

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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BEING A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN IS A WAY OF LIFE

I can't live a perfect life; there are too many rules to follow. This is the way many people feel today. As Christians we must help them to understand that Christians don't live a perfect life; they live a forgiven life. In Acts 22:16, we read about Paul who persecuted the church, yet was forgiven. In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus tells us that all that labor and are heavy laden should come to Him, take His yoke, and learn of Him, then we can find rest unto our soul. In 1 John 5:3-4, we are told that God's commandments are not grievous, and if we are born of

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God, our faith will help us overcome the world.

Some will ask if God is just waiting for them to mess up so He can zap them. This is far from the truth. 1 Timothy 2:4 tells us that God wants all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. In 2 Peter 3:9, we are told that the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Also, when we are tempted, God has promised that there is always a way to escape from the temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

Lets look at some parables in Matthew chapter 25 where Jesus taught three different lessons about heaven. In each lesson there were only two outcomes: success or failure.

Wise & Foolish Virgins – Matthew 25:1-13

(1) Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. (2) And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. (3) They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: (4) But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (5) While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. (6) And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. (7) Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. (9) But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. (10) And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. (11) Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. (12) But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. (13) Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

The Lord tells of ten virgins who were going to meet the bridegroom. Five were wise and prepared with oil in their lamps and five were foolish and had no oil. The bridegroom came during the night and the wise virgins went to meet him, but the foolish unprepared virgins missed his coming because they had to go and buy oil for their lamps. While the foolish virgins were gone to buy oil, the wise virgins went in to the marriage and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins returned after going to buy oil, the bridegroom told them, "I never knew you." This parable reminds us to always be ready for we know not when Jesus will return. Also, it teaches us that there will not be time to get ready when Jesus returns.

Parable of the Talents – Matthew 25:14-30

(14) For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. (15) And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. (16) Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. (17) And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. (18) But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. (19) After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. (20) And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. (21) His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (22) He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. (23) His lord said unto him, Well done,

good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (24) Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: (25) And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. (26) His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: (27) Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. (28) Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. (29) For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. (30) And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 tells us to use our talents and abilities to do all that we can for the Lord. Those that fully used their talents were rewarded with the words we all want to hear: enter into the joy of thy Lord (Heaven). The one that did nothing was cast into outer darkness (hell). It's horrible to think that our soul could be lost for all eternity for doing nothing. James 4:17 tells us that if you know to do good and don't do it, then it is sin.

Judgment – The Separation – Matthew 25:31-46

(31) When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

The Separation

(32) And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: (33) And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Saved on the right

(34) Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (35) For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: (36) Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Saved on the right – a way of life for good

(37) Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? (38) When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? (39) Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? (40) And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Lost on the left

(41) Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: (42) For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: (43) I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Lost on the left – a way of life for evil

(44) Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? (45) Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. (46) And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

In Matthew 25:31-46, we are told about the Judgment and how all people from all nations will be separated into two groups: the saved and the lost. In verses 34-36, we are given a list of things Christians should do to serve God and be pleasing to Him. It is interesting to note in verses 37-39 that the righteous person could not remember doing those things. He did not keep a list of every good thing that he had done. It was just a way of life for that person, and he didn't expect a pat on the back or praise when he helped someone. Helping others was such a part of his life that he served others without thinking just as a trained athlete develops muscle memory and performs as a reflex. However, we read in verses 41-46 that those who will be cursed are the ones who lived for themselves and not for God. They didn't help others; they didn't have love and compassion for others. Of course, most people would help Jesus if He knocked on our door asking for help and we knew it was Him. Not helping others was a way of life for the unrighteous.

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:

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How do we make sure that we are righteous and not cursed? First, we will never live better than we know. In 2 Timothy 2:15, the Bible tells us to “*Study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*”. Next, let the truth of the scriptures shape our lives as we serve God and mature as Christians. Romans 12:1-2 teaches us to serve God and renew our mind with His word so that we will know how to be acceptable to Him. We must not conform to this world, but be transformed by renewing our mind to do God’s will. A process that must continue for the rest of our life!

Being a Christian is much more than obeying the gospel and going to Church. Being a faithful Christian must be a way of life in all that we do for us to make Heaven our eternal home someday.

MARK CARPENTER
Woodland, AL

FROM THE SCRIPTURES: COMFORT IN CHRIST

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Mat. 11:28-30)

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (Joh. 14:1-3)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	TIME	PLACE	SPEAKER
Sept. 12—14	7pm Friday & Saturday, 10am Sunday	Clay Village Shelbyville, KY	Timothy Lewis (Eubank, KY)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who was also known as Jedidiah?
2. What was the name of Mered's wife who was the daughter of Pharaoh?
3. Which two Apostles are described as being the "son of Alphaeus"?
4. In which city of the Promised Land was the tabernacle (tent of meeting) originally located?
5. What kind of tree did Jesus curse?

...ANSWERS NEXT MONTH

And remember last month's questions?

1. How old was Joshua when he died? 110 (Josh. 24:29)
2. Which city did David pray for the peace of?
JERUSALEM (Psa. 122:6)
3. Out of the ten lepers Jesus healed, what nationality was the one who returned to thank him?
SAMARITAN (Luke 17:16)
4. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard how much was each person paid to work? ONE PENNY (Mat. 20:2)
5. What did Jesus and the disciples have for breakfast when Jesus appeared to them after the resurrection by the Sea of Tiberias? BREAD AND FISH (John 21:13)