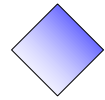


The Voice of Truth



July 7, 2013

What Shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

In **Mark 10**, beginning at **verse 17**; here we have the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus to ask Him the question that is one of the deepest longings, yearnings of the human heart. He wanted to know: *“What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”* The Bible is clear. There are two paths which may be chosen in life (**Matthew 7:13-14**); the narrow way is the way that leads to eternal life and is the most important because it determines the destiny for the soul of man, which is of more value than all the riches of the world (**Matthew 16:26**). Many in the world today desire to have the best of both worlds, but such is impossible, since man cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6:19-24**); man must serve one or the other. The rich young ruler is an inspired example of one who faced the great decision. The choice of masters determines our eternal destiny. Therefore, it is life’s greatest decision.

This young man ran to Jesus and knelt to Him; he worshiped the Christ. In kneeling to Him, he recognized Jesus as Divine and entitled to worship. He asked the Good Teacher, *“What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”* He was concerned about eternal life; he went to the right Person to ask this question. Notice, *“Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life”* (**John 6:68**). This young man realized that eternal life was not granted unconditionally, that there was something which he would have to do. And he realized that in spite of the fact that there was something for him to do, that eternal life would still be a matter of inheritance (**Mark 10:17**).

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? **Mark 10:19**, *“Thou knowest the commandments.”* **Matthew 19:17** says, *“...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”* Indeed, something does have to be done. What is it? *“Keep the commandments.”* Be obedient to God’s word! The Law of Moses was still in effect at that time, and this man was responsible to the Mosaic Law. This young ruler replied in **Matthew 19:18**, *“Which?”* That is, which commandment? He seemed to think that there was

one certain thing which he could do that would secure him for eternal life.

Many today feel the same way, but the Lord stresses that there is not one commandment to keep, but all. The Bible declares in **Hebrews 5:8-9**, *“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”* *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous”* (**1 John 5:3**). *“If ye love me, keep my commandments”* (**John 14:15**). *“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my saying”* (**John 14:23-24**). *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven”* (**Matthew 7:21**). Obedience to the will of God is expected if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven; there is simply no other way to show our love to God, the truth, His word, the Gospel, but to obey it! God is pleased with obedience (**1 Samuel 15:22**); obedience is required of all! And if we refuse, then we have no right to call Jesus our Lord (**Luke 6:46**). *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”* (**Ecclesiastes 12:13**).

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Deny self! In response, the young man affirmed concerning the commandments of God, *“All these things have I observed from my youth up”* (**Mark 10:20**). The rich man asked in **Matthew 19**, *“What lack I yet?”* Jesus said one thing thou lackest, Go thy way and whatsoever thou hast, give to the poor and thou shall have treasure in heaven. One thing he lacked – the surrender of self, which involved the surrender of all. Sell all! Christ must be all! One of the most difficult things in life is denying self, living apart from selfish

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desires and ambitions. Jesus showed the rich young man just how selfish and how earthly his thoughts and aims were. He showed him how firmly his heart which he thought longed for heaven was chained to this earth and all its material values. Here we find the very essence of Christianity – total surrender of self; the young man could not rise to the sacrifice. But, if we were to question ourselves today with such a question as, "Who rules in our life – God or self?" What kind of answer would we give? If we were to ask ourselves, "Who gets the most of our time and our material possessions – God or self?" What kind of answer would we give? *"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again"* (**2 Corinthians 5:15**). The love of Christ constrains us to leave the world of sin and self; we are not to please ourselves (**Romans 15:1**).

This young man's possessions happened to be that which prevented him from following Christ. He would probably have given up half his possessions, but he could not give up all for Christ. What is it that prevents you from becoming a purer, stronger, holier person for Christ?

