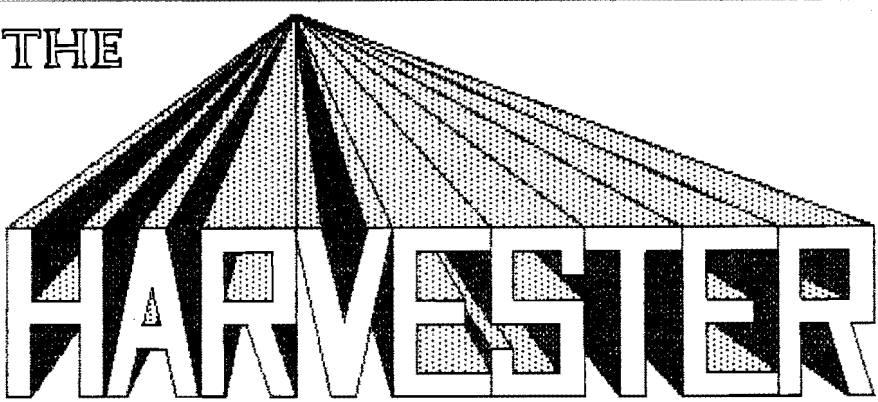


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"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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### SOME EXAMPLE!

Once again a famous TV evangelist is making news in our nation. Unfortunately, the news looks bad. Even worse is the fact that this 'televangelist' has a huge following. Thousands and thousands of people are being lead by this man and his 'ministry'. Where is he leading them? To heaven or to hell? Or to his own special 'kingdom'? Maybe it is time to examine the acts of this man a little closer.

It is not our intention to 'judge' this particular TV evangelist. The Bible clearly teaches that we must not presume to determine the fate of another person's soul, in the way that God does. The only true Judge is God (Rom. 2:16). We, as humans, tend to judge with

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partiality. We are never fully aware of the hidden intents and motives of the heart. But God does know the hearts of all men (1 Sam. 16:7; Acts 1:24) and thus, he is able and fully qualified to sit on the Throne and pass judgment accordingly.

However, we can "*judge righteous judgment*" (John 7:24). Just as we can 'judge' or determine a tree by its fruit, we can 'judge' a man by his works (Matt. 7:15-20). We can tell a lot about a person by looking at his actions and the example he sets. And so let us note a few items about the televangelist who has made headlines recently. Let us examine the 'fruits' of this man who professes to follow God and compare it with what God's Word has to say on the matter.

Last month this man and his rival went to court over a defamation suit. The televangelist lost in the jury's decision and now has to pay ten million dollars to his rival. It isn't important who won or why, but of significance is the fact that they took their quarrel to a civil court. How does this action compare with the scriptures found in 1 Cor. 6:1-8? There the apostle Paul wrote that believers should NOT take their matters to law before the unjust. So why did this TV evangelist purposely forsake God's teaching in this passage? Is this the example he really wants to set before his followers, that he is not subject to NT laws?

More recently, he was pulled over by the police in California and cited for traffic violations. He disobeyed the law and was given a ticket. Obviously he also disobeyed God's law about being subject to the government and being a law-abiding citizen (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). If this TV evangelist has no regard or respect for our nation's traffic laws, then how much honor will he truly give unto God? It makes one wonder if the man actually fears the Lord.

The part that got the big headlines was the fact that he was traveling with a questionable female companion. This was the second time this man was found in company with an alleged prostitute. The other time was in 1988 in New Orleans. Again, we are forced to 'judge' his deeds with the Word of God. Doesn't the Bible in 1 Thes. 5:22 say, "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*"? Not a very good example of adhering to that verse, is it?

But let us not be too hasty in judgment. Remember, "*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*" (John 7:24) Things are not always what they appear to be. In Genesis 39 it appeared that Joseph was guilty when Potiphar's wife held up his garment. We all know that he was really innocent but Potiphar had little choice except to send Joseph to prison. Now, we are not trying to prove that the televangelist is innocent of any wrongdoing but he certainly did not avoid the appearance of evil, did he?

Throughout all these discoveries, the TV evangelist has made very few comments. He has not admitted guilt or offered any explanations. Many people will say that proves his guilt because "Silence gives consent". If he was innocent, then he would speak up. Well, what about Jesus Christ? Before His crucifixion, He was given a trial and several times He would not give an answer (Matt. 26:63; 27:12,14). So does 'silence' really imply consent, as the saying goes? Once again, we are not attempting to put the televangelist on trial nor making a decision on his blamelessness. We are merely trying to learn something from his actions and how it all compares with the Bible.

I suppose the clincher came a few days later when this man announced that God SPOKE to him and told him not to step down from the pulpit. The man said he had tried to read the

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Bible that night but couldn't. He had trouble sleeping. But later he clearly heard God's voice talk to him! God revealed a new plan to him! I am afraid too many TV evangelists have tried this tactic lately and with too much success. They all claim that God has directly revealed a special message to them and many unsuspecting people fall for it. Soon those people are deceived into following these impostors and giving them all their money.

