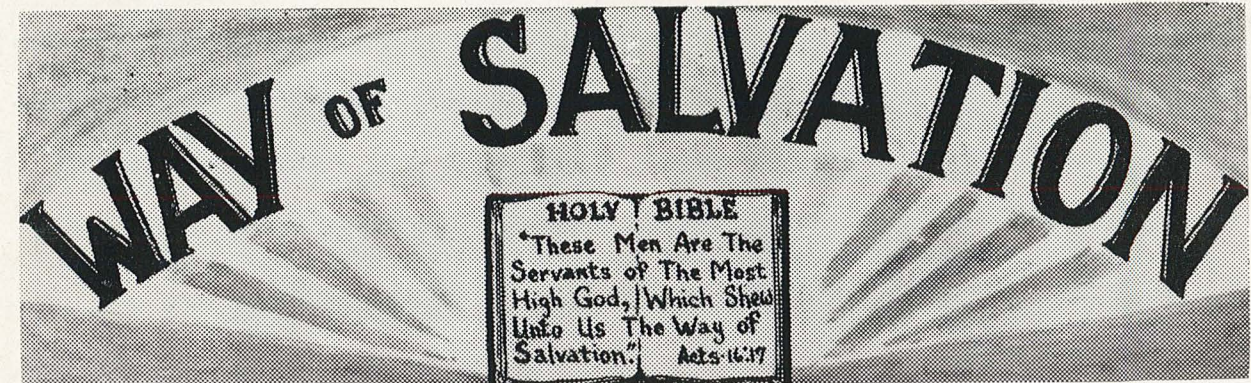
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Volume 3

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA — JANUARY, 1956

No. 6

The Ark And Salvation

E. V. SRYGLEY, JR.

Similarity

There is a very striking similarity between truths relative to Noah's ark and truths regarding the Gospel plan of salvation.

I am not insisting just here that these truths concerning the ark are all TYPES. I am simply suggesting that these facts about the ark are very similar to facts about salvation today.

The reader is invited to investigate an analogy between the ark story and the message of salvation in this Christian age.



One Material

According to Gen. 6:14 one material was used in constructing the ark of Noah: gopher wood. Hence, Noah was not at liberty to put into the framework of the ark just any material of his own choosing.

Noah and his family constituted the saved of the antediluvian world. Today, the saved of earth constitute the New Testament church that Jesus built, Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:23.

In the New Testament church there is but one material: obedient believers, Acts 8:12; 18:8; 1 Cor. 12:13. Hence, infants are not the proper material for the church Jesus built.

One Source of Light

According to Gen. 6:16 only one window went into the ark.

Today, for the church there is only one source of spiritual light: the Bible.

Jesus said the apostles would be guided into ALL the truth, John 16:13. Hence, the writings of the apostles constitute ALL, not just SOME, of the truth.

Paul said the writings, or Scriptures, furnish us unto all good works, II Tim. 3:16, 17.

One Door

We learn from Gen. 6:16 that the ark had only one means of entrance. Hence, Noah was not allowed to run along the sides of the ark cutting doors to suit the sentiments of all who would enter.

Today, there is only one means of entering the church: baptism, preceded by faith and repentance, Acts 2:38; 8:12; 18:8; I Cor. 12:13.

No "theological bulldozer" can tear down and replace God's plan of salvation.

One Family

According to Gen. 7:7, the ark contained only one family: the family of Noah.

Today, the church has within her walls only one family: the family of God.

This must be true because God does the actual enlarging of the borders of the kingdom, Acts 2:47.

I suppose the churches of Christ, without exception, have on their church rolls some who are the devil's children. But I don't expect God to make a mistake and place on HIS ROLL a child of the devil.

Salvation In the Ark

From I Pet. 3:20 we may gather that eight were saved in the ark.

Please note that these people were saved IN the ark. Hence, it would have been ridiculous and futile for some of Noah's day to have said: "We can be saved just as readily OUT of the ark as we can IN it."

Today, salvation is IN the church; not OUT of it, Eph. 5:23. I do not refer to some denomination (Baptist, Methodist, etc.), but to the church we may all read about on the pages of the New Testament, Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; Eph. 4:4; Eph. 5:23.

All Outside Died

According to Gen. 7:21, 22 the water of the flood destroyed all living things outside the ark.

If Christ is the Savior of the church He is not going to save the accountable ones of this dispensation who are outside the church, Eph. 5:23.

Water A Means

Peter teaches us that the salvation of Noah by the water of the flood was a type of our salvation by the water of baptism, I Pet. 3:20, 21.

