

Continued from Page Three, "I'm Satisfied"

religion (Matt. 7:22-23).

People often make the reply "I'm satisfied" as though that's all that matters. They think that since they are happy and content with the church they are in, all is well with their soul. However, one's primary concern should be, "Is God satisfied?" The Pharisees were very much satisfied with their religion, but Jesus said, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9). Jeroboam was well satisfied with his new religion and so were the thousands in Israel who embraced it (1 Kings 12:25-33). However, there are no harder words of condemnation found anywhere in the Bible than those spoken against Jeroboam and his followers (1 Kings 13:1-2; 14:10-11). Jesus showed that at the judgment there will be many condemned in spite of the fact they were pleased with what they were doing in

The "I'm satisfied" attitude is not a good attitude to have. Instead, the child of God has an open mind realizing there is always room for correction and improvement. Furthermore, he realizes that those who differ with him will point out his error, but those who embrace that same error will not. To overcome the danger of embracing falsehood, he is always willing to study both sides of the question with a good and honest heart. With this humble attitude the Christian will study and examine what others present; without it, he will be closed minded and will cut off all possible avenues of truth. The Bible says, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure..." (2 Pet. 1:10). "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves." (2 Cor. 13:5). Credit: <http://oakridgchurch.com/riggs> ♦

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

- BETWEEN** the atheist who would not dream of financially supporting the church and the Christian who will not financially support the Lord's church?
- BETWEEN** the skeptic who does not believe the Bible and the negligent Christian who never reads it?
- BETWEEN** those who do not believe in Bible classes and those who choose never to attend a class?
- BETWEEN** the atheist who does nothing to build up the Lord's church and the Christian who finds fault with others, but does nothing himself?
- BETWEEN** a man of the world, and a person in the church who lives like a man in the world?
- BETWEEN** a man of the world who lives for self and a person in the church who lives for self, and not God?

These are tough questions for Christians who live in a tough world. The fact is, Christians make no difference until they are different. Again, **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?** ♦

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

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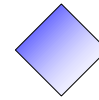


Schedule of Assembly

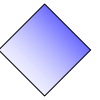
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

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

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



April 17, 2011

Enemy of God
By Jimmy Pettigrew

Being a Christian is something matchless. It is a new way of life (Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17). A new mode of life lived by new standards, with new values and attitudes. Pleasing God is a Christian's daily desire! "Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk, — that ye abound more and more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1). "No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of (this) life; that he may please him who enrolled him as soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4). "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). A Christian cannot serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). A Christian is marked by characteristics that set him apart from the world. He is one that is in the world, but not of the world (John 15:19; 17:14-16). A Christian loves "not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15-17). We are "not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2). A child of God keeps himself "unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). "The world hath been crucified," put to death for one who follows the steps of Christ (Galatians 6:14; 1 Peter 2:21). He knows that "the whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19) and "the land is filled with sin" (Jeremiah 51:5). A Christian denies "ungodliness and worldly lusts" and lives "soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:12). Christians "are seen as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15).

Warning! Our Lord taught in the parable of the soils that the cares and pleasures of this life, serve to choke the gospel. They smother the Word of God, cause one to neglect spiritual things in favor of worldly things and turn him back to sin (Luke 8:14). These hearers loved the world and returned to it (2 Timothy 4:10). A Christian who gives way to evil desire, living for the cares and pleasures of the world (Mark 4:19; Titus 3:3; Hebrews 11:25), has broken his vow to God. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" - James 4:4

maketh himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). There is no way we can be friends with the world or love the world and expect to have the favor of God. Friendship with the world equals enmity with God, which means a state of war with God. The church is Christ's bride (2 Corinthians 2:11) and every member of the church is pledged to be faithful to Jesus as Lord. Thus, the worldly person tends to compromise with the world. When Christian's exhibit desire for and make compromises with the world they are guilty of spiritual adultery. They have taken love, energy and time that belonged to Christ and have squandered it on the world. When the world is permitted to come into the heart, God is thereby crowded out. "Wherefore come out among them, and be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6:17); "Abhor that which is evil" (Romans 12:9). "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Timothy 2:19).

