

Continued from Page Three, "I Samuel 15"

shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17-19). Adam listened to his wife instead of God and suffered for it (and so have we!) just

like Saul listened to the people and suffered for it (and so did future generations).

Friends, to whom are we listening? Let us remember that we are responsible for our own sin. Others will not answer to God for the sin we commit (II Cor. 5:10; Ezek. 18:20). Since this is true, why are we listening to others instead of listening to God? Let us learn what I Samuel 15 teaches, and be "living sacrifices", the kind of people who please God! (Rom. 12:1-2) Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

Are You Like The Bereans?

By Jonathan L. Perz

You might be wondering, "Who are the Bereans?" Though the Bible says little of this people, what it does say speaks volumes!

"Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men." (Acts 17:10-12)

- The Bible says they were "fair-minded!" Are you?
 - The Bible says they "received the word with all readiness!" Do you?
 - The Bible says they "searched the Scriptures daily!" Do you?
 - The Bible says they wanted "to find out if these things were so!" Do you?
- The Bible says "many of them believed?" Have you?

INDEED, THE LORD'S CHURCH NEEDS MORE OF THE BEREAN SPIRIT!

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

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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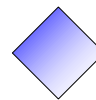


Schedule of Assembly

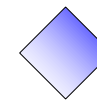
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

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

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



April 3, 2011

Being Content
By Jimmy Pettigrew

Before we get started, let us look at the word "content;" The Greek word is "arkeo"; the primary meaning signifies, "to be sufficient, to be possessed of sufficient strength, to be strong, to be enough for a thing"; hence, "to defend, ward off"; in the middle voice, "to be satisfied, contented with," (Luke 3:14), with wages; (1 Timothy 6:8), with food and raiment; (Hebrews 13:5), with "such things as ye have"; negatively of Diotrefes, in 3 John 10, "not content therewith." (From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

So, in this article I want to talk about the subject of being content. First, I want to ask some questions. What effect does Christianity have in one's life? Will it make a difference in this world we live in? Is it all teaching and no doing? Today, sadly, we often live beneath the standard of New Testament Christianity. The nature of Christianity demands a difference in life. Christianity changes people (1 Peter 4:1-4). Saints are to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4). The conduct of the Christian will either "adorn" the doctrine or it will reveal a lack of dedication to Christ which will hinder the cause of Christ (Titus 2:10; Romans 1:18). The apostle Peter discussed the power of a godly life in a wife to lead a non-Christian husband to Christ (1 Peter 3:1-2). Paul urged Timothy to be an example of the believers (1 Timothy 4:17). The Christian must decide if his life will become or betray the gospel. It will do one or the other! The manner of life of Christians is a powerful preacher.

Therefore, what do you preach each day? Meaning, what do you preach to other people concerning your wages and being content? I asked these questions because we are living in a time when people want higher pay for doing less. People who do not want to do a reasonable day's work for a fair wage. They want more, higher pay, for doing a lesser amount of work. Don't believe it? Just look around at our modern society; with its almost total emphasis upon material benefits, it has had its influence upon

Christians as well as others. But the Scriptures paint a different picture, "Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5). The Christian is to find his satisfaction not in some hoped for wealth, but is to be content with the things at hand. Did you notice what God says at the end of this passage? "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." That means the Christian enjoys the continual presence and help of the Lord. Could having more money improve on what God can do for you? Could an abundance of possessions make you more secure? Can the world offer you something better? Are we able to find contentment in whatever goods God may have provided us in this life (Philippians 4:19)? Paul says he had learned "in whatsoever state I am, therein be content" (Philippians 4:11). Note that Paul had not always known how to be content! It was something that he had "learned." However, with the cross of Christ ever before him (Galatians 6:14), the apostle Paul had learned how to suppress self-centered desires (1 Timothy 6:6; Galatians 2:20). What a generous portion of that education we do need today! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that our heavenly Father so cares for us that we need be anxious "for nothing" (Matthew 6:30-34). John inform some soldiers, "be content with your wages" (Luke 3:14). Rather than complaining about their wages they were to be content. "Having food and covering we shall be therewith content" (1 Timothy 6:8). The devout Christian will be satisfied when his actual needs are supplied. What lessons for us today!

In the book of Colossians 3:22-4:1, the apostle Paul gives some inspired direction to those who labor for others. He was actually addressing the servant/master relationship, but to you and me the application is to the employee/employer status. The apostle Paul writes, "Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Being Content
Pages 2 to 4 - "I Samuel 15"

Page 4 - Are You Like The Bereans?
Page 4 - What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Continued from Page One, "Being Content"

pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ. For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." Christians are not to render half-hearted service. They are to give a day's work for a day's pay. The child of God takes great pride in his work; he does the very best job he can. They were to do it as though the Lord gave them the job. Some work harder to shirk a job than to do it! The fact that some might not treat them properly does not mean they are to render less than quality work. Oh, I'm only getting paid \$\$\$\$ an hour, so I'm not going to work too hard, or

give my best. First, we should not continually gripe about our pay. Second, the Christians should go the second mile to be a good worker. Put your heart into your work (**Eccl. 9:10**). Didn't Joseph do this in the house of Potiphar and later when in jail in Egypt? If we do our work as though we were doing it for Jesus – Jesus will see that we are rewarded – and that is better than any pay check (**Colossians 3:24**)! Also, when you read these verses, we find that the servants have a task and masters have their trust. The master can expect the best work but he is also to provide the best treatment. There must be fairness and justice, for the laborer is worthy of his hire (**Luke 10:17**). How many labor relation problems would never have to come to the table if both labor and employer would apply the principles of the gospel?

