

Continued from Page Three, "Fervent in Spirit"

Fervor and enthusiasm are the keys to success in the Lord's work. The church at Laodicea was chastised because of their lukewarmness (**Rev. 3:14-16**). Barclay says, "The one man whom the Risen Christ could not stand was the man who was neither hot nor cold" (Ibid.). He added, "The Christian may burn out, but he cannot rust out."

seems impossible to move some "Christians" into action. The fire and enthusiasm of the first century church is missing from their lives. They may have restored the truth, but they seem to have forgotten the spirit.

**Conclusion**

**Ephesians 6:6** counsels us to be, "doing the will of God from the heart." May none of us drag our feet but instead give ourselves enthusiastically to doing the work of the Lord. Such a life of service will grant us the best life here and in the hereafter. *Credit: www.padfield.com* ♦

**What Do I Owe My Congregation?**

Author unknown

**I owe it my loyalty.** I must help carry out every good work it undertakes. I should help other congregations in special efforts, but I should not neglect my home congregation. I owe it my dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

**I owe it my financial support.** It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. I am responsible to the Lord to give as He has prospered me. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability, for if the members of the church do not support the work of the home congregation, it will not be supported. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contribution when absent.

**I owe it my presence.** If everyone stayed home there would be no worship of God. I am responsible as anyone to attend all of my congregation's services. I must not be a parasite.

**I owe it the influence of a godly life.** The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it the harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and the salvation of the lost. I should live in such a way that my life will be blessing to others.

**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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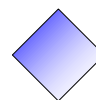


**Schedule of Assembly**

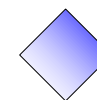
**Bible Study:** Sunday, 9:00am  
**Worship Service:** Sunday, 10:00am  
**Bible Study:** Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

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

**www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com**



# The Voice of Truth



January 29, 2012

**After Baptism – What Then?**

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The Word of God tells us that there is one baptism (**Ephesians 4:5**), and this baptism is for all lost men (**Mark 16:16**). The design of baptism into Christ is for remission of sins, to obtain salvation (**Acts 2:38; 22:16**). Baptism changes ones state and relationship with God. One is out of Christ until he/she is baptized into Christ (**Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27**). Salvation is to be found only in Christ (**2 Timothy 2:10**); along with all spiritual blessings (**Ephesians 1:3**). Thus, one cannot have salvation or any other spiritual blessings out of Christ before being baptized into Christ!

Therefore, after baptism - what then? Baptism does not guarantee eternal life! Even after one is baptized into Christ, he/she can so sin as to be lost; and Paul told some: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace" (**Galatians 5:4**). They had fallen from grace! He had declared, earlier, that these had been called into the grace of Christ by the Gospel (**Galatians 1:16**). Here Paul plainly declared what so many in the religious world state cannot be done: They had fallen from grace! Baptism did not guarantee their eternal salvation (**Galatians 3:26-27**)!

Baptism does not guarantee eternal life; what then, after baptism? Let us make a list. After baptism you MUST:

(1) Put the kingdom (the church) first (**Matthew 6:33**). Put God before pleasure, loved ones, company, work, etc. Like Paul, count all things loss for Christ (**Philippians 3:7-8**).

(2) All of life is devoted to Christ (**Galatians 2:20**). We are to be living sacrifices for Christ (**Romans 12:1-2**). "For to me to live is Christ" (**Philippians 1:21**).

(3) You must worship God every Lord's day (**Acts 20:7; Hebrew 10:25**). Where else would a Christian want to be?

(4) You must live with care. Satan exists to make war with the saints of God (**Revelation 13:7**). Peter thus warned: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (**1 Peter 5:8**).

(5) Cease to practice sinful or doubtful things. Live as a new creature (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). The one who is baptized into Christ is raised up to walk in newness of life (**Romans 6:4**). "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners" (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (**1 Thessalonians 5:22**).

(6) Set your affection on things above. Don't put your trust in things of the world, for all will be burned up (**2 Peter 3:10**). "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (**Colossians 3:1-3**).

(7) Keep in touch with God. We must permit God to speak to us daily through the study of His Word (**Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15**). Never quit growing spiritually.

(8) Be doers of the Word (**James 1:22**). Show faith by works (**James 2**).

(9) We must be more concerned about obedience than sacrifice. To obey is better than sacrifice (**1 Samuel 15:22**).

(10) We must add to our faith (**2 Peter 1:5-8**). "For he that lacketh these things is blind, ... but, if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble" (**2 Peter 1:9-10**).

Brethren, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ ..." (**Philippians 1:27**). We must live the

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others of the value of Christianity – live it! ♦  
gospel to be ready for eternity. If you want to convince

## “I Press ...”

By Jarrod Jacobs

One prominent characteristic of the gospel is the fact that it pushes and presses Christians forward so that they grow spiritually in this life. In the different Eastern religions, one works and presses until he reaches a certain point, a point of “clarity”, “peace”, etc.; and then, he has gone as far as he can go. The gospel, however, continues to push and press us while we live. There is no time while upon this earth that we can say that we know all about the Bible. Nor can we say we have done all that God expects of us. In fact, the more one learns what God would have us know in His word, the more one realizes that he does not know anything!

It has been said that if a Christian is standing still, he is actually going backwards! I believe that this is true. Let us study the words of three teachers from the Bible, and their encouragement to Christians to press, strain, and push forward in this life. Then let us make the application in our lives to “press”!!

### Christ’s Words Of Encouragement:

Many have the attitude that being a Christian is a “spectator sport.” This is not the case! In Christ’s parables, we read of folks who had much to do! If one wants to please God, he cannot “sit on the sidelines”!