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? *"Take up the cross, and follow me,"* said Christ (**Mark 10:21**). To be perfect, as he as this young man claimed to be, he was going to have to give up wealth, power and position, and cast his lot with the despised Teacher of Nazareth. Eventually, this cost of discipleship was not what the young man had in mind, for **verse 22** says that when he "heard that

saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions."

To take up the cross and follow Him is life's greatest challenge. To be a disciple of Jesus we must love Him more than anything in this world; every disciple of Jesus must bear his own cross (**Luke 14:27**). It costs to have heaven as our home. It costs to be able to enjoy the feast in heaven! It demands the bearing of the cross! That cross is the willingness to give up everything, even one's own life.

Following Jesus would be most difficult and would take enormous self-denial and sacrifice. However, He has promised to be with us to help us, to walk before us, to show the way, to walk beside us to give us strength, and to walk behind us to give us encouragement, but, he never, never, promised being His disciple would be easy! It may cost a great deal to serve God. Of course, the reward is worth it! The prize is worth the price!

The Christian walk is one that follows the path of the Lord. Surely, we would trade this earth in for a place where there will be no more death, mourning, crying, pain, sorrow, disappointment, and separation. Thank God that we can have Heaven, if we will just count the cost. If the cross of Calvary ever meant anything to you, let us get our priorities right. Jesus went to one of those drab wooden crosses so that you and I would never have to taste eternal death in Hell. He didn't have to do it, but He did it because His priorities were right. The least you and I can do is give up our lives to Jesus Christ! ♦

THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. *"Upon this rock I will build my church"* (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living today is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

Sin will take you farther than you
Ever wanted to go.
Keep you longer than you ever wanted
To stay and cost you
More than you ever wanted to pay. ♦

“Christ Did Not Send Me To Baptize..”

By Jarrod Jacobs

“For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel” (I Cor. 1:17). This passage is a favorite among those who teach that baptism is not necessary for salvation. This verse can be confusing if we listen to men’s “twist” (II Pet. 3:16) and do not handle it “rightly” (II Tim. 2:15). At first glance it seems to be in contradiction with such passages as Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, and I Peter 3:21, but this is not the case.

Knowing that Satan himself (mis)quoted Scripture at times (Matt. 4:1-11), it should not be surprising to see men in religious error doing the same thing. Let us study this passage and learn what Paul was saying. When we do this, we will learn that I Corinthians 1:17 is NOT in contradiction with passages such as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, I Peter 3:21, and others, but is in harmony with them.

Grammatically

When studying the phrase of I Corinthians 1:17 (“For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel”), we must understand that this is an elliptical sentence. Paul was literally saying, “For Christ did not (only) send me to baptize but (also) to preach the gospel.” For this phrase to mean anything else makes Paul a liar! He said earlier in the text that he had baptized Crispus, Gaius, the household of Stephanus, and others that he couldn’t remember, v. 14-16.) Paul not only baptized others, but also spent much ink writing about the necessity of baptism. Before that, he had submitted to baptism for the remission of sins, himself (Acts 9:17-18, 22:16, 16:14-15, 30-34; Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:26-27; etc.)!! Therefore, he can’t be saying that he was sent to preach and NOT sent to baptize, for clearly he did both. He was sent not only to baptize folks, but also to preach Christ (See also: Gal. 3:26-27).

Contextually

In considering the context of this passage, let’s begin by reading I Corinthians 1:11-17: “For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, “I follow Paul,” or “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Cephas,” or “I follow Christ.” Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to

preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.”

The point in this text is that some were taking the names of the men who had baptized them (pure denominationalism!). Thus, some said they were “of Paul” or “Apollos,” etc. When Paul asked who was crucified for them, and in whose name (by whose authority) they were baptized, he was trying to focus their attention on Christ and not men. He was not condemning baptism, or saying it was not necessary, but reminding them that their focus and allegiance was to be on Christ and not on men. When we understand this, we can see why Paul “thanked God” that he had not baptized any more than he did. Several people were taking men’s names, like folks often do today! Thus, he was glad he didn’t baptize any more than he did “so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name” (I Cor. 1:15).

