

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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JESUS GIVES LIFE

by Jim Stauffer

“Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.” (Jas 1:21)

The clear implication of the words spoken here as given by the Holy Spirit, indicate we must put away many things of our previous life in order to humbly receive the word which has been implanted in us for the purpose of saving our souls.

As we look at the verse, the first order is to remove or put aside the *.....filthiness and all that remains of wickedness.....* To do this we must deny the life we lived prior to our obedience to Christ. There has to be a change. That is the change Christ taught Nicodemus in **John 3** when He told him to be *....born of water and the Spirit.....*, in order to enter the kingdom. Jesus teaches him about a new birth, a new beginning of life. This is the new life Paul speaks of in **Romans 6** as he speaks of baptism as he says *our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;.....* He says we rise from baptism to *....walk in newness of life*. This, Paul tells the Ephesians is putting off the old man and putting on the new (**Eph. 4:22**).

What enables success in putting off the old and putting on the new is humbly receiving the implanted word. **John 1:1,2** tells us Jesus is the word. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.”* Later in **John 1:14**, *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Having the word implanted in our hearts is exactly the claim Paul made about himself more than once. *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave*

himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20) Here he uses similar language to the passage in Romans. We crucify the old man, putting him off, and now live, guided by the word (Jesus Christ). Christ then dwells in us through His word to which we have become obedient, *“Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.” (1 Peter 1:22)* This comports perfectly with Jesus’ statement to the Jews on this occasion, *“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”” (John 8:31–32)*

Finally, our passage indicates the end result of salvation to the one who humbly receives this implanted word. Remember Jesus is the Word. He also is the One we must obey since He is the author of our salvation (**Heb. 5:8,9**). All this leads us to understand fully the words He spoke, *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)*

Jesus and Pilate's Wife **Fanning Yater Tant**

Pilate was in a dilemma. An innocent man stood before him for judgment; Pilate knew that for envy he had been delivered up, and there was no evidence of wrong doing which would justify a sentence against him. Yet the mob was howling for blood. It was a ticklish situation, a nasty mess. Pilate must have wished with all his heart that he could be relieved of the necessity of handling this case. Either way he went, he was certain to have regrets. His sense of Roman justice was outraged at the thought of condemning an innocent

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man; yet his political sagacity told him that he dare not antagonize the mob.

At this crucial juncture his wife sent an urgent message: *"Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."* How pleasant that would be! What a relief just to wash his hands of the whole affair, bow gracefully out of the picture, and refuse to render a verdict. In a sense that was what Pilate tried to do. He even called for water and symbolically *"washed his hands"* of the matter, avowing his innocence. Yet Pilate found that it was impossible to side-step his moral responsibility. The verdict of history, repeated endlessly in that earliest of all creedal statements, is that Christ was "crucified under Pontius Pilate."

As it was with Pilate, so is it with everyone who has knowledge of Jesus. Neutrality is an impossibility. The advice of Pilate's wife is incredible. Pilate's very failure to declare himself was a declaration. Had he been familiar with the teachings of the prisoner he would have recalled his words, *"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."* (Matt. 12:30) The long story of the years has demonstrated the inexorable truth which Jesus put into words, *"I came not to send peace, but a sword."* His advent into the world has brought to mankind the necessity of making a choice regarding him. In theory they may postpone the choice, or try to evade it or avoid it; in practice the choice is made every day, and in every act or word or thought. Pilate's theory was that he could avert the choice; his practice was that he delivered Christ to be crucified.

A hundred years ago the Church of Christ stood at the crossroads. For multiplied thousands of Christians an inescapable choice loomed up. They did not ask for this problem; they did not want it; they did not like it. But it was there. In theory multitudes of them tried to shut their eyes to the problem, and ignore it; in practice every last one of them made a choice. Apparently in any such circumstances there are three choices possible: a positive choice for, a positive choice against, and a neutral choice. But as the years unfold, it has been demonstrated over and over again that the "neutral" choice disappears in the cold, hard logic of practice. Men can be neutral in theory only; in practice they are compelled to declare themselves.

In national affairs, when a nation is engaged in a struggle to the death for her very existence, neutrality is regarded as treason. In spiritual affairs, it is true that the Lord's church is perpetually engaged in a warfare that knows no respite. When a matter of truth or error is up for decision, any attempt at "neutrality" is treason to the

truth!

"Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man," said Pilate's wife. Attempting to follow that advice, Pilate turned Christ over to his tormenters. *"Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man,"* is the unexpressed, but none-the-less real, determination of thousands upon thousands of our contemporaries and acquaintances. Yet every such effort at "neutrality" is disastrous to the one attempting it. For Christ cannot be ignored. He makes positive claims and demands on the life of every individual. A failure to acknowledge those claims, a refusal to yield to those demands places one squarely in opposition and rebellion against God.

In theory a man can decide to be "neutral" on the subject of baptism; he is neither "for" it, nor "against" it. But in practice he either will be baptized, or he will not be. There is no neutrality in practice. In theory a man may be "neutral" on the subject of instrumental music in the worship; he is neither "for" it, nor is he "against" it. But in practice he cannot be neutral. He will either worship with it; or refuse to worship with it. The choice may not be forced upon him all at once; but sooner or later it will come. Perhaps he thinks himself against instrumental music; but he never speaks against it; never points out to any man the error of it; refuses to discuss it either publicly or privately. He is neutral in theory only; he is not neutral in practice. His influence is on the side of those who advocate the organ.