God used the flood as a MEANS, or CONDITION, or ESSENTIAL to Noah's salvation, I Pet. 3:20. Similarly, God uses baptism as a MEANS, or CONDITION, or ESSENTIAL to our salvation, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21.

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Religious Prejudice

"Prejudice" as considered here is a "preconceived judgment or opinion; unreasonable predilection or objection; esp., an opinion or leaning adverse to anything without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge."—Webster. Hence, it means to pre-judge; to judge or form an opinion without facts.



PERVIE NICHOLS

Biblical Examples of Prejudice at Work

Religious prejudice caused some to accuse the Son of God of possessing a devil (Jno. 7:19-20). This sin led to the crucifixion of Christ (Matt. 27:21-26), and made some falsify and try to prevent His resurrection. (Matt. 28:11-20.) Moreover, it caused some to become angry and resentful toward the truth; to stop their ears, gnash on Stephen with their teeth, cast him out of the city and stone him to death. (Acts 7:54-60.) Prejudice against the truth regarding the resurrection caused some to mock or scoff at God's word. (Acts 17:32.) And it led some to falsely accuse the apostles of teaching error. (Rom. 37:8.)

Modern Examples

Religious prejudice leads some to misrepresent facts. They try to insult children of God by calling them "Campbellites." Fair-minded and considerate people will not call others objectionable names. When we teach God's word which says that salvation is by grace through the faith that works (Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 5:6; Heb. 5:8-9), they say, "you folk don't believe in salvation by grace." Because we teach the Bible doctrine that the Holy Spirit operates only through His word (not separate or apart from it) (Lk. 8:11; Rom. 1:16; 8:16; Eph. 6:18; Acts 2:1-10), these people say that we don't believe in the work of the Holy Spirit. And when we teach the truth regarding the necessity of baptism (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4), they shout, "you deny that the Blood of Christ saves, and put your trust in the water."

Truths Often Ignored Because of Prejudice

Jesus built but one church; He established but one kingdom. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; 20:28; Mk. 9:1.) That church is His body. (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18.) There is but one body or church of Christ. (Rom. 12:4-5; I Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:3-5.) This one body contains all the saved. (Eph. 2:12-16; 5:23; Acts 2:47.) Yet these truths are often ignored because of preconceived notions or prejudice.

In spite of the fact that God chose a new name for His people (Isa. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15), thus giving them the name "Christian" (Acts 9:1-5; 11:22-26; 26:28), and declared that this is the name through which to glorify Him (I Pet. 4:14-16-R.V.), many ignore these facts and affirm that "there is nothing in a name." Prejudice blinds them to the fact that God condemns as sinful all human religious names. (I Cor. 1:10-14; 3:1-10.)

Opinions formed in the absence of Biblical facts cause many to ignore some conditions of pardon and suppose that sinners are saved by faith alone. But believers are commanded to repent of sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30), confess faith in Christ (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:36-39) and be "baptized into Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3-4) "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mk. 16:16; I Pet. 3:21.) Prejudiced people will not accept all of God's word. Their attitude was demonstrated by one woman who boastfully declared that Mk. 16:16 is not in her Bible for she said she cut out the page containing that scripture.

In giving us information regarding baptism God says it is the form of a burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39.) But some people ignore these facts and suppose that sprinkling or pouring is baptism and will be acceptable to God. Open-minded people can readily see that sprinkling or pouring does not correspond to the Lord's description of baptism. Immersion is the only act that qualifies. Hence, their supposing is without Biblical facts.

Consequences of Religious Prejudice

It causes ignorance of the truth and produces spiritual blindness. (Matt. 13:15; Jno. 8:39; II Cor. 4:3; Eph. 4:18.) It is founded upon ignorance and can only exist through ignorance, willful or otherwise. This sin also hinders obedience to the Lord's Will (Jno. 5:40; Matt. 13:15; II Thes. 1:7-9), and will cause its victims to be lost in hell. (Jno. 12:48.)

The judge and juror must earnestly and with an open mind seek all facts pertaining to the case before making their decision. But to do this they must be free from prejudice. In like manner you and I should obtain all Biblical information on any Bible subject under consideration before reaching any decision or forming ideas. When all the facts are obtained, then with an open mind "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." (Jas. 1:21.)

