

Continued from Page Three, "The Churches Of Judea"

When the aged warrior Paul was arrested and imprisoned at Jerusalem and later in Caesarea, they sacrificed in order that he might be more comfortable (Heb. 10:32-34). Then later, as turmoil in Judea increased because of the conflict with the Roman state these saints heeded the words of Jesus and fled "to the mountains" (Matt. 24:16). They resisted the "false Christs" and the "false prophets" (Matt. 24:24). Sadly, they watched as Jerusalem fell to the sword, but their faith saved them (Matt. 24:13).

the Holy Ghost gave them was the assurance "that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance ... great recompense of reward" (Heb. 10:34-35). Whatever these saints gave up in the service of Christ, whether houses, lands, reputation or even life itself was returned to them in coin of far greater value. As in the words of Paul, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life" (Rom. 2:7, 10). Credit: www.padfield.com ♦

Their Comfort

Luke records that they achieved all these things "in the comfort of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:31). That comfort which

THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING

He made no mistakes and took no wrong roads;
 He never humbled the ball;
 He never went down beneath the load.
 He lost no hard fights in defense of the right;
 He never bled with his back to the wall.
 He never fell faint in his climb to the light;
 He simply did nothing at all.
 So death came nigh, for life slipped away,
 And he feared for the Judgment Hall.
 When they asked him why, he said with sigh:
 "I simply did nothing at all."
 So, God will pardon your blunders, my friend,
 And regard with pity your fall.
 But the one big sin that surely means Hell,
 Is simply to do nothing at all. ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
 Green Bay, WI 54313

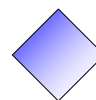


Schedule of Assembly

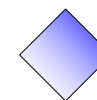
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
 Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
 Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



November 20, 2011

"Charges to Christians"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

One of the real problems of Christianity is a lack of dedicated service to Christ. You must serve Christ zealously and faithfully. Living the Christian life is pictured in the New Testament as: warfare (Eph. 6:10-18), an athletic event (1 Cor. 9:24-26; Gal. 5:7). A good start, so important in a race, does not insure a successful finish. Christians need to remember these charges for running the Christian race.

(1) "...stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). Paul exhorts the Corinthians to stand fast. Meaning, stand fast in the truth (Jno. 17:17), God's word (Psa. 119:9), the New Testament (2 Cor. 3:6), the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16), the doctrine or teaching of Christ (2 Jno. 9). This is the urgency needed by all saints! We must prove our worth as a soldier of Christ and fight the spiritual warfare that Christians must wage! Stand fast in the faith, always be eager to defend (1 Pet. 3:15) and contend (Jude 3). Stand for things which Christ stood for, stand for the things which Christ died for, stand and ask for the old paths (Jer. 6:16).

(2) "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). When one has learned what is good or true, and what is evil and false, he should hold fast the true and abstain from the evil. In 1 Timothy 6:11-12, follow a discourse on a number of evils and the disastrous results that come upon those that follow such things. Paul addresses Timothy as a "man of God", indicating that he is one who is committed to God in this life. In view of the evils just mentioned (1 Timothy 6), Paul urges Timothy to "flee these things" (vs. 11). There are times when running is not cowardly, but wise. It is absurdity, foolishness and madness to remain in the presence of temptation needlessly. It is not wisdom to deliberately place one's soul in jeopardy. When Joseph was approached by the wife of Potiphar for the purpose of fornication, Joseph fled the scene completely. We cannot always avoid temptations, but we do not have to remain in their presence. "Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not

travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on" (Prov. 4:14-15).

(3) "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). This says in effect, that love for the Lord is evidenced in keeping His commandments. If you'll keep on loving Me, you'll keep my commandments. "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keep-eth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 Jno. 2:3-5). "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jno. 15:9-10). This love for God is not simply an emotion. It is a disposition that seeks the glory of God. It is an attitude of submission to His will. It is the desire to do His bidding! Love is not only obeying commands; it is having them! "He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to Him" (Jno. 14:21). Love **MUST** be expressed in obedience! Such glorifies the Son and thus, glorifies the Father. Do you love the Father? Do your actions show that you do?

