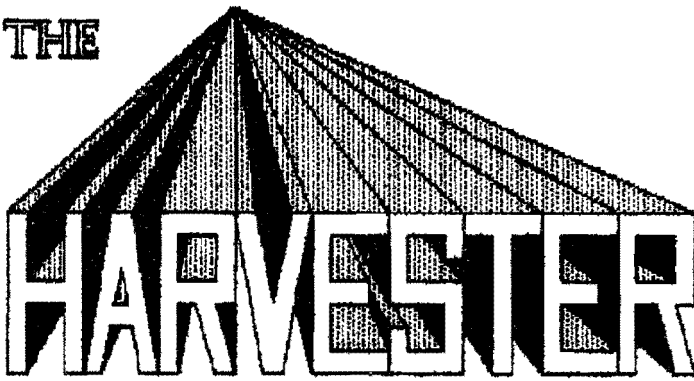


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"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

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ALL OR NOTHING

God has always demanded total subjection from his people. From the beginning of time he has ordered his children to put him foremost and to avoid the worshiping of idols. In fact his very first commandment to the Israelites was "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exo. 20:3) Certainly this shows the attitude that God's people must possess today; we must give him our "all". He will accept nothing less!

Any reader of the Bible will quickly learn that God desires our full attention

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and does not want his people to be half-hearted. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep **all** my commandments **always**, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deut. 5:29) Jesus also pointed out this fact as the "great commandment" in Matt. 22:37, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind." With God it must be all or nothing!

Perhaps many today do not appreciate this truth as much as it should be. How many of us have really given our Heavenly Father our "all", that is, our best? Are we actually part-time Christians? So what does it mean to give God "all or nothing"?

It means we cannot serve two masters. God wants us to serve him only. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other: or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24) When we try to serve two masters, our attention will be divided. Our loyalty will be questionable. When the "marbles" are on the line, who will we serve most? If we cannot serve God as our only master, then we may as well try to be subservient to everything else! Moses found out very early that a person cannot live on the fence or try to have the best of both worlds (Heb. 11:24-25). With God it must be all or nothing!

All or nothing means we cannot be lukewarm. It is best to be "hot" but if we can not do that, then be "cold". Just do not be lukewarm! "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:15-16) Jesus tells us to be totally committed one way or another, but never in-between. There is absolutely no room in God's kingdom for compromise.

We have to give him our "best shot" all the time! "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:10) Am I really giving God my ALL when I live for him? when I worship him? when I preach or sing or pray? Do I attend the church services on a minimum basis which means just enough (as I see it) to get me into heaven? Yet God demands our maximum effort! It has to be hot or cold, not lukewarm.

All or nothing also says we cannot be double minded. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (Jas. 1:8) A person who is "wishy-washy" and indecisive and divided between two opinions is not giving all he has to God. Elijah faced this same problem on Mt. Carmel when he asked, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." (1 Ki. 18:21) Because the people were unsure in their minds, they

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could not properly follow God. That little seed of doubt kept them from serving the Almighty. Likewise, many of us may also have "doubts" about religion or of our salvation. Are we sure in our minds that our service to Christ comes from the heart? Are we absolutely sure that we understand the basic foundations of Christianity? With God it must be all or nothing, hot or cold.

We cannot be double-tongued if it is "all or nothing." James discussed the exactness of our speech when he wrote: "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh." (Jas. 3:10-12) It is impossible for God's people to use kind words on Sunday and then use foul language during the week days. We cannot limit our Christian vocabulary to just one day a week. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how

ye ought to answer every man."(Col. 4:6)
It must be ALL the time or none at all!

Finally, all or nothing means we cannot adhere to the verses of the scriptures we like and omit the ones that are contrary to us. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for doing exactly this (Matt. 23:23,24). It is imperative that God's people follow all of his commands, not just the ones we favor. Notice again that Jesus pointed out this particular flaw in the rich young ruler before he went away sorrowful (Matt. 19:17-22). Similarly, when we preach about believing in Christ, we must also include baptism (Mark 16:16). When we talk about conversion, do not forget to mention faithful living afterwards (Titus 2:11,12). The Bible is not based on the "pick-and-choose" method. When we deal with God's Word, it must be all or nothing!

God wants us to give him ALL we have. That simply means we cannot serve two masters, we cannot be lukewarm, we cannot be double-minded or double-tongued, and we cannot be selective with his Holy Word. It must be all or nothing! Since our Heavenly Father gave us his all (even his only begotten Son), should not we do likewise? *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."*(Matt. 22:37)

RAY McMANUS

**The best thing about most popular songs
is that they aren't popular very long.**

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Payday for a hired man working for an Israelite was supposed to come how often?
2. Who is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places?
3. For what did the disciples ask that caused Christ to give the Lord's prayer?
4. What book of the Bible records the birth of Isaac?
5. What did Hilkiah, the priest, find in the rubble of the temple being restored?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. Who incited David to take a census of Israel? SATAN (1 Chr. 21:1)
2. How many times did Jesus ask Peter, "Lovest thou me?" in John 21? THREE (John 21:15-17)
3. What did Paul not cease doing after he heard about the faith of the saints of Ephesus? GIVING THANKS FOR THEM (Eph. 1:15-16)
4. Which of the following is the king who destroyed Judah and Israel during Jeremiah's time: Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, or Zebek? NEBUCHADNEZZAR (Jer. 21:7)
5. What was "flowing" in the promised land of Canaan? MILK AND HONEY (Exo. 33:3)

IT MATTERS

Along the coast of the vast Atlantic ocean there lived an old man. Each day when the tide went out he would make his way along the beach for miles. Another man who lived not far away would occasionally watch as he vanished into the distance and later notice that he had returned. The neighbor also noticed that, as he walked, the old man would often stoop down to lift something from the sand and then toss it away into the water.

One day, when the old man went down to the beach this neighbor followed to satisfy his curiosity and, sure enough, as he watched, the old man bent down and gently lifted something from the sand and threw it into the ocean. By the time the old man made his next stop the neighbor had come near enough to see that he was picking up a starfish which had been stranded by the retreating tide and would, of course, die of dehydration before the tide returned. As the old man turned to return it to the ocean the neighbor called out with a degree of mockery in his voice, "Hey, old timer! What are you doing? This beach goes on for hundreds of miles, and thousands of starfish get washed up every day! Surely you don't think that throwing a few back is going to matter."

The old man listened and paused for a moment, then held the starfish in his hand out toward his neighbor. "It matters to this one."

GOSPEL MEETINGS

| <u>DATES</u> | <u>PLACE & TIME</u> | <u>SPEAKER</u> |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| May 30 - - June 1 | New Bethel Church Cullman, AL | Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL) |
| June 1 - 6 | Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL | Dana Chandler (Wedowee, AL) |
| June 2 - 6 | Winchester, OH | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 8 - 13 | Mt. Carmel Church Woodland, AL | Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL) |
| June 15 - 20 | Ephesus, GA | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 15 - 20 | Thomaston, GA 7:30pm E.S.T. | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| June 20 - 22 | Second Ave. Church Opelika, AL | Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL) |
| June 22 - 27 | Hokes Bluff Church near Gadsden, AL | Sam Dick (Cave City, KY) |
| June 23 - 27 | New Bethel Church McKinney, KY | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| June 30- - July 4 | Camp meeting Wedowee, AL | Various speakers |



***God is a spirit: and they that worship him must
worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)***