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"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)

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LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

[Foreword: I do not profess to know a tremendous amount on this subject, nor do I intend on spending a lot of time on the controversial parts of it. What I do want to do is try to remind us young and old, but especially the young that the leadership in the Lord's church is very important.]

Everything that the church does must be backed up by one of two different ways. First of all we must follow all commands. We baptize and are baptized because Matt. 28:19 tells us to *"go and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."* We partake of the Lord's Supper because Paul

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received of the Lord to do so and delivered it unto us, I Cor. 11:23. We attend the services of the Lord because Heb. 10:25 tells us not to forsake "*the assembling of ourselves together.*" These are commands so we must follow them.

We must also follow all examples that pertain to us in the scriptures. Acts 20:7 tells us that we should come together on the first day of the week to break bread and preach. This is just one example but it does get the point across. There are also things we are not to do for we know by example that to do more than God intended for us to do is very damaging. Nadab and Abihu offered up a sacrifice, as shown in Lev. 10, that God had not commanded them to offer. They were immediately consumed by fire! We should not use a musical instrument because I Cor. 14:15 tells us to sing with the spirit and understanding. There is no command for it or example. We do not have a classroom that we divide into because Heb. 10:25 tells us not to forsake "*the assembling of ourselves together.*" Not only that, but there isn't a command or example for classrooms.

So what about our leadership? I Cor. 10:12 tells us to "*take heed lest ye fall.*" Therefore we need to constantly evaluate ourselves and make sure we are doing what the Lord has commanded us or shown us. Before the church was first formed Jesus picked out a certain twelve men to assist Him in getting the ball rolling, so to speak. They were called His apostles. According to Unger's Bible Dictionary an apostle is: someone sent with a special message or commission. The original twelve were Simon Peter, Andrew, John, Philip, James, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Simon Zelotes, Jude, James, and Judas Iscariot. Then after Judas hanged himself, Mathias was added. Later on Saul of Tarsus was made the thirteenth.

Ministers are also mentioned in the NT. II Cor. 3:5-18 shows us that as ministers of God and the New Testament, it is not of the letter but of the spirit. It continues to compare the old law to that of the New. It shows how much more glorious the new law is compared to the old law. Going into chapter 4:1 Paul states that "*seeing we have this ministry ...*" we should not faint but renounce dishonesty, craftiness and handling of the word of God deceitfully. This is something a minister must do. Col. 1:23 tells us that as Paul is a minister, whom we need to follow, Phil. 4:9, we must continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved from the hope of the gospel. A minister teaches the mystery of God which is of Jesus Christ and our salvation through Him. A minister also must preach, warn every man, teach every man in all wisdom that he may be able to present himself and every man perfect, complete, in Christ. He must be patient in all things, II Cor. 6:4-10, not speaking to please men but God. Never must he use flattering words or seek glory of any kind, I Thes. 2:4-6. A minister is to use the scriptures which are given by the inspiration of God for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness so he may be thoroughly furnished and perfect unto all good works, II Tim. 3:16,17.

We find in the scriptures there were deacons, Phil. 1:1. I Tim. 3:8-13 explains to us that in order to be a deacon one must meet certain requirements and be able to prove them before he can become one. The first and foremost of these is the desire to do the work, 3:1. Then one must be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, or greedy. A deacon must also hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. A deacon's wife must have the same qualities of her husband, and the husband

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cannot have more than one wife. He must also rule his children and his own house well. Also 3:1 tells us that the office of a bishop is a good work. If you would now look at v. 8, it starts out saying "*likewise must the deacons ...*" Therefore we conclude that the office of a deacon is a good work!

Another leader of the church is a bishop. Like the deacon, a bishop has requirements that he must meet before he can become one. These are stated in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Tit. 1:5-9. A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, not a striker; which according to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance means not quarrelsome. A bishop cannot be greedy, a brawler, or covetous. He must also have a lot of patience and rule his house well having his children in subjection with all gravity. Among all things he must know the scriptures and what he is to do, not a novice. He must also have a good report with those outside of the fold.

Acts 11:30 shows us that during Barnabas and Paul's time there were elders. The elders have a function. One of these is to handle disputes as shown in Acts 15:2. I Tim. 5:17 tells us that the elders that rule well should be counted worthy of double honor, especially if they labor in the word and doctrine. The 19th

verse shows us again that the elders are to settle differences within the church. If a church does not have any elders, who is to settle disputes? Tit. 1:5 shows us that Titus was left in Crete for a purpose. He was to set things in order and ordain elders. We also notice that an elder and a bishop is the same thing. Verse five starts out talking of elders and continues through verse nine on the same subject naming them as bishops. If in fact elders and bishops are used interchangeably, by Strong's definition an elder, or bishop must be someone who is older. Definitely he must have children but also have proven his quality as an overseer of his family and one that has ruled his house well and can handle the affairs of the church.