(4) "...Be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Pet. 1:15). We are encouraged to live lives of complete dedication to God. As the song we sing, we need to:

*Take time to be Holy,
 speak oft with thy Lord;
 Abide in Him always,
 And feed on His word.*

Are we taking time to be holy when we want worship services shortened? Or, when we want the sermon not to be over twenty minutes? We want the prayers short, the

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - "Charges To Christians"
 Pages 2 to 3 - "How Can I Make This Church Strong?"
 Pages 3 to 4 - The Churches Of Judea
 Page 4 - THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING | What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Continued from Page One, "Charges To Christians"

songs few. What's the big hurry? Are we in a hurry to visit the sick and erring after services? No, we want to go to a restaurant and eat a delicious meal, watch TV or whatever we desire. If the Lord's Supper is served first, some brethren will partake of it and leave on a trip the minute after they partake! Is this taking time to be holy, or is this taking time for our own desires? We need to forget the cares of

the world and take time to be holy! We should study God's word and pray every day.

The truth of God has been placed in the care of those who love the Lord. It is an awesome responsibility, so let us handle it aright, love it, obey it, live it and stand fast for it! ♦

“How Can I Make This Church Strong?”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Strength, whether physical or spiritual, is something that we all need. New parents want to make sure that their baby grows and develops physically, don't they? If it does not gain strength in the coming weeks and months, that child will go to every doctor and specialist around until he gets better, or a reason for the lack of growth and development is discovered!

In like manner, the local church here needs to gain and retain spiritual strength. This is something God demands (**I Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10; II Tim. 2:1; II Pet. 3:18**).

Knowing this is true, many concerned Christians say, "I wish this church was stronger or growing more than it is." This is a great attitude to have, but it takes ACTION if we are to grow in the Lord. What can I do to make this church strong?

Be Converted To God's Ways.

Once one is baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**), he must completely give up his old ways. **Romans 6:3-6** says we must die to the old man of sin (Also **Col. 3:5-14**). After this, we become a "new creature" in Christ (**II Cor. 5:17**). In fact, Jesus said we must be as a child if we wish to see Heaven (**Matt. 18:3**).

In applying these principles, one who will make this church strong is one that will not turn back to his old ways in sin, but will leave that old man "in the grave." As a child of God, he must have the child-like qualities of humility and obedience to God (**I Pet. 5:5-6; Jn. 14:15, 23**). He/She must sincerely and completely turn to God (**Rom. 12:1-2**). Does this describe YOU? If not, it is time to "repent and do the works you did at first" (**Rev. 2:5**)!

Be Faithful To God's Ways.

Unfaithfulness is to this church what termites are to a house!! Jesus promises to take care of our physical wor-

ries when we "seek ... first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (**Matt. 6:33; Ps. 37:25**). John stressed the importance of being righteous when he told those in Smyrna, "be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life" (**Rev. 2:10**). The apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (**I Cor. 15:58**). If this church is to grow and be strong, it needs YOU to be faithful in your attendance, in your speech, in your thoughts, and in all you do (**Col. 3:17**)! Yes, it is a tall order, but it MUST be done!

Be Educated In God's Ways.

In Old Testament days, God's people experienced a great famine. It was worse than a shortage of food or water. It was a famine of God's word (**Hos. 4:6; Amos 8:11-12**)!! In like manner, we have a similar famine, or shortage of God's word.

Unfortunately, our problem is not from a lack of spiritual food available to us, as in other countries. Rather, this famine is the result of a REFUSAL TO EAT (**I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14**)!!! As a society, we are refusing to listen to God's word and let it settle in our hearts.

Paul said that only through reading (the Bible) could we hope to have his understanding (**Eph. 3:4**). He later told Timothy (and us) to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (**II Tim. 2:15**). Peter commanded that God's people "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (**II Pet. 3:18**). How can this happen when we do not know what the Bible says? How can we ever hope to strengthen the church here when we have no earthly idea what we are doing or how to do it? Thus, the need for education and for application of what we have learned!