We **MUST** maintain unquestioned loyalty to Christ; we must submit ourselves "to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). What is Christian living all about? It is the purging out of one's heart all the cares and pleasures of the world which destroy spiritually. It is the conquering and being victorious! "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, (even) our faith" (1 John 5:4). Thus, may each and every person be faithful and totally committed to God! The God of heaven, Who created us, gave us breath, life, and this wonderful world to live in (Acts 17:28) deserves the first place in our lives! As our Creator, Provider, Ruler, and Judge, we are indebted to honor and serve Him with our very best! Are you putting God first? ♦

In This Issue...

Page 1 - Enemy of God
Pages 2 to 3 - "Stone Tablets Of Warning"
Pages 3 to 4 - I'm Satisfied
Page 4 - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? | What Must I Do to Be Saved?

“Stone Tablets Of Warning”

By Jarrod Jacobs

I recently read a newspaper article about a Japanese warning system. It reminded me a lot of what God had the Jews do when crossing the Jordan. **Joshua 4:1-7** records God’s commands that once the nation had crossed the Jordan into Canaan, 12 men (1 per tribe) were to take a stone from the bed of the Jordan and set up a pile of stones on the other side where they camped that night (**v. 2-3**). The purpose was so that when future generations passed that place and asked what those stones meant, the fathers could tell them of God’s deliverance by bringing them into Canaan by means of crossing the Jordan on dry ground. (It is understood also that when these children became parents, then they would tell their children, and so on.) In other words, setting up the stones was not for that present generation’s benefit, but for the benefit of future generations who had not experienced this event. Memorials in the Old and New Testaments are utilized by God on several occasions. These memorials teach, warn, and give us insight into the wisdom of God when we pay attention and obey Him.

In like manner, after recent earthquakes and a tsunami the Japanese people have suffered, it has been discovered that the Japanese had a “warning system” on their coasts. What was this system? The people had stone markers set up in their land. These markers served to warn people of the dangers of tsunamis and earthquakes. Men who had experienced earthquakes, tsunamis, and their subsequent destruction many years ago, left stone markers all over Japan, stating things like, “Always be prepared for unexpected tsunamis. Choose life over your possessions and valuables.” Another marker said, “Octopus Grounds”. This referred to the animals that washed up there after a tsunami. The markers even indicated where it was safe to build houses. One marker had this inscription: “Remember the calamity of the great tsunamis. Do not build any homes below this point.” What makes these markers even more special is the fact that they are more than 600 years old! It was also fascinating to learn that those who listened to the markers and built on “high ground”, or those who moved to high ground soon after the earthquake were alive to be interviewed! Those who did not listen to, or were ignorant of, the warnings on the markers were killed, and even swept out to sea in many cases. (Source: *Messenger-Inquirer*, p. A4, 4/7/11)

As I read that article, I couldn’t help but think of several Biblical truths that these Japanese warning stones reflect. First, notice that these warning stones were created by

folks who endured trouble years ago. These words warn future generations what men in the past endured. Heeding the warning meant men today might avoid the same horrors. The truth on the stones is as real today as it was 600 or more years ago.

Can we see a parallel? The Bible was completed many years ago, but its truth is still as powerful and as relevant as ever (**Jn. 17:17**). Yet, it does us no good if we do not LISTEN!! Thus, the Lord tells us to “take heed” on several occasions (**Mk. 4:24; Lk. 8:18, 12:15; Acts 20:28; Rom. 11:21-22; I Cor. 10:12; I Tim. 4:16; Heb. 3:12; II Pet. 1:19**). There are many things God has said that are deserv-ing of our attention and obedience. Are we doing it? When we do, we are blessed and can avoid many of the pitfalls and hardships in life, up to and including being lost in a Devil’s Hell! When we disobey, then hardship on earth and a Devil’s Hell are what face us! (See: **Matt. 7:13-14; Mk. 16:16; Rev. 21:7-8, 22:14-15**, etc.)

