



"Therefore said he unto them, 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)

March 1986

No. 003

"YE JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF ETERNAL LIFE"

HOW?

By making a disastrous decision, such as is found in John 3:19. *"And this is condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."* We find by reading Lk. 16:19-31, a message from torment.

First let's look at a disastrous decision. The worst plight: *"This is condemnation..."* There is salvation for those who accept Jesus Christ.

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Read John 3:14-18. Let us note verse 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Of necessity, there is condemnation for those who reject Him. John 3:18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Note also Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

So you see we do pass judgment on ourselves, by the decisions we make while living in the flesh. Acts 13:46, "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, AND JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF EVERLASTING LIFE, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Rom. 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rev. 6:16, "And said to the mountains and the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The greatest blessing is, that Light is come into the world! Christ...The Light. John 8:12, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The Light of Life, as found in the above verse, is Christ. The Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ: 2 Cor. 4:4, "In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, LEST THE LIGHT OF THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." It lighteth every man. Read John 1:1-9.

The Most Disastrous Decision

"And men loved darkness rather than light." They liked the darkness of ignorance rather than "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." 2 Cor. 4:6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Works of darkness: Rom. 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." They wanted the darkness of sinful pleasures rather than the light of the gospel: "In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

They had the un-holiest reason: "Because their deeds were evil." They did not want their deeds reproved. John 3:20, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." For the evil deeds come from within: Mk. 7:21-21, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." A disastrous decision: "That light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."

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Now, a Message From Torment

Read Luke 16:19-31. We note from this reading that one was saved, and the other lost. Kind of does away with the doctrine of universal salvation, doesn't it? Read Matt. 7:13-14, 21-23. Rev. 20:15, *"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* The fact that these two men did not cease to exist after death seems to do away with the doctrine of materialism, doesn't it?

Man has been created in the Spiritual image of God: Gen. 1:27, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* Note John 4:24, *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* So if God is a Spirit, and He created man in His image, then man was created in the Spiritual image of God. Man is a dual being: 2 Cor. 4:16, *"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."* 2 Cor. 5:1, *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."* Death separates the body and Spirit: Jas. 2:26, *"For as the body without the spirit is dead"*. Eccl. 12:7, *"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."*

We see the rich man pleaded for mercy, but it was too late. This does away with the second chance after death, doesn't it? Now is the day of salvation: 2 Cor. 6:2, "*Behold, now is the day of salvation.*" Preparation MUST be made before the return of Christ. Read Matt 25:1-12. The fact that God refused to send a messenger from the dead to warn the living is proof that God will not use a miraculous power, separate, and apart from his word to convert people. Rom. 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION to every one that believeth.*" Also read 1 Pet. 1:22-23. Jas. 1:21, "*Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness THE ENGRAFTED WORD, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS.*"

The fact that the rich man's brethren could hear Moses and the Prophets, proves the fairness of salvation and does away with the doctrine of "Elect and Non-Elect". Salvation is for all, and all can be saved, IF we accept the word of God, which is truth: John 8:32, "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" God is no respecter of persons: Acts 10:34, "*Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.*" Jesus tasted death for every man: Heb. 2:9, "*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for EVERY MAN.*" The invitation is extended to all. Read Matt. 11:28-30. Every creature: Mark 16:16.

The fact that the rich man went to a place of torment and could not cross the gulf, while Lazarus went to a place of comfort, does away with the doctrine of purgatory. Here we have a message which testifies to the foolishness of trusting in riches, or anything, or anybody in

this world. Read Mk. 8:36-38, also 1 Tim. 6:6-12. We cannot depend on anything in this world, because we came here with nothing, and we will leave here the same way...for it will ALL be burned up. Job 1:21, "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." LET US NOT MAKE A DISASTROUS DECISION AND JUDGE OURSELVES UNWORTHY OF ETERNAL LIFE. THIS IS A WARNING AND A MESSAGE FROM TORMENT.

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FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ISAIAH 5

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

19 That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have

cast away the law of the Lord of Host, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

25 Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25)

With this thought, the writer of Hebrews acknowledged a very common problem among the brethren. In the early years of the church, disciples of Christ would assemble together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Sometimes they would gather together daily (Acts 2:46) or for special meetings (Acts 15:22). Nonetheless, it was expected that everyone attend, especially on the first day of the week to break bread.

Some disciples, however, would forsake (abandon or desert) some of these "assembling of ourselves together". What could the others do to help solve this problem? "Exhort one another" was the answer given. And it was particularly stressed as the "day" approached. It is uncertain whether the "day" referred to "the first day of the week" (Sunday), the day Jerusalem would be destroyed or "the day of the Lord" (the Judgment Day).

Since this condition still seems to exist in nearly every congregation, we must continue to

address the problem. With this article, it is the intention of this writer to start a series on church attendance and related topics. There is a definite need to encourage those of us who are weaker in the faith or who are babes in Christ. We need to be present every time the church assembles. Meanwhile, we do not need to be down-graded, harassed, name-called, nor forced in any thing, but rather to be treated in a scriptural manner: "... reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine"(2 Tim. 4:2). Hopefully these are the guidelines that will be used in our series of future writings.

RAY

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
March 14-16 (Fri- Sun)	Pleasant Grove Church (halfway between Alex City & Dadeville, off Hwy 280) 7:00pm	Douglas Farmer Rainsville, AL
March 21-23	Fairview Church Oxford, AL	James McDonald Woodbury, TN
April 7-11	West Point Church West Point, GA	James McDonald Woodbury, TN
April 7-13 (M-Su)	Oak Grove Church Eubank, KY 7:30pm (EST)	Sammy Dick Cave City, KY

Note: Is your congregation having a Gospel meeting? To have it announced in this paper, please send all information to The Harvester at least one month in advance.