The God Of Peace

By Clinton W. Whitten, Auburn, Alabama

"And the God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23). God is called "the God of peace" no less than six times in the New Testament where the word "peace" itself appears over one hundred times. The Apostle Paul wished "grace and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ" to the Romans in the introductory lines of his epistle to them. He wished the same thing to those in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse and Thessalonica. Paul laid great stress on the doctrine of peace. In the introductions to all thirteen of his epistles, in fact—from Romans through Philemon—he wished "grace" and "peace" to the recipients of all these letters. (We recognize grace as a basic doctrine of the New Covenant: are we not hereby justified in concluding that the same significance prevails regarding the doctrine of peace?) Jerusalem—the capital city of the Jews—it appears, was named for peace (Hebrews 7:2).

Not Contrary to Christian Warfare

We are not to conclude, however, that the peace of which God is the author is to be found in a state of apathy to sin or in indifference to the advancement of righteousness. The peace of which God is the giver is harmonious with one's participation in the Christian "warfare" to which all of Christ's true followers are called. One of the paradoxes of the gospel lies in the fact that, though Jesus is the Prince of Peace, He once said to His disciples, "I came not to send peace but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). (The gospel of Christ is referred to as "the gospel of peace" but it is also symbolized as "the sword of the Spirit.")

Peace can and will exist in the heart of the fully-surrendered Christian (and, in spite of external circumstances) as it did in Paul's heart even while he was imprisoned in the dungeon at Philippi. But, as long as sin exists in the world a Christian should not be expected to have peace with it. For one to profess neutrality in the never-ending struggle of right against wrong places him in the ranks of God's enemies. We frequently confront the danger of crying, "peace, peace, when there is no peace" as did the false prophets of Jeremiah's day. The peace of

God consists in a condition of harmony with God's will. Where a conflict with God's will exists, true peace can be brought about only through the surrender of the one or ones who are in rebellion against it. We have sometimes sung, "Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Saviour am happy and blest": all things cannot be "at rest" except on the terms of "perfect submission." The reason more things are not at rest in the world or in the church today lies in the fact that we do not have more perfect submission. It is in keeping with our duty to "fight the good fight of faith" then, that we are enjoined to "seek peace and pursue it." A certain poet has written:

You have no enemies, you say?
Alas, my friend, the boast is poor.
He who has mingled in the fray
Of courage that the strong endure
Must have made foes. If you've made none
You've struck no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've turned no wrong to right;
You've been a coward in the fight.

Follow Peace

It is in conjunction with our "wrestling against principalities," then, that we are to "follow things that make for peace." "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." "God has called us to peace." "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." "God is not the author of confusion but of peace." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace . . ." "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts to the which also ye are called in one body and be ye thankful."

Perhaps it may be today that the "God of peace shall bruise Satan" under our feet shortly as He did in ancient Rome 1900 years ago (Romans 16:20).—C. Chronicle.

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Sermon Outline

LOYALTY TO CHRIST

By Pervie Nichols

Introduction

To be "loyal" is to be "Faithful to the lawful government, or to the sovereign to whom one is subject. 2. True to any person to whom one owes fidelity." "Loyalty" is the "state, quality, or instance of being loyal."

Loyalty is a much-needed quality; more of it is needed in the average home, between husband and wife, children and parents; there should be more loyalty between friends. But above all we should be loyal to Christ.

I. EXAMPLES OF LOYALTY TO CHRIST.

1. Peter and John. (Acts 5:29.)
2. Stephen. (Acts 7.)
3. Paul. (2 Cor. 11:21; 2 Tim. 4:7-8.)
4. Church at Philadelphia. (Rev. 3:7-13.)

II. EXAMPLES OF DIS-LOYALTY.

1. Church at Corinth. (1 Cor. 1:8; 3:1-10.)
 2. Some of Jesus' disciples before the cross. (Jno. 6:66.)
 3. Demas. (2 Tim. 4:10.)
- Others. (Lk. 6:46; 1 Pet. 2:10-22.)

III. CHRIST IS WORTHY OF OUR LOYALTY.

1. He is our King. (Acts 2:22; 1 Cor. 15:22.)
2. Our High Priest. (Heb. 4:14; 9:11.)
3. Our Master or Teacher. (Jno. 3:2.)
4. Only mediator between God and man. (1 Tim. 2:5-6.)
5. Saviour of sinners. (1 Tim. 1:15.)
6. Only head of His church or body. (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18.)

IV. JESUS DEMANDS OUR LOYALTY.

1. (Matt. 19:16; Lk. 14:26; Lk. 12:51; Matt. 10:22.)
2. Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:8-9; 1 Pet. 3:15.)