In theory, a man can decide to be "neutral" as to the regularity of observance of the Lord's Supper; in practice he cannot be neutral. A failure to be for a weekly observance of it inevitably puts him in the class of those who are NOT for a weekly observance of it.

"Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man." Yes, that is what Pilate devoutly wished could be so. But it was impossible for him. And it is impossible for anybody. It is impossible for YOU! When right and wrong are involved, when truth and error are in combat, neutrality is not only treason, it is impossible. Even an attempt at neutrality marks one as disloyal to Christ. There is no middle ground between Christ and Satan.

I WAS BLIND, NOW I SEE

"So they were saying to him, *"How then were your eyes opened?"* He answered, *"The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight."* They said to him, *"Where*

is He?" He said, "I do not know" (John 9:10-12 NASV).

John focuses our attention on light. Jesus, the Light of the World, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Dedication (**John 10:22**), and even the dark corridors of sin in the life of the woman taken in adultery, tell us that light is indispensable to life. We read in the OT about light. Israel's exodus recalls the pillar of cloud and fire. The Psalmist declared: *"The Lord is my light" (27:1)*. The Messiah provided *"light"* to the Gentiles, bringing sight to the blind (**Isaiah 49:6; 35:5**). Someone else needed light—the blind man.

The blind man had been blind from birth; there was no doubt about this fact. Jesus' disciples seeing the blind man, asked why was he blind. Were they concerned about the man's misfortune; were they going to in some way help him? He was after all, a beggar, depending on the generosity of others for support. Their question as to cause, was part of the conventional wisdom of the day. Whose fault was it? Did he sin; did his parents? Blindness (or, other misfortune) must be the result of sin. Sometimes sin does cause suffering. We bring suffering on ourselves; others bring suffering to our lives because of their actions. Jesus is not saying that this man or his parents had never sinned; that is not the point. The point is: sin is not the reason for the man's blindness. We don't know why he was blind from birth; leave it there.

In view of John's stated purpose (**John 20:30-31**), Jesus' works are prominently displayed. The signs are casual (should be, are meant to be); their purpose is to produce faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. His works were the words of God (**John 6:28-29**). Jesus' works were precursors to the works of His apostles (**John 14:12**). The works, the signs, testify; they distinguish, they indicate, they are tokens of power. They point to Jesus.

Rather than focusing on the reason for the blindness, Jesus said He would work the works of His Father. Here is an opportunity to display God's power and love. If God can make this man see, then God can save the world from the darkness of sin. Now is the time to do this; I am here; I will show forth the power of God. There was no doubt in the blind man. He got up and did what Jesus told him to do; then he could see. What about you and me? Do we know we are blind? Or, do we really think that we can see without Jesus' help?

"Light of the world, for ever, ever shining,

There is no change in thee.

True light of life, all joy and health enshrining,

Thou canst not fade nor flee.

Light of the world, undimming and unsetting,

O shine each mist away!

*Banish the fear, the falsehood and the fretting;
Be our unchanging day" (Horatius Bonar).*

Randy Harshbarger

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

As Paul concludes his letter to the church at Thessalonica, he gives a series of practical habits to incorporate into one's life. One of the statements: *"...pray without ceasing..." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)*. Read the entire context. You will be richer for doing so.

What does it mean to pray without ceasing? God does not mean that once a prayer has begun it can never cease. If that were the case, we could not start another prayer! God's people are *often* in prayer. It may be understood as an on-going state of mind where one could, at any time or circumstance, address God with whatever was on the mind. This constant praying is the result of a constant awareness of God, as well as a closeness to and trust in Him. Such a constant, continual attitude ready for brief moments in prayer can not substitute for specific times and occasions when a more focused, deliberate, and longer fellowship with God is enjoyed.

Pray without ceasing could be an admonition that we will never cease being people who pray. We continue to be people of prayer, through the years, over time and through all circumstances in life. Yes, we need to pray and not stop praying! No matter the experience and maturity we possess, our need for personal communion with God will not diminish. *"Pray without ceasing."*

Don Bunting

Honesty, Error, and Truth

There are many good people in the world who are honestly mistaken, but when a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, one of two things must happen: he will cease to be mistaken or, he will cease to be honest. If he does not obey it, he will no longer be honest. If he does obey it, he will no longer be mistaken. Honesty and error must separate when truth comes along. No man can be honestly mistaken if he has heard the truth.

by Eugene Britnell

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller

Brandon Jamison

Joe Hurd

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-620-0563

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News and Notes:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Trudy Mullen, Denese Goring, Brooklyn Boyer and Merry Dee Wood.

Tracy Richardson now recuperates at home Pat Gaines; Surgery was successful.

George Root is recuperating at home from injuries from a fall.

L.A. Stauffer has returned to the hospital

Sunday Morning Bible Class - Messianic Pathway - OT to NT - Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening Bible Class - Home and Family - Ron Peck

Sunday Morning Sermon - Showing Up is Half the Job



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10