When Christ talked about the Kingdom, He compared it to a vineyard (**Matt. 20:1-16, 21:33-46**). Those who know about vineyards, know that this is the hardest form of agriculture that there is. A vineyard requires constant attention and care. In Zondervan’s Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, there is an entry on vineyards which says, “A vineyard calls for harder and more regular labor than any other form of agriculture. Constant pruning of the vines is necessary if the clusters of grapes are to grow to full maturity” (Vol. 5, p. 882). It should be clear why our Lord compared the Kingdom to the most difficult form of agriculture. This is because being a Christian is not for the lazy! It is not for those who do not know how to work, but for the “worker” (**II Tim. 2:15**)!

In Christ’s words to the church at Smyrna, we read, “be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” (**Rev. 2:10**). Matthew Henry explains this verse as, “... the life worn out in his service, or laid down in his cause,

shall be rewarded with a much better life, which shall be eternal.” Christ’s emphasis is on one’s life being given in obedience to God. It is not enough to say you are a Christian; you must live as a Christian 365 days a year!

### Paul’s Words Of Encouragement:

When the apostle Paul wrote to Christians in various parts of the world, he reminded them of their duties to Christ. He also declared that he was not exempt from obeying the Lord. He told the Corinthians: “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified” (**I Cor. 9:24-27**).

In that same epistle, it is written, “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**). Let us define the words used by Paul. “Steadfast” “denotes seated, metaphorical of moral fixity” (Vine’s Amplified, p. 766). “Always” means, “everywhere, at all times” (Strong’s Hebrew/Greek Lexicon). “Abounding” means, “to superabound (in quantity or quality), be in excess, to cause to superabound or excel: increase” (Strong’s). “Work” means “toil (as an effort or occupation); by implication an act” (Strong’s). “Labour” means, “by implication pains: labour, + trouble, weariness” (Strong’s).

Therefore, when Paul wrote these brethren, he was telling them to be fixed morally, and everywhere and at all times they must toil painfully and struggle for the Lord. Yet, this was not a waste of time, but a wise use of their time and life because it was “in the Lord”. Remember, when the apostle Paul pressed and pushed Christians to be the best they could be, he was also doing this himself (**I Cor 9:27**)! When Paul wrote to Timothy, he told him that he had “fought the good fight” and expected Timothy to do the same (**II Tim. 4:7; I Tim. 6:12**).

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Are we applying these lessons to ourselves? We had better do so! The gospel demands that we not let up, slow down, or give up. We must keep pressing! Again, the apostle Paul declared that this was his attitude. “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (**Phil. 3:13-14**).

### Peter’s Words Of Encouragement:

As the apostle Peter wrote to the Christians “scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (**I Pet. 1:1**), he told them to grow. He reminded them that they had “purified [their] souls by [their] obedience to the truth...” (**I Pet. 1:22**). They were “born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (**I Pet. 1:23**). As a result, they were “newborn infants.” He then told them to “long

for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation” (**I Pet. 2:2**).

I find it interesting that in Peter’s final letter, the last recorded words we have from his pen are words encouraging growth! He said, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (**II Pet. 3:18**).

### Conclusion

Let us never get sedentary in our duties to the Lord. Let us continue to grow and mature spiritually, for this is what God expects of us. If our goal is Heaven, we must have our minds set on things above (**Matt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1-2**). We must walk the strait and narrow way that leads to everlasting life (**Matt. 7:14**). This is a faithful life to God (**Rev. 2:10; I Cor. 15:58**). Therefore, let us “press” toward the goal and serve God faithfully in 2012!

*Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦*

## "Fervent in Spirit"

By Gene Taylor

As Christians we have work to do. We were created in Christ for good works (**Eph. 2:10**) and to be zealous for them (**Tit. 2:14**). Albert Barnes said, “An idle man and a Christian are names which do not harmonize.”

The above text points out two basic attitudes the Christian can have in relation to the work of the Lord. One can be either “lagging in diligence” or “fervent in spirit.” Of course, if one is going to please the Lord the latter is preferred.

### “Lagging in Diligence”

The King James Version translates this phrase as “slothful in business.” To be slothful is to be lazy or indolent. William Barclay stated, “There is a certain intensity in the Christian life. There is no room for lethargy in it” (The Daily Study Bible Series, Romans, p. 178).

God’s people in the Old Testament were warned against having such an attitude. **Amos 6:1** pronounced woe upon those who were “at ease in Zion.” **Jeremiah 48:10** says, “A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work!” (NIV).

Diligence is required of Christians—God’s people today. They are to give diligence to grow in Christ (**2 Pet. 1:5**); to abound in diligence (**2 Cor. 8:7**); and to be diligent, never

becoming sluggish (**Heb. 6:9-12**).

Diligence is a product of commitment. The Corinthians’ commitment to the Lord was demonstrated by doing what needed to be done in reference to the sinner they had in their midst (**I Cor. 5:9-13**). **2 Corinthians 7:11** says, “For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”

### “Fervent in Spirit”

The word translated “fervent in spirit” means to boil with heat, be hot. It is used of boiling anger, love and zeal for what is good or bad. As used in our text, it means to have a burning zeal to do the will of God.

An example of this attitude is Jesus Christ. **John 2:17**, in speaking of Him, says, “Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up’.” Apollos is also an example of zeal. **Acts 18:24-25** states, “Now a certain Jew named Apollos...came to Ephesus...and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord...” Both Jesus and Apollos were successful in accomplishing their God-given tasks.

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