3. He commands us to follow Him; to be faithful to Him. (Matt. 4:18; Rev. 2:10.)

V. LOYALTY TO CHRIST DEMANDS:

1. That we recognize no religious head but Christ.
2. That we belong to no church but the one Jesus built. (He did not build a denomination or sect.)
3. That we wear no name but the name of Christ, the name "Christian."
 - a. Since all Christians are married to Christ (Rom. 7:1-4), should wear His name and no other.
4. That we remain faithful to Him; worship and serve Him as He directs in His word. (Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7.)

VI. CONCLUSION

Those who are loyal to a king will obey him. No one can be loyal to Jesus the King while rejecting His will. (Jno. 12:48.) Only those loyal to Christ throughout life will be permitted to enter heaven. (Rev. 22:14; Heb. 5:8-9.)

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Have Not I The Right?

By Thornton Crews

Millions of people in the world today are being misled by false, weak or shallow reasoning. There may be many things that contribute to this state of affairs, but there is no justification for wrong acts. The majority of people seem to think anything that is legal or constitutional by man's laws, is all right. But Peter said it is right to obey God rather than man. Acts 4:19; 5:29. There are many things that we can do socially, politically, or even morally, that are not right in the eyes of the Lord. Many people think they can do anything that they have a right to do. But we may be granted "rights" by man that God does not authorize. I want to remind you that the right to choose does make the choice right. We must have the right motive and make the right choice in respect to the right object—God, for our conduct to actually be acceptable. False teachers, false ideas, false reasoning, and wrong conduct can never fit our souls for a home in Heaven. To every act of man there is attached a blessing or a penalty. We must reap as we sow, Gal. 6:7, 8. If we please men, we cannot please God, Gal. 1:10.

Seeking the Right Way

When we open the Bible and begin to search it we find wonderful things therein, Ps. 119:18. God said, "It is not in man that walks to direct his steps," Jer. 10:23. Solomon said, "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12; 16:25. Another time, he said, "The way of the fool is right in his eyes," Prov. 12:15; 28:26. Most people want to do right, but being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own, Rom. 10:1-3. This is why Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God," 2 Tim. 2:15. Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures," Jno. 5:39. The Bereans were noble because they searched the scriptures daily, Acts 17:11. Jehovah said, "Come, let us reason together," Isa. 1:18-20, and Jeremiah said, "Ask for the old paths, wherein is the good way, and walk therein," Jer. 6:16. Anything that God authorizes us to do is right, and everything that He condemns by silence, implication, or statement, is wrong. The best thing that man ever thought is not as good as the worst thing that God ever thought, Isa. 55:8-11. Therefore, let us seek His conclusions in everything, Ecc. 12:13, 14.

How Shall We Treat God's Word?

We have a constitutional right to set it aside and accept some other standard or creed. Legally, we can worship in any way that we please regardless of the clear teaching of His word, but that does not make it right. At the last day, we will be judged out of the things written in it, Jno. 12:48; Rev. 20:12. We find many of the best people who lived in the days of the making of the Bible, were punished for slightly deviating from it. Heb. 2:1-4; Num. 20:10-13; 1 Kgs. 13:20-32; 1 Chr. 13:10-14. Therefore, we do not have the right to set up our own word against the Bible. If we do, we will pay the penalty in the last day, Mark 8:38.

How Shall We Treat God's Earth?

Many people think they can treat the earth and all things therein just as it pleases them. They seem to never learn that the earth and the fullness thereof belongeth unto God, I Cor. 10:26. And God has done some legislating about the use of it. He said to man, "Go forth, multiply, replenish the earth, and subdue it," Gen. 1:28; 9:1. The soil never loses its fertility if it is used right. If man abuses it he suffers.

How Shall We Treat Our Bodies?

Most people think they can treat their bodies any way. They can eat and drink anything they want, but they will find that God has condemned such conduct. It may be your body, but you cannot destroy it, for it was made to be a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit in this world. God and Christ and the Spirit will dwell with us or in our hearts if we will use the body in the right way. (See I Cor. 3:16.) Most everyone knows it is wrong to commit suicide, but they do not know many people take years to do the deed. Any one who pursues a course that will slowly destroy his body is guilty of suicide. Take care of the temple of the Holy Spirit if you would have a home in the beyond that fadeth not away. Christ died to redeem the body, Rom. 3:23.

How Shall We Treat the Church of the Lord?

