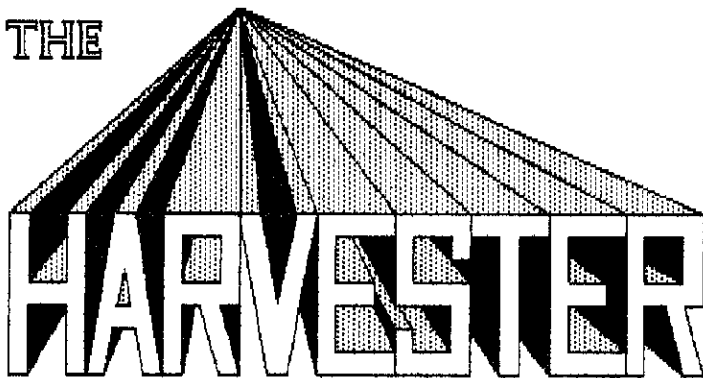


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"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

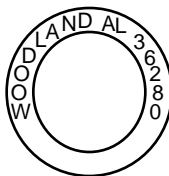
JULY 2000

No. 175

BE LOYAL TO CHRIST

Benedict Arnold was a distinguished military leader during the American Revolution (1775-83). His military tactics quickly earned him the rank of general. But with a desperate need for money and his anger over certain matters, he committed the worst possible act in America's fight for freedom -- treason. In 1780 Benedict Arnold betrayed his loyalty to his country and switched to the British side. Today his name is synonymous with "traitor." As Judas betrayed Jesus (Matt. 26:25), Arnold was disloyal to a whole nation.

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According to 1 Peter 2:21, Jesus left us an example to follow. That means we should carefully examine His life, noticing how He acted in different situations and how He treated other people. Then we should emulate Him as closely as possible. Today let us discuss the topic of loyalty. Are we loyal to Christ or can we be considered "Benedict Arnolds" to the cause?

First of all, what does being "loyal" mean? The Webster dictionary gives this definition: being constant and faithful in a relationship; unswerving in allegiance; being trustworthy and devoted. Now, can we say we are "loyal" to Christ? Are we faithful and totally devoted to our Lord? Would we ever consider switching to the devil's side if things became so unbearable? God forbid!

As we already noted, we can look at Jesus' loyalty and therefore, have a pattern to follow. In so many things Christ was loyal. However, there were four items to which He was particularly loyal. It is these four that every Christian should be faithful toward.

Jesus was certainly loyal to the Truth (Matt. 4:4). Every time He was tested by the devil, He turned to the Word of God. Jesus had complete confidence in the Holy Scriptures and thereby, His allegiance dwelt. Jesus showed an extreme loyalty to His disciples, as well (Matt. 12:47-50). When questioned about His earthly mother and sister and brothers, He turned to His disciples and claimed them as His true brethren! The relationship among

Christian saints surpasses any loyalty among earthly alliances. There can be no doubt that Jesus was also very loyal to the church (Eph. 5:25). What better way to prove His allegiance than to GIVE UP His life for it! And finally, Jesus was loyal to God the Father by sitting down on the right hand of His Majesty's throne (Heb. 1:3). This is the way Christ lived His entire life here on earth and thus, it is the example we MUST develop. Christians must be loyal to the Truth, to the disciples, to the church and to God!

Now for the million-dollar question: is our loyalty like that of Jesus? Are we sincerely obligated to Christ? If Moses were to ask right now "*Who is on the Lord's side?*" (Exo. 32:26), could each one of us who raised our hand prove our faithfulness? Surely everybody will pledge his allegiance to Christ. Yet how many of us can truly be counted on? Perhaps there are some signs that can tell us whether we are loyal to Christ or not.

One of the ways that Paul told the young man Timothy to be an example was in his speech or word (1 Tim. 4:12). Therefore, a Christian will not be afraid to express in words his loyalty to Christ under any circumstances. "*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*" (Matt. 10:32)

If we are really loyal to Christ, then our actions will indicate this. We will DO things that only a disciple of Christ would ever be caught doing (like going to church and revivals, helping the needy,

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and being hospitable to strangers!) *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."* (Col. 3:17)

We will be loyal to Christ in name. The only name we can call ourselves is "Christian" (1 Pet. 4:16). To take on any other name is the same as committing high treason in the kingdom of God!

