

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

Church of Christ
371 W. Main Street
Greenwood, IN 46142
(317)888-8288

www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org

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The Eternal Value of not Giving Up

By Tom Edwards

There are probably many reasons--though unjustifiable--why some people do not want to obey the Lord. For instance, sometimes it is because of peer pressure or the threat of social ostracism (**John 12:42, 43**) or perhaps--as in the case of the early church--the fear of torture or death could also serve as an overwhelming deterrent. To comfort those who would face the latter, Jesus says, "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (**Matt. 10:28**). Also in **Revelation 2:10**, the promise of an everlasting life is given to those who would remain true to God during their endurance of much tribulation: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested,

and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (**Rev. 2:10**).

Also in **Luke 21:19**, this same reoccurring thought is exclaimed: "By your endurance you will gain your lives." Again and again, we are made aware of the need for the Christian to persevere in his faith and obedience; but just how important is this? God, through the writer of the book of Hebrews, clearly shows of this by warning, "For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised...But My righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul" (**Heb. 10:36, 38 39**).

Eternal salvation is contingent upon our perseverance in living for God (**Rom. 2:7, 8**). To "shrink back"

2

can only lead to destruction. We must, therefore, "contend earnestly for the faith" (**Jude 3**) and not stray from it--for that would result in eternal ruin (**James 5:19, 20**).

There is great reward for the one who will remain true and faithful to the Lord Jesus. In speaking to His apostles, the Lord encouraged them with the following challenge: "And you will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (**Matt. 10:22**).

Will you be one who will also endure to the end? If you are not a Christian, we would like to help you become one. And if you are a Christian who has ceased enduring for the cause of Christ, we would like to encourage you to pick up your cross again and follow after Jesus. Do so now, while you have the time. Tomorrow might be too late. Now is the time for each of us to live faithfully and endure whatsoever may befall us for the gospel's sake. Whatever your lot in life will be, your perseverance in Christ can help you through, fill your life with purpose, and lead you to a blissful eternity that will make you forever glad that you did not give up.

"It Ain't Easy!"

By William Beasley

From my earliest memories of worshiping with the saints at the Preston Highway Church of Christ (Louisville, Kentucky), I was impressed with the concept of *Speaking where the Bible speaks and remaining silent where the Bible is silent*, and of *Calling Bible things by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways*. Among my heroes were gospel preachers who showed that these were Bible concepts (1 Peter 4:10-11; 2 John 9; etc.). I looked to these men (Joseph Cox, A. C. Grider, Norman Fultz, and visiting gospel preachers) as examples of God's servants who were striving to put into practice the things which were taught.

As I aged physically and matured (I trust) spiritually I learned that *it ain't easy* to always do this. Some of the men who taught lessons on *Calling Bible things by Bible names . . .* also presented wonderful lessons on *The Prodigal Son* (Luke 15:11-32). Imagine my chagrin when I learned that the Bible, as we had it way back when (i.e., King James Version, American Standard Version),

says nought about *a* or *the Prodigal Son*. The word *prodigal* was not to be found in any standard translation of the scriptures (that I have been able to check) until the New King James Version in about 1979. Even then, in speaking of **“the younger son”** it says that he **“wasted his possessions with prodigal living”** (Luke 15:13, NKJV), and does not speak of *the Prodigal Son*.

Does this mean that my heroes of decades ago were hypocrites, dishonest or deceitful? Assuredly not! This is a minor failing; after all, the headings (written by men) has *Prodigal Son* over Luke 15:11ff. There are three lessons to be learned: (1) From time to time check on those things which we have always known, to see if what we know(?) is in God’s revelation. (2) Preachers are human and liable to make mistakes. (3) Recognize that ***it ain’t easy*** to live up to our stated goals.

The Greatest Library Ever

By Bob Myhan

The greatest library ever is not the Folger Shakespeare Library

with its more than 225,000 volumes.

Not the ancient Alexandrian Library with over 400,000 scrolls (including a copy of every scroll then known to exist).

Not the Vatican Library which contains over 1,000,000 printed books plus 50,000 manuscripts.

Not the Bodleian Library which has over 5,000,000 books and 60,000 manuscripts.

Not the British Library which automatically receives a copy of each new book published.

Not the Bibliothique Nationale with more than 20,000,000 volumes and more than 500,000 magazines.

Not the Library of Congress with over 20,000,000 books and 32,000,000 manuscripts.

It is the Bible with just sixty-six books: five books of law, thirteen books of history, five books of poetic wisdom, eighteen prophetic books, four biographical books and twenty-one epistles.

The Righteous MUST CONDEMN

The Unrighteous

Lincoln Bible Reader

From time to time the Lord’s people, the church of Christ, are criticized for “condemning” others. We are told, “Preach what you believe and leave others alone,” or “Preach your people to heaven and stop trying to preach others to hell.” Of course, when one examines such thoughts carefully they are found to be without merit. We have a belief (faith) concerning other people (Matthew 7:13-14); therefore, to preach what we believe we must, of necessity, deal with other people. Warnings (mistakenly called *condemning*) are to bring about repentance that the guilty might enter heaven and **not** go to hell.

The righteous condemn the unrighteous by the righteous lives they live. When Noah in faith obeyed God he **“condemned the world”** (Hebrews 11:7). When the righteous attend all the services of the saints they condemn those who forsake the assembling together (Hebrews 10:25). The ones who **“soweth bountifully”** (2 Cor. 9:6-7) condemns the tightfisted worshipers of money (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5). The one who in faith is baptized **“in order to have your sins forgiven”** (Acts 2:38, Goodspeed Translation) condemns, by that very act of an obedient faith, the un-baptized and those who were immersed for the

wrong (believing they were already saved) reason.

Please pray for the work that is going on in Sierra Leone at this time and the upcoming trip.