

THE

# HARVESTER

"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]

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## A SECOND CHILDHOOD

It is quite evident that today's modern world is meant strictly for adults. Children often seem to be little more than a burden for some. They get in the way and have to be left with the day care center or the baby sitter. And it is generally assumed by most educated and sophisticated adults that children are primarily a nuisance and have no place in the "real world" of grown-ups. And that they can contribute absolutely nothing of value to the adult world until they are grown.

However, we should not be so quick to judge. Children actually have much more to offer us than you might realize. Jesus told Nicodemus,

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*"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God!"* (John 3:3) This is of course referring to a spiritual rebirth and not a physical one. But what exactly does this spiritual rebirth entail? It means that a person is completely changed and reshaped. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!"* (II Cor. 5:17) Peter even describes new Christians as *"newborn babes."* (I Pet. 2:2)

In many ways this analogy between Christians and children is more than just figurative. Christ intends that His people will actually behave like children in some ways. He told the disciples that, *"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."* (Mat. 18:3) I have heard this passage discussed often, by various people, but it was always used in a discussion of humility. Certainly humility is one of the lessons the Lord would have us learn from children, but is that all?

Consider what He said on another occasion. *"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein!"* (Mark 10:14-15) There is no direct mention made here of humility, although it would certainly apply. But so would a lot of other things.

Consider, for example, the value of money. Young children simply don't comprehend this concept. Offer a two or three year old the choice of a nice shiny quarter or a drab looking dollar bill. Which do you think he'll take? He will snatch the quarter out of your hand before you know it.

Adults, on the other hand, are more than willing to lie, cheat, steal, and even murder all for the almighty dollar. Too many people are obsessed with material gain and feel that as long as they have an abundance of material possessions everything will be just fine. They trust in their money. Have you ever seen a child do this?

Well, who or what do children trust in? That's very easy, their parents. Little children believe that mom and dad are the greatest. There's not a question they can't answer, there's not a thing they can't do. Their trust is complete and without reservation. This is the way we should trust our own heavenly Father. Children can definitely give us a lesson or two on trust.

Another item to consider is respect of persons. If you put two little children together so that they can play with one another, do you think they will start questioning each other about how much money the other's family has, or what neighborhood they live in, or what their political ideology is? Or will they be bothered by each other's skin color? No, they will simply play together like any two normal kids would be expected to do.

A child responds to another person based on how they are treated by that person. It is only when children mature that they learn to dislike and condemn entire groups of people. If we could all lay aside our pride, conceit and prejudices and take on the attitudes of children when dealing with others, 99% of the problems in the world would disappear.

Children also know how to forgive, most adults don't. How many times have you heard someone say, "I'll forgive you, but I will never forget what you did as long as I live"? Is this

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really forgiveness?

Consider again two children playing together. They get into a squabble over a toy or something like this and before you know it they are mortal enemies. They promise never to speak to each other again as long as they live. Five minutes later they are best friends once again and are playing together as though nothing ever happened. Wouldn't it be nice if adults could forgive so easily?

Certainly children can teach us many things if we will follow their examples, but we must also be mature adults at the same time. *"Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."* (1 Cor. 14:20) Here Paul points out quite well how we must be childlike in some ways but very grown-up in others.

Bound up in the heart of a child are things such as love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, virtue, kindness, humility, and many others. These are some of the most important attributes of a Christian. Unfortunately, most people lose some of these characteristics as they mature. What we must now seek to do is go back and relearn these things. In other

words, we need to experience a second childhood.

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## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Name the tribe of Israel that David said was to carry the Ark of God?
2. In Pharaoh's dream, interpreted by Joseph, where did the cows come from?
3. Where did Paul tell the Corinthians that he would stay until Pentecost?
4. When a soul is saved, what is hidden?
5. When Moses' hands became heavy during the battle with Amalek, what did Aaron and Hur do?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. What was the age of Joseph when he gave his father an evil report about his brothers?  
SEVENTEEN (Gen. 37:2)
2. Why did God want the Israelites to be holy?  
BECAUSE HE WAS HOLY (Lev. 19:2)
3. In Romans, Paul says that the sinners have changed the truth of God into what? A LIE (Rom. 1:25)
4. What Biblical author wrote from an island?  
JOHN (Rev. 1:9)
5. Could the Pharaoh's magicians duplicate Aaron and Moses' act of turning their staffs into serpents? YES (Exo. 7:12)

## ANTICHRIST

Certain matters in the field of religious thought appear to attract more than usual attention. This is especially true of a spectacular subject such as the end of time and events which relate to it. It is encouraging that increasing concern is being aroused about such matters -- but along with warranted concern have also arisen improper views. The matter of antichrist is one subject about which there is considerable misunderstanding, and it will be interesting to learn what the Bible really does say about this.

Despite the many speculations in regard to "antichrist," direct reference is made only by John and in only four passages:

*"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 Jn. 2:18).*

*"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn. 2:22).*

*"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn. 4:3)*

*"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 7).*

It is to be observed from these passages that antichrist is not one individual who will yet appear in the future. John said, "even NOW are there many antichrists" (2:18), "even NOW ALREADY is it in the world" (4:3), and "ARE

entered into the world" (2 John 7). Each of these passages refers to antichrist as being then present as the words were being written.

Having determined that antichrist has already come, we now need to determine who he was and is. John explained, "*HE is antichrist, THAT DENIETH the Father and the Son*" (2:22), "*EVERY SPIRIT that CONFESSETH NOT that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh . . . is that spirit of ANTICHRIST*" (4:3), and "*WHO . . . CONFESS NOT that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. THIS is a deceiver and an ANTICHRIST*" (2 John 7). Antichrist, as these passages clearly show, is anyone who denies Christ.

Antichrist is not one individual and is not yet future, but rather he who denies that Jesus is God's Son come in the flesh. This spirit of denial arose in times past, it is present now, and it will no doubt continue until the end of time.

Some have been inclined to tie together the "beast" of Revelation 13 and antichrist spoken of by John. While the "beast" definitely serves the will of Satan and not God, he is not spoken of in Scripture as antichrist. The "man of sin" referred to by Paul in 2 Thess. 2:3-4 also serves the purpose of the devil, but the Bible does not identify him as antichrist. Regardless of the sensational circumstances often associated with this matter by various religionists, antichrist is simply explained in Scripture as anyone and everyone who denies that Jesus is God's Son come in the flesh. Antichrists existed in John's day of the First Century and are not to be confused with spectacular future events.

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# GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place &amp; Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
November 11 - 13 (Fri - Su)	Pleasant Grove Church near Alexander City, AL 7:00pm / 10:30 & 6:00 Sun	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
November 18 & 19	Wedowee, AL Debate on "Cup" Issue	Ronnie Wade & Harry Cobb
November 18 - 20 (Fri - Su)	Owens Road Church Prattville, AL 7:00 each evening	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
December 2 - 4	Fayetteville Road Church Atlanta, GA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
December 12 - 16	Jigger, LA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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## SEVEN WONDERFUL THINGS IN THE BIBLE

1. PETER'S HOOK -- to bring up fish.
2. DAVID'S CROOK -- to guide the sheep.
3. GIDEON'S TORCH -- to light the dark places.
4. MOSES' ROD -- to overcome.
5. DAVID'S SLING -- to prostrate giant foes.
6. BRAZEN SERPENT -- to cure bite of world's snakes.
7. PAUL'S ARMOR -- to be our protection.