As God's children wearing the name of Christ, we are not to seek titles or reverence by anyone. I think one of the biggest problems today is that men, and women alike, are wanting to be recognized with some type of title. Too many men want to be known as an elder or deacon or minister of some church but they do not want the responsibility with it. It is true what Paul tells Timothy in I Tim. 3:1 that the office of an elder is a good work and one to be desired. It is not a glorified name, but an office which is to be desired because it is pleasing to God, not man. I have heard the statement before: 'If we were to appoint an elder or deacon, someone who was not appointed might be offended!' I say now for all ears to hear that if you or I would be offended because we were not appointed or chosen for the good work, we did not need to be one to begin with, and that in itself proves our disability for the job. Besides that, the scriptures make it very clear that an office of one of these two must be met with the specified qualifications. If there is no one qualified, then no one

should be appointed. Brethren, our problem lies in our future. We may not have one person qualified for the work now, and if we don't we need to start encouraging and teaching and exhorting those who could be qualified in the future. Like most things I think this starts in the home. If parents would tell their young sons, "This is something that you want to become," and tell their young daughters, "These are the traits that you need to have so you can become a good elder's wife," then we would have some qualified in the future.

Everything that is given to us by the apostles to keep the church running smoothly must be followed through. I am afraid that this is one thing that has not been followed the way it should be. Paul spends too much time on this subject just to be wasting his breath and find us lacking. *"Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me do: and the God of peace shall be with you."* (Phil. 4:9)

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. After Joshua's death, which tribe of Israel did God say should go up and fight the Canaanites?
2. According to John 15, Christ chose the disciples for what?
3. When should one not let the left hand know what the right hand is doing?
4. Solomon says his darling is like what kind of flower among the thorns?

5. What prophet is quoted by name more than all the other prophets?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. What prophet was confined in the courtyard when Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Jerusalem? JEREMIAH (Jer. 32:2)
2. What was God about to do when He said, "Should I hide from Abraham the thing I am about to do?" HE WAS GOING TO DESTROY SODOM (Gen. 18:16-22)
3. How should Christian wives behave toward unbelieving husbands? BE IN SUBJECTION (1 Pet. 3:1)
4. What book of the Bible first mentions the working of brass and iron? GENESIS (Gen. 4:22)
5. What was the first group of people displaced by the Israelites coming out of Egypt? THE AMORITES (Num. 21:25)

[Editor's Note: This is issue #60 which means the completion of five whole years! God has certainly blessed this 'little' paper. He has provided the time, effort and resources of several people in order to make THE HARVESTER possible. He has also provided 918 names to the mailing list at this time. Special thanks must go to Buster Boyd, Dana Chandler, Harry Cobb, Max Gaskins, Marty Livingston and Tony Whiddon, who each contributed edifying articles this year. As 1990 comes to a close and 1991 begins, let us remember to *"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."* (Matt. 9:38) Please pray for us while we continue this labor.]

BIBLE PRINCIPLES OF SALVATION

I. ALL PEOPLE HAVE SINNED

1 Ki 8:46 Rom 3:10 Rom 3:23 Rom 5:12 1 Jn 1:8 1 Jn 5:19

II. A SINNER WILL FACE ETERNAL DEATH

Ezek 33:8-9 Rom 6:23 2 Thes 1:7-9 Jas 1:15 Jas 5:20 Rev 21:8

Unless he:

1. Hears the Word of God
Matt 13:23 Lk 10:39 Jn 10:16 Rom 10:17 Eph 1:13 1 Thes 2:13
2. Realizes Jesus Christ is the Only Way to Eternal Salvation
Jn 6:68 Jn 14:6 Acts 4:12 Eph 2:18 1 Thes 5:9 Heb 5:9
3. Believes Jesus is the Son of God
Mk 16:16 Jn 3:16 Jn 8:24 Jn 20:31 Acts 10:43 Acts 16:31 Heb 11:6
4. Is Convicted in his Heart of his Own Disobedience
Acts 2:37 Acts 16:29 Acts 24:25 2 Cor 7:8-11
5. Repents of his Sins
Lk 13:3 Acts 2:38 Acts 3:19 Acts 17:30 Acts 26:20
6. Confesses his Faith in the Lord Jesus
Matt 10:32 Acts 8:37 Acts 19:18 Rom 10:9-10 Phil 2:11 1 Jn 4:15
7. Is Baptized by Immersion for the Remission of Sins in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Matt 28:19 Mk 16:16 Jn 3:5 Acts 2:38 Acts 8:36-39 Acts 10:47-48 Acts 16:33 Acts 22:16 Rom 6:3-6 Gal 3:27 Col 2:12 1 Pet 3:21
8. Lives a Faithful Life, Guided Only by the Authority of the NT
Matt 25:21 Rom 1:16 Tit 2:11-12 Heb 4:12 Jas 1:21 1 Jn 5:4 Rev 2:10
9. Worships in Spirit & Truth, not Forsaking the Assembling, and Observing the Lord's Supper every first day of the week
Matt 4:10 Jn 4:23-24 Acts 2:42 Acts 20:7 1 Cor 11:20-30 Heb 10:25
10. Prays for Forgiveness, if he should Fall into Sin again
Acts 8:22 1 Cor 10:12-13 Eph 6:18 1 Thes 5:17 Jas 5:15-16 1 Jn 1:5-10

III. ONLY THOSE WHO DO THE WILL OF GOD SHALL BE SAVED

Matt 7:21 Matt 12:50 Lk 6:47-48 Rom 2:13 Jas 1:22 1 Jn 2:17 Rev 22:14

The godly man's prayers are his best biography,
his most exact portrait. People who do a lot
of kneeling don't do much lying.

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