With men, one church is just as good as another, and any person—man or woman—has a right to start a church of their own. You and I by reason of being free moral agents, and by the constitution and laws of our country, have a right to join said church. But that does not prove that one church is as good as another, or that the choice that we make in the matter is right in the sight of God. Do you think it would be the right thing to do if England should give any citizen in this country, the right to form a government within the limits of the United States? You say, "That would be treason." So it would. Then what do you think it would be to form another government within the limits of the Lord's Kingdom. His church or kingdom was promised by the prophets, Isa. 2:1-4; Dan. 2:4-45; 7:13, 14; Zec. 1:16. It was to be for all people and for all ages. All races and peoples were to enjoy its benefits. He set up His church on Pentecost, and added about three thousand to it, Acts 2:41, 47. It was built upon the truth that Jesus is the Christ, Matt. 16:13-21; and upon Christ, I Cor. 3:11; and upon the teachings of the apostles and prophets, Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, Eph. 2:20. Do you think you can build another church—different in name, government, worship, and laws—on the same foundation? If you and I were to build just as He has directed on the same foundation, it would be the same church. Therefore, it would be the right thing to do. To build in some other way to please men, would not be right. In every religious act, God is the one to be pleased. When we learn this lesson and put it into practice, we will be right in all that we do, and will not have time to worry about the idea of having rights according to the standards of men. Who is to decide what is right and what is wrong? God, of course. Therefore, let us quit thinking about, "Do I not have the right?" and, think only of what God requires of us.

The Saved Men Of EPH. 2:8-9

By James W. Clark, La Grange, Ga.

"For by grace are ye saved, (A.S.V. have ye been saved), through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2:8-9.

These verses have been used by many as weapons to try and refute the teaching that a man is saved or justified by works. Jas. 2:24. They point quickly to the phrases in the verses, "by grace," "through faith," "gift of God," "not of yourselves," "not of works." These they array against all the teaching the Bible has on the subject of works. If, however, they would consider it in the light of other verses they might be able to see the harmony of the scriptures. These verses speak of saved men. The fact of their salvation cannot be denied. There can be no argument as to that. But is the word "saved" here any more positive and emphatic than when used to describe the same type of people in other places? Are the saved here a different type than others under the gospel dispensation? For example, (Mk. 16:15-16), "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Now if you had a group who had complied with these conditions you could say, "they have been saved." Now would they differ from the saved of Eph. 2:8-9? If so, in what respect? We cannot say they would not be saved, for the Lord said they would be. Another, Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins." Some did this. Acts 2:41. Then, in verse 47, the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved. Now you have them saved by complying with the condition of verse 38. Do they differ from those of Eph. 2:8-9? Certainly not. Yet another, I Pet. 3:21. "Baptism doth also now save us." If you looked at the man afterward you could say he is saved. Would he differ from the others? No. That all of these are saved man cannot deny. But Paul said if saved they are saved by grace. But these are saved. So you must take it then that those of Mk. 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, I Pet 3:21 were saved by grace.

It is also stated that it is through faith, verse 8. So any man who is a saved man is saved through faith. But the man or men of Mk. 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, I Pet. 3:21 were saved. So their salvation was through faith.

Also, you will find that salvation is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. So when you find a saved man you find one who is saved, not of himself; his salvation is the gift of God. But remember the Lord said that the man of Mk. 16:15-16 was saved. The Holy Spirit said through Peter that the man of Acts 2:38 was saved. Peter said in I Pet. 3:21 that these were saved. It must be understood that their salvation was not of themselves but was the gift of God. You do not find one being saved otherwise.

Look further and you will see that it says, "not of works lest any man should boast." This has been

Recipe For A Happy New Year

By Pervie Nichols

- H—Hold fast the profession of faith. (Heb. 10:23.)
 A—Assemble on the first day of each week. (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Heb. 10:25.)
 P—Pray often. (Eph. 6:18; I Thes. 5:17; I Tim. 2:8.)
 P—Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (Rom. 12:17.)
 Y—Yield yourself unto God. (Rom. 6:13.)
 N—Neglect no opportunity to do good. (Gal. 6:10; Matt. 25; Jas. 4:17.)
 E—Examine yourself. (I Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5.)
 W—Worship God in spirit and in truth. (Jno. 4:20-24.)
 Y—Yield not to temptation. (I Cor. 10:13; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 3:21.)
 E—Exercise yourself unto godliness. (I Tim. 4:7-8.)
 A—Abound in the work of the Lord. (I Cor. 15:58; Phil. 2:12.)
 R—Rejoice in the Lord. (Phil. 3:1; 4:4; Rom. 12:15; I Pet. 4:13.)

the battle ground for some. However, the battle will be short lived if only the word "saved" is kept in mind. Remember, we are talking of saved men. (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21). We have to accept the fact of their salvation. But if we accept the fact of their salvation then we must also accept the fact that they were not saved by boastful works. For no man is saved by boastful works. But we face the reality that those of whom we have spoken were saved.