Answering A Popular Argument

From time to time some folks (especially Baptists) will cite I Corinthians 1:17 in a vain attempt to say that baptism is not necessary for salvation. Since they are misusing this passage to try to disprove the need for baptism, they usually say something to the effect: “See, Paul said he did not come there to baptize, only to preach the gospel...” When our Baptist friends say this, they need to be reminded that according to Baptist doctrine one cannot be a Baptist without being baptized. Therefore, if their statement about Paul is correct, and he really didn’t come to baptize folks, then Paul also didn’t go to Corinth to make Baptists out of them, and then “thanked God” that he wasn’t making Baptists (I Cor. 1:14)!

Conclusion

Now that we understand this passage, let us not shy away from it. Paul never taught that baptism was not necessary for salvation. In fact he submitted to baptism, himself! Let us not be afraid of Satan’s arrows that he shoots at us in an attempt to get us to question such basic Bible truths as baptism (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:16). Let us put on the whole armor of God and take up the shield of faith against such attacks against the Biblical record (Eph. 6:13-17). Let us be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (I Pet. 3:15). Let us approach all Bible study in this way.

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I **Corinthians 1:17** is not a difficult passage to understand when we examine it in light of it's grammar and context. I **Corinthians 1:17** is not contradictory to such passages as **Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, I Peter 3:21,** and others

like it. Let us respect what is said in this passage, and let us encourage folks to become Christians by being baptized into Christ, just as the apostle Paul did!!

Credit: The Old Paths - 6/16/13 ♦

Calling Upon the Name of the Lord Saves

By Jeff Belknap

Scripture teaches: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (**Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13**). "Stop, in the name of the law!" is an officer's warning to stop by the authority of the law. Likewise, "calling upon the name of the Lord," is to call upon the authority (word, law) of the Lord. But, HOW and WHEN is this accomplished? Since understanding scripture is not of any private interpretation, we must let scripture interpret itself.

Shortly after the apostles received "the great commission" of the Lord (**Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47**), in **Acts 2:36**, Peter charged the multitude in Jerusalem with crucifying Jesus. Convicted of their sin, in **verse 37** they asked the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" In **verse 38**, "Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." To receive this "gift," they were required to comply with the conditions expressed by Peter "in the name of Jesus Christ." Peter encouraged them further in **verse 40** saying "save yourselves," which is exactly what 3000 did in **verse 41**.

From the days of Abraham, God promised, "IN thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (**Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16**). Salvation is IN Christ (**2 Timothy 2:10**). We are new creatures IN Christ (**2 Corinthians**

5:17). There is no condemnation IN Christ (**Romans 8:1**). Therefore, one must be IN Christ to be saved. The Bible clearly tells us HOW and WHEN one gets INTO Christ: **Galatians 3:27**, "For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ have put on Christ."

In addition, **Romans 6:3** says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized INTO Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." Not only are we to be baptized INTO Christ, but at the same time, the scripture teaches that we are baptized "INTO his death" (where his precious blood was shed for the remission of our sins, **Matthew 26:28**). The blood of Christ washes away our sins (**Revelation 1:5**) WHEN we yield to His bidding (**1 John 1:7**) by being "baptized into his death" (compare with **Mark 16:15-16; 1 Peter 3:21**). At that point, "our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (**v. 6**), which allows us to "be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (**v. 5**), having been freed from our sins (**vs. 16-18**)!

In **Acts 22**, the apostle Paul recounted his conversion, revealing more of what had transpired in **Acts 9**. He stated that a disciple named Ananias taught him the gospel and said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (**Acts 22:16**). Let us call upon His authority in all that we do (**Colossians 3:17**)! *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦*

*Truth is truth even if no one believes it.
Error is error if everyone believes it. ♦*

*Don't think you can ignore the Lord in this life and
He will give you a crown in the Life to come. ♦*

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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

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