

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)

February 2018

No. 386

IT IS WRITTEN

There is a conclusiveness and finality in this expression that carries with it an irresistible appeal to everyone whose heart's fondest desire may be voiced in the language of Hebrews 10:7: *"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."* It antagonizes and is antagonized by all who have a zeal for God that is mingled with and diluted by a determination to follow their own wills in part, no matter how small that part may be.

"It is written" gives an assurance that banishes incertitude, dispels every doubt, quells all fear, quenches every fiery dart

THE HARVESTER
141 County Road 474
Woodland, AL 36280
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



of the wicked, and puts to flight every gainsayer. He who is intrenched behind that which is written is encompassed by a wall that is impregnable to every assault of skepticism, sophistry [fallacy], philosophy or “science, falsely so called.”

These words fell so often from the Savior’s lips, and so frequently occurred in the writings of his apostles, that they may well be accepted as the slogan of everyone whose faith stands “*not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*” [1 Cor. 2:5]

Absolutely there is nothing of worth to the spiritually-minded outside of that which is written. We know nothing of God, Christ, Holy Spirit or angelic hosts save what is written. Heaven and its glories and the blessedness of those who attain that blissful abode, can be viewed only through the medium of the written word, and God’s hatred of sin and the awful doom of sinners can there alone be learned.

Would we escape the wrath to come? We must tread the path of faith, repentance, confession and baptism--as it is written. Would we so order our lives as to make our calling and election sure? We must walk as it is written.

There is no standard by which we may measure the acceptance of our service, worship, praise or prayers with God, except the rule he has given us--the things that are written. No individual and no church can hope to remain without spot or wrinkle unless a constant watch is kept over every word of doctrine, every method of work and every item of practice, to see that it goes not beyond “our rule.”

In Romans, fifteenth chapter, we have a notable instance of the constant insistence of the apostles on that which is written as our only mentor, model and test in serving God acceptably.

In the fourth verse, Paul says: “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have*

hope.” The only hope, therefore, having a sure foundation is the hope based upon that which is written. Every other hope is a delusion and a snare. Let others, if they will, put their trust in dreams and visions, or follow the mirage of illusive feelings; but for my part, let me have the blessed assurance that comes only from learning and following the things which are written. If the things written aforetime were of such inestimable value, how infinitely more precious must those be which come to us as the direct message of the Savior of men?

For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (Heb. 2:2-4)

It is of this last and greater message that Paul speaks in the fifteenth verse of Romans 15, after having emphasized the value of the “things written aforetime”:

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (Rom. 15:15-16)

This settles the fact, beyond all cavil, that no offering is sanctified by the Holy Spirit or acceptable to God unless made “as it is written.”

This demolishes the argument of some who contend that if the thing we do is right, then it is right to do it in any way. If it is right to send out missionaries, we are right in devising any means we please to send them; if it is right to teach the Bible,

any way we teach it is right. There was never a sophistry ever devised by the devil more potent for the destruction of souls or more contrary to the word of God. The way a thing is done may render it as abominable in God's sight as if the thing itself were devil worship. Let us see what is written along this line in Isaiah 66:3:

He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

It was right to offer bullocks and lambs, incense and oblations, but the way of offering them was as important as the offering. Nadab and Abihu did a right thing in burning incense before the altar, but they did it in a wrong way and death was the penalty [Lev. 10].

In conclusion, I wish to call attention to the greatest lesson ever delivered along the line of my subject by the greatest of all teachers--Jesus Christ. Turn with me to the fourth chapter of Matthew and view the most dramatic incident in the life of our Lord; when the mightiest champions of good and evil met in mental conflict, and note well that every answer of the Son of God is prefaced by the dynamic words, "it is written."

I ask no better assurance of acceptance when I stand at the judgement seat of Christ than to be able to say for all that I taught or practiced on earth, "it is written." I am not willing to risk explaining by saying, "it seemed expedient," "it worked well," "it was done for the upbuilding of thy cause." For me there is just one reason that can satisfy my soul, and that is, "it is written."