A second lesson I see in this is best stated by a Japanese professor who discussed these stones in this article. He said, “It takes about three generations for people to forget. Those that experience the disaster pass it to their children and their grandchildren, but then the memory fades.” Wasn’t this the problem experienced in **Judges 2**? The Record says, “*The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel*” (**Judges 2:7**). It does not state specifically “3 generations” had passed, but as we continue to read, we are told that, “*Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.... And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel*” (**Josh. 2:8-10**). Thus, after Joshua died, and after that generation had passed who had lived through what Joshua had lived through (ex: **Josh. 24**), there arose another generation who did not know God! That generation then brought harm and disgrace to the nation through their sins and wickedness. Sadly, the passing of time has not made people less forgetful! We have not become less negligent on matters! This is the reason the apostle Peter was inspired to write to the Christians and tell them, “*I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as*

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, “Stone Tablets Of Warning”

long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (II Pet. 1:12-16). In speaking of those Japanese stones, one man said, “People had this crucial knowledge, but they were busy with their lives, and jobs, and many forgot.” What a terrible price they paid for their forgetfulness!

Yes, people are forgetful, thus it is necessary to have these reminders from time to time. We get short-sighted, don’t we? We allow day-to-day activities, what we eat, where we live, etc., to get in the way of what is most important! Jesus spoke of this in **Matthew 6**, and reminded people that the life is more than food and the body more than clothing (**v. 25**). Therefore, we need to “*seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (**v. 33**). Far greater than the Japanese stones are the reminders God has established in His word so that future generations will continue to remember what God has done for man and be saved in Heaven one day!

Finally, I found it quite telling that those who listened to the warnings printed on the Japanese stones were spared death by the tsunamis. Those who did not build below a certain level, per the warning on some of the stones had their houses spared; while the many who did not lost

everything. It is interesting to note that in the article, one man said, “In five years, you’ll see houses begin to sprout up here again.” What? In other words, in a short amount of time, people will forget. They will go back to “normal,” ignore the warnings, and place their lives and their families’ lives in danger.

It is obvious that people, regardless of culture, are basically the same. For example, the Jews acted in a similar manner in the days of the Judges for some 450 years. They would sin and be punished by God through an invading army. After a time, they would cry out in repentance to God, and He would raise a judge to deliver them. They would then live in peace while the judge lived, but after his death, they would fall back into their sin and repeat the cycle (**Judges 2:12-19**)! Many people died in those years because folks refused to follow the Lord’s command! They chose to ignore God’s warnings, and they suffered the consequences.

Brethren, when will we learn? We are not different, are we? God has warned us against acting in ways which result in our spiritual death. Specifically, He has said, “*The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (**Rom. 6:23**). Furthermore, He has told us what leads to sin and death (**Jas. 1:14-15**). He has told us we need to guard our minds to make sure our words and actions are pure and pleasing to God (**Phil. 4:8-9; Prov. 4:23; I Tim. 5:22b**). We need to keep our minds, words, and actions on the “high ground” so as to avoid spiritual disaster! Yet, what do we do about it? Do we act? Do we ignore the Lord’s will? It is evident that we forget what the Lord has said to our own peril!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

I'm Satisfied By David J. Riggs

Zealous Bible students are eager to persuade people to study the Bible with them, but more often than not, they are met with the reply, "I'm satisfied with my religion." These people seem to think that since they are pleased with their present religion there is not need for Bible study. However, just because one is satisfied with his religion does not necessarily mean that God is satisfied.

There are satisfied people in all churches, but all churches cannot be right because they contradict one another. When several churches are teaching conflicting doctrines, some of them are in error. Truth is absolute and always consistent with itself. If one church teaches we can

baptize infants and another says we can't, if one claims baptism is for remission of sins and another teaches it is not, or if one declares we are saved before baptism and another at the point of baptism, they all can't be right.

The Bible says, "*Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.*" (**2 John 9**). It is a Bible fact that Jesus Christ has only one church (**Eph. 4:3-6; 1:22-23**). Jesus said, "*Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.*" (**Matt. 15:13**).

Continued on Page Four