Being content is a picture of practical Christianity at work, demonstrating to the world the exalted life in Christ! ♦

"I Samuel 15"

By Jarrod Jacobs

This chapter reveals one of the darkest times in Israel's history. By the end of this chapter, we see Samuel leaving Saul, and looking for a new king in **I Samuel 16**. Most people will remember that King Saul was commanded to utterly (completely) destroy the Amalekites, but he did not do so (**I Sam. 15:3, 8-9, 11**). The result was that he lost his kingdom. He went from being a very inspiring person from humble beginnings, to a tragic figure that, put simply, taught us what "*not to do*" (**I Sam. 15:17-19**)! Let us study this chapter, and learn some lessons that hopefully will help us in our service to God (**Rom. 15:4**).

The Lord Is Our Commander.

When Samuel came to Saul, he wanted him to "*hearken unto the words of the Lord*" (**v. 1**). It makes no difference what a man, or group of men might tell you to do. What matters is what God has said (**Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11**)! The Lord is in control, and He wanted Saul to utterly destroy these enemies who had been fighting God's people since **Exodus 17:8-16**. Once Saul knew what God wanted him to do (**I Sam. 15:3**), it was up to him to obey.

In like manner, the Lord has told us what to do in the New Testament (**Heb. 1:2**), and it is up to us to obey His word if we wish to go to Heaven (**Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; Rev. 22:14**; etc.)! The Lord is over us, and we are to submit to Him (**Jas. 4:7**).

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "I Samuel 15"

Our Sin Hurts Other People, Even Future Generations.

In reading **I Samuel 15**, we see that no sooner had Saul and the people disobeyed God than the word of the Lord came to Samuel, "*saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night*" (**v. 10-11**). When Saul and the people disobeyed, they did not simply hurt themselves, but they grieved Samuel. They also grieved God in this sinful action. Really, this is the way it is with sin; we hurt others as well as ourselves! Sin affects more than just the guilty one. Even in cases where one might claim, "I am not hurting anyone but myself", do we not have family and friends who love us and want the best for us, and grieve because of our bad decisions? Too, consider the lasting effects of sin, and how it can harm generations yet unborn.

In the case of Saul, the consequences of his sin were felt in the immediate, and for years to come. In addition to losing his kingdom, we read in **I Chronicles 4:41-43** that in the days of King Hezekiah, the Simeonites killed Amalekites in their nation. Why was this necessary? It is because Saul was disobedient! Saul's incomplete work meant these people had to risk life and limb in later years! Perhaps the most well-known consequence of Saul's disobedience is recorded in the book of Esther. The enemy who came dangerously close to destroying the Jews was a man named Haman, "*the Agagite, the Jews' enemy*" (**Est. 3:6, 10**)! Now, how could it be that this man could get so close to destroying the Jews? It is because Saul sinned by failing in his duty long ago! Yes, future generations of Jewish people were affected because of the sin of Saul.

It is no different today. When we sin, we not only hurt ourselves, but we hurt others. Sadly, some sins will affect people in generations to come as well! Friends, our selfishness does this damage! When we decide we want to commit a certain sin (**Jas. 1:14-15**), and nothing will stop us, let us remember that we cannot and do not live in a vacuum (**Rom. 14:7**)! In fact, our sin not only affects folks on earth, but God Himself (**Gen. 39:9b; Isa. 59:1-2**)! If you do not believe this, just look to the cross! Have we forgotten the reason Jesus Christ came to this earth (**Lk. 19:10; Rom. 5:8; I Tim. 1:15**)? Yes, our sins hurt others. Often, we hurt others we never intended, nor imagined we would hurt!

When One Does Not Do All God Says, It Is Sin.

There are some who try to justify themselves in their sin by saying, "I am not that bad, I do not kill people or steal things, I think I am O.K." When asked whether or not they have obeyed God, they will say, "I believe in Jesus, and I am a good person. That is enough." Then, when this person is shown the Scriptures concerning salvation (**Mk. 16:16**) and how one sin can keep them from Heaven, and that one sin grieves God, that teacher may be called "legalistic" or a "Bibliolater" (Bible-worshipper).

Is a person "legalistic" to say such things? Let us see what God said about Saul's sin: "*It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments*" (**v. 11**). Wait! Didn't Saul do MOST of what God said? Didn't he get a "vast majority" of God's will accomplished? Why then doesn't God focus on that? The fact is that by not doing all that God had said, God looked upon Saul as being disobedient (**v. 19**)! He is said to have rejected God because he did not do all that was commanded (**v. 23, 26**).

Let us make sure we do not have such a cavalier attitude about sin! It is not enough to do "some" or "most" of what God has said. Saul's error is a very real example and reminder to us (**Rom. 15:4**) that God demands COMPLETE obedience from His people (**Rev. 22:14; Jn. 14:15, 15:14; Heb. 5:9**).

Blaming Others Does Not Excuse Our Sin.

Saul made excuses concerning his sin by saying, "*I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me...But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal*" (**v. 20-21**). Though Saul blamed the people for the disobedience, God knew who was responsible! As a result, God rejected Saul from being the King of Israel. Though what Saul said may have been true, listening to the people instead of God was not a sufficient excuse! He knew what to do and did not do it.

We know that listening to others instead of God has been a problem men have had since the beginning. When God confronted Adam in his sin, He said, "*Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou*

Continued on Page Four