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "How Can I Make This Church Strong?"

Be A Worker In God's Ways.

We do many things that amount to nothing in this life; but working for God is something that is never in vain (**I Cor. 15:58**)! God said that His word will not return to Him void (**Isa. 55:11**). Thus, each and every thing we can do to

increase our strength and the strength of our fellow Christians is a useful thing. We sometimes sing, "I Want To Be A Worker For The Lord" (Hymns For Worship, #504). Do we mean the words we are singing? Are we ALL chipping in and doing our part? I hope so — the strength of the Lord's church in this place depends upon it!!! Do you truly want to help? Are you willing to do what it takes to make this church strong? I am!! *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦*

The Churches Of Judea

By Jeff Asher

The exact time of the establishment of the Judean churches is not stated in the book of Acts. Their mention in the New Testament is tied to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (**Acts 9:26-31**) and the movement of the Apostles out of Jerusalem after the first persecution ended (**Acts 8:1; 9:32**). In particular Lydda, Joppa and Saron are mentioned in order to introduce the next great phase of the commission's fulfillment -- the Gospel going to the Gentiles (**Acts 10:1-5**).

Since Christ had planned the advance of the Kingdom in connection with the great commission (**Acts 1:8**), these churches must have been established shortly after the great Pentecost conversions and before the sending of Philip into Samaria (**Acts 8:1, 4-5**). If Saul was converted in 36 A.D. (see *Harmony of the Life of Paul*, by Frank Goodwin, p. 7), then these churches must have been established about a year after Pentecost (**Acts 9:1, 31**).

Their Growth

Peter's visit into Judea seems to have been much like the one he and John made into Samaria in order to confirm the churches (**Acts 8:14**), and the one like Paul and Barnabas made when returning through Galatia (**Acts 14:23**). The post-persecution period of the Judean churches was a time of edification and multiplication (**Acts 9:31**). This would have been the time when the first converts were maturing and advancing in the churches and new converts were being readily made (**Acts 9:35, 42**). Thus, about two years after their establishment we have opportunity for the apostles to have visited these churches and ordained elders in every city.

Their Suffering

The persecution against the church grew in direct proportion to the success of the gospel. The more converts that were made the more severe the retaliation of the High Priest and those in league with him. At first, it was

threatening and intimidation (**Acts 4:21**). Then it was beating and imprisonment (**Acts 5:18, 28, 40**). After that, the violence escalated to mob assault and murder (**Acts 6:9-15; 7:58**). Finally, there was an organized, government-sanctioned persecution against the church in Jerusalem, Judea and wherever there was a synagogue (**Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2; 22:4-5, 19; 26:11**).

The churches of Judea were most certainly the objects of this persecution (**1 Thes. 2:13-16**). However, their suffering was not limited to physical abuse from religious-political authorities. Their suffering began long before their attack.

It was the Judean Christians that bore the brunt of the responsibility for those Jews "out of every nation under heaven" (**Acts 2:8-11**). These are the saints who sold their possessions and parted them to every man, as he had need (**Acts 2:45; 4:34**). These are the saints that bore the responsibility for their brothers and sisters as they suffered (**Hebrews 10:32,33**). When the Lord chose to identify an outstanding saint among the Judean brethren, it was a woman "full of good works and almsdeeds" (**Acts 9:36**). However, poverty and duress was not all they endured. God allowed them to undergo the trial of famine and pestilence (**Acts 11:28**). Their suffering was so complete that they were reduced to charity in order to survive (**Acts 11:29**). Their affliction was an opportunity by which the kingdom increased.

Their Faithfulness

These precious saints of the Lord endured and remained faithful throughout their troubled history. They were under great pressure from their unbelieving countrymen to return to the bondage of the Law of Moses (**Heb. 10:39; 12:1-5**). However, their latter faith flourished even as it did in the beginning.

Continued on Page Four