If only more people would study the scriptures, they would find out that God does NOT speak to man directly like he did in the Garden of Eden. Today God speaks to us through his Son (Heb. 1:1-2). Christ speaks to us through the apostles He commissioned (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8). Those apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit of God (John 14:16-17,26; 15:26-27; 16:7-13). Therefore, God reveals his will to us today by his Spirit and through the writings of the scriptures (1 Cor. 2:7-10; Eph. 3:4-5; Heb. 2:1-4). If God has anything to tell us, we can find it recorded in the pages of the Bible. What must we think, then, of a man who claims to have received another message directly from God? *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"* (Gal. 1:8)

I doubt this is the last we have heard from this 'televangelist'. He will make the six-o'clock news another day. But so far, he

has been setting some kind of example for his congregation to follow! Perhaps many of his followers will open their eyes now and see that this man is not abiding in the doctrine of Christ like he should (2 John 9). Perhaps the man himself will realize that it is time to forsake the religious ideas of men and to return to the spiritual truths of God's Word. This is our hope and prayer.

The antics of this televangelist can be a great lesson to each one of us if we will make the proper spiritual application. What kind of an example am I setting before men? Do I let my light shine (Matt. 5:13-16) and am I being a good role model (1 Tim. 3:12)? We might not be in the same limelight as a TV evangelist but it is very important that we conduct ourselves properly at all times (Titus 2:7,8). We never know who is watching us. Everything we do becomes **SOME EXAMPLE!**

RAY McMANUS

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Why did Hezekiah break the brazen serpent Moses had made?
2. While in the wilderness, how many trumpets were used to alert the Israelites to assemble or to break camp?
3. After Peter escaped from prison, what did King Herod do to the keepers of the prison?
4. According to Revelation, when the clusters from the vine of earth were gathered and thrown into the great wine press of the wrath of God, what came out from the wine press?
5. What book was written by a general?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Who was the king of the Media-Persian empire during the time of Esther? **AHASUERUS** (Esther 1:1)
2. In the Parable of the Lost Coin, how many coins were involved? **TEN** (Luke 15:8)
3. What is the reason stated in Romans for salvation coming to the Gentiles? **TO MAKE ISRAEL JEALOUS** (Rom. 11:11)
4. What is the shortest book in the Old Testament? **OBADIAH**
5. Why did Abraham tell Abimelech that Sarah was his sister? **HE WAS AFRAID THAT THEY WOULD KILL HIM TO GET HIS WIFE** (Gen. 20:11)

## **CHRIST IN THE BIBLE**

In **PHILEMON** we have the story of Christian brotherly love at work. A runaway slave named Onesimus has been converted. Now Paul makes a special request of his friend Philemon to receive Onesimus back. Any debt that Onesimus owes, Paul promises to make good. Forgiveness and brotherly love is all he asks in return. In the same manner, we are restored to God through the forgiveness and love of the Messiah. As Paul intercedes for Onesimus, so does Christ mediate for us before the Father.

Because many of the Jewish believers wanted to escape persecution, a move was made to return to the Mosaical system. The book of **HEBREWS** counters this movement by showing the superiority of Christ. He is better than the angels, than Moses, than the Aaronic priesthood, and than the Old Law. Christ is our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. In this book the Messiah is described with over

twenty different titles presenting His deity and humanity in premiere fashion.

JAMES says very little about the Messiah, yet his book is filled with the teachings of Christ. It was the Saviour who taught the Sermon on the Mount. In the epistle by James many of those same principles are repeated (1:2; 1:4; 2:13; 4:11; 5:2; etc). If this James was the Lord's brother, then he certainly was blessed to have heard such a sermon and to share it with his beloved brethren.

The apostle Peter wrote two books of the Bible. In 1 PETER he encourages those who are struggling with being persecuted. He reminds them of the Messiah who suffered on the cross and whose death provided redemption. This same Messiah is their hope and inheritance and their source of love. Today Christ is the Chief Shepherd and Guardian, especially of the persecuted believers. In 2 PETER there is a longing for the return of the Redeemer. The whole world will behold His glory at that time. Notice in particular how Peter uses the word "Lord" everytime he refers to the Saviour after the first verse. Truly the disciple can attain spiritual maturity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

RAY

**NOTHING IS GAINED BY BACKSLIDING**

*The church loses a member  
 The Lord loses a servant  
 The brethren lose a brother  
 The community loses a Christian's  
 influence  
 And the backslider loses his soul!*

-COPIED-

# GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place &amp; Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
November 8 - 10 C - Su	Pleasant Grove Church near Alex City, AL 7:00pm/ 10:30am & 6:00pm	Curtis Smith (Cullman, AL)

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## 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