If you read I Cor 9:16 you will find that you cannot boast of a thing that you are commanded to do. As one put it, "Necessity excludes boasting. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for NECESSITY is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Take the principle and study Eph. 2:9 and you will see that when you are commanded to do a thing you cannot boast of it. We believe that Christ is the Son of God. But can we boast of it? What excludes boasting? The command. Jno. 8:21. Suppose we do not believe. We die in our sins. Jno. 8:21-24. We are to repent. Lk. 13:3. Can we boast? Why not? We are commanded to repent. Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30. We are baptized. Can we boast of it? No. Why? We are commanded to be baptized. Acts 2:38.

We must conclude then that the saved of Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38-47; I Pet. 3:21 are saved or were saved the same as those of Eph. 2:8-9.

Where Is Christianity Going?

By Tolbert F. Vaughan, Jr.

Changes often are slow—so slow that they sometimes are never noticed. History records changes in what is usually called "Christianity" and most of what goes under that name has now so changed that it is not Christianity at all. While we may be able to look back through the history books and notice these changes it is very possible that people living in those ages were not cognizant of them at all.

It is possible that we do not realize the changes that continue to be made even today. Some who notice them do not view them with alarm and, as a result, many fail to realize the seriousness of the situation. Where is Christianity going? Where are we being led?

Some will be shocked to learn what is happening in the "Christian" world. The following, taken from the bulletin of the church of Christ, Garland, Texas, will help bring these facts to our attention:

"Out of a poll of 700 preachers the following results were given: 48 percent rejected the creation of the Bible; 33 percent no longer believed in the devil; 43 percent denied the complete inspiration of the Bible; 24 percent rejected the atonement; 12 percent rejected the resurrection of the body; 27 percent did not believe Christ will come to judge the quick and the dead.

"The following quotation is from *World Wide Christian Conservation*: 'The machinery of Proestantism is securely in the grip of the liberal element. That's what really counts. So long as the great seminaries, publishing houses, the denominational organizations, are controlled by liberalism, there is no chance for the orthodox to make a comeback.'

"In Washington, D. C., a well-known minister said, 'We liberal clergymen are no longer interested in the fundamental-modernist controversy. We do not believe we should even waste our time engaging in it. So far as we are concerned, it makes no difference whether Christ was born of a virgin or not. We don't even bother to formulate an opinion on the subject.'

"In Arlington, Virginia, a minister commented: 'We have closed our minds to such trivial considerations as the question of the resurrection of Christ. If you fundamentalists wish to believe in that nonsense we have no objection, but we have more important things to preach about than the presence or absence of an empty tomb 20 centuries ago.'

"One of the Virginia ministers said: 'We are interested in human life and human destiny on earth. We don't know or care whether there is a life beyond the grave. We presume there is a God, but we know that He will ever be a mystery to us. We do not

know or care whether God possesses personality or not. He may be just an impersonal force. Religion means very little, if anything. In the modern world religion has no vital place. The function of the modern ministers is to guide the thinking people along social and economic lines. Morals, like religion, are out of date. The world today requires a new social order. The younger generation won't need either morals or religion if we create a social order in which ignorance and poverty have no place. We are moving in the direction of the elimination of prayer from our services entirely. We still include it, occasionally, to please those who are accustomed to it. Prayer is a sort of habit with folks. It takes time to educate them to a realization that it is a hangover from the superstitious past. We do not teach the Bible to our young people. Our youth program is centered around recreation.'

"A leading minister in Washington said flatly, 'In our denomination what you call the Faith of our Fathers is approaching total extinction. Of course a few of the older ministers still cling to the Bible. But among the younger men, the real leaders of our denomination today, I do not know of a single one who believes in Christ, or any of the things you classify as fundamentals.'

The sad thing about the entire story quoted above is that very few have any real right to show alarm. In the thinking of most people one way is just as good as another and everyone has the right to "join the church of his choice." These examples may be extremes but the majority of the rest of the so-called Christian world is not far behind. Man has again left God and has no respect for Him. These gradual changes are leading him farther away from the Creator of heaven and earth.

HOW WIDE IS THIS PAGE?

Read the answer

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