When the tempter said to Jesus, "*Command that these stones be made bread,*" back comes the reply, "*It is written man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out*

of the mouth of God” [Mat. 4; Luke 4]. Infinite trust in the word of God; that is what we all need more than any other thing. Let us live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God and ask for nothing more. Let us discard everything that is not found in the word. Let no imagination of our own hearts deceive us into the belief that we can hasten God’s work by means and devices that are not in the things that are written.

The second temptation of the devil shows that he is an apt scholar, for at the Savior’s first reply he perceived that nothing would pass current with the Son of God except that which was written in his Father’s word, hence we hear him saying:

If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. [Mat. 4:6]

If asked to define a perversion of scripture, I suppose nine out of ten would say that it consists in changing either the words or application of the text so as to mislead one as to the meaning, which, while true as far as it goes, ignores the subtlest as well as the commonest form of perversion, of which the foregoing quotation is a notable example. Satan not only quoted the scripture correctly, but undoubtedly applied it to the identical one of whom it was written, and the answer of the Savior gives the infallible test by which every such perversion may be exposed. Note well his reply:

“It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” [Mat. 4:7]. How often have just such perversions deceived the hearts of the simple? The doctrine of salvation by faith alone is one of many instances in point, for it is written, *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,”* [John 3:36] and *“we are all children of God by faith”* [Gal. 3:26]. How clearly the sophistry of such is revealed when we apply the acid test of the Lord’s reply, *“It is written again.”* Ah,

yes, it is written again: *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,”* [Mar. 16:16] and again *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* [Gal. 3:27].

The application of this rule, which the Lord demonstrated for us in this great hour of his temptation, would enable us to avoid many of the most carefully concealed pitfalls which the devil has prepared for deluding unwary souls to their own destruction. It is written, *“how shall they preach, except they be sent?”* [Rom. 10:15] It is written, *“Go teach all nations,”* [Mat. 28:19] and it is written again just how the teaching was done. Let us ever follow in the footsteps of our Lord, putting all of our reliance upon that which is written, giving precept or example for all that we teach or practice, and we may then look forward without fear to the time when we must answer to the Judge of the whole earth for our every word and act.

That which is written will never fail us, can never mislead us, for it is the brightness of the Shechinah [denotes the dwelling or settling of the divine presence of God] in the sanctuary of the soul--the likeness and glory of God in the church of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

G.A. TROTT

Submitted by Wilma Mickey

I walked a mile with Pleasure;
She chatted all the way;
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow;
And ne'er a word said she;
But, oh! The things I learned from her,
When Sorrow walked with me.

— Robert Browning Hamilton

FROM THE SCRIPTURES: SORROW

Sorrow: a feeling of deep distress caused by loss, disappointment, or other misfortune suffered by oneself or others

-Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. (Mat. 5:4)

-And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Rom. 5:3-5)

-Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (John 16:20-22)

-By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. (Heb. 11:24-26)

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication intended to encourage all men everywhere to become laborers into God's harvest (Luke 10:2). This paper is mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, address changes and all correspondence to:

The Harvester

141 County Road 474 * Woodland, AL 36280

Phone: (256) 449-9221* Email: raymcm Manus@hotmail.com

Web Page: www.churches-of-christ.org

www.theharvesteronline.com

GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
February 16 - 18	Taylor's Cross Roads Roanoke, AL	Brandon Turner (Pell City, AL) & David Burnham

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. What color was the High Priest's robe?
2. How many cities did the Levites possess?
3. Proverbs describes a "fair woman without discretion" as like a jewel of gold in what?
4. In which city were Paul and Barnabas worshipped as gods?
5. How does Peter say a husband should treat his wife?
...and remember last month's questions?
1. How often was the year of the Lord's release? EVERY SEVEN YEARS (Deut. 15:1-2)
2. Who sang a song celebrating the downfall of Sisera?
DEBORAH & BARAK (Jdg. 5:1)
3. Which river was Naaman told to wash in to rid himself of leprosy? JORDAN (2 Ki. 5:10)
4. Which prisoners experienced an earthquake after their prayer? PAUL AND SILAS (Acts 16:26)
5. In the New Jerusalem where are the names of the twelve tribes written? ON THE TWELVE GATES (Rev. 21:12)

**A HUMBLE PERSON SERVING GOD IS
GREATER THAN A FAMOUS ONE WHO IS NOT**