Our loyalty can also be detected by the manner in which we worship our Creator. *"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* (John 4:24) If we bow down to any other god, we are a traitor in the ranks of Judas and Benedict Arnold!

A Christian will be loyal to Christ in his work for the Lord, too. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."* (1 Cor. 15:58) We will work for the Lord 24 hours a day, putting His work always before ours because we are true to Him.

Brethren, every time we sin and disobey God's commandment, we become disloyal to Christ. Whenever we conform to this world and seek its fashion, we betray Christian principles. How important that Jesus knows He can depend on us to be on His side when the battle gets thickest! He will not tolerate traitors (Matt. 7:21). Would you?

In elementary school, children are taught the "Pledge of Allegiance" and each morning they recite it. Maybe we can take a cue from them. Maybe every morning we should remind ourselves of our allegiance to Christ and to be loyal to His cause in word, in deed, in name, in worship, and in work.

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who was the seller of purple who gave Paul and Silas a place to stay?
2. Who was the crippled son of Jonathan, the son of king Saul?
3. Who was the proconsul of Achaia who refused to hear the Jew's case against Paul?
4. Who was Abraham's second wife?
5. Who was a "*mighty hunter before the Lord*"?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. What was the chest of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream made of? SILVER (Dan. 2:32)

2. About how many men swore an oath not to eat until they had killed Paul? FORTY (Acts 23:13)

3. Who was the first king of Israel after the 10 tribes split from Judah? JEROBOAM (1 Ki. 12:20)

4. What did the five foolish virgins forget? OIL (Matt. 25:3)

5. How many times in all did the Israelites march around Jericho? A TOTAL OF THIRTEEN (Josh. 6)

"TO DELIVER SUCH AN ONE UNTO SATAN"

1 Corinthians 5:5, *"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

This man had been involved in an evident and unquestionable sin. Paul had instructed the church in verse 4 to bring the matter before the congregation when it had gathered together. The church was to *"deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh"* (verse 5a). Assuming that the brother would not

repent and make correction, this rejection by the church was intended to have the effect of so touching the erring brother while he was yet in the flesh that he might change and be eternally saved. The effect of this action might be felt by the brother in that he would realize he was:

* Without the comfort of Christian fellowship (Phil. 1:3-5; 1 Cor. 2:7b),

* Without the advantage of intercessor prayer (James 5:14-16), and

* Subject to the afflictions of Satan (2 Cor. 12:7b; 1 Thess. 2:18b; 2 Cor. 2:11; 1 Cor. 7:5b; 1 Tim. 1:20).

The second effect would hopefully be that his "*spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*" (verse 5b). It appears from 2 Cor. 2:6-11 that the man in question did repent and was subject to forgiveness. 2 Corinthians 7:9 makes mention of those who had "*sorrowed unto repentance.*"

Our ultimate purpose in all rebuke and correction should be for the return of those who have drifted away from the anchor of safety.

HARRY COBB

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**LEARN FROM THE MISTAKES OF OTHERS.
YOU CAN'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH
TO MAKE THEM ALL YOURSELF.**

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>PLACE & TIME</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
July 9 - 14	Temple Hill Church Smithdale, MS	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 10 - 14	Westwood Church Ashland, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 16 - 21 (Su-Fr)	Oak Grove Church Woodland, AL 7:00 evenings	Ray McManus (Woodland, AL)
July 19 - 23 (W-Su)	Fayetteville Road Fairburn, GA 7:00 E.S.T.	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 23 - 28 (Su-Fr)	Napoleon Church Woodland, AL 7:00 evenings	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
July 24 - 28	Becton Church near Glasgow, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 30 - Aug. 4	Rainsville, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
August 4 - 6	New Bethel Church Cullman, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
August 13 - 16	Rincon, GA	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
August 14 - 18	Owens Rd. Church Prattville, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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