

CONTINUED....FAITH:...God's Son and that He is the Savior of the world. It will cause us to change or to shift ourselves into a new position so that we will obey the gospel of Christ, which is God's power to save man (Colossians 1:18). It will cause us to let our lives be directed by the gospel as we faithfully serve God in our lives. And, we will put all our trust in God, faithfully serving Him and while having the hope of everlasting heaven burn within our hearts. As the Hebrew writer wrote concerning those who were looking upward toward God, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:16). It is this hope of heaven that serves as an anchor for the soul so that we are secure; we are stable as we go through the world. Thus, this hope of heaven is the source of our strength and comfort even when we are faced with ongoing trials and frustrating tribulations.

Now, faulty reasoning will weaken faith. When we take our thoughts of heaven and set them aside because of some defect in our reasoning, faith is rejected. The wise man says: "to trust in God, for this is the only safe course." And, we must know that man cannot direct his steps (Jeremiah 10:23). We are dependent upon God. Yet, when doubt is in the mind of an individual, it will weaken faith. This is why the Lord rebuked the apostles on a few occasions because they lacked in faith and were afraid. Make no mistake, when faith and love is perfected, there will be no fear. Do not be like the one talent man in Matthew 25 who was afraid and did not use that which his master had entrusted to him. Do not be like those mentioned in Revelation 21:8, where it list the fearful are among those who will be lost. Worrying is a sure sign that one's faith is weak. However, Jesus assures us that if we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; all the necessities of life will be provided (Matthew 6). The problem of so many is that you do not have enough faith to believe these truths. So many worry about worldly matters. But may we all study our Bibles and follow the Apostle Paul's example who enjoyed peace of mind because he had learned to trust God and he could rest upon the Lord's promises. 1

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BACK TO THE



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Back To The Bible is a quarterly evangelistic outreach for the expressed purpose of helping people study the Bible. It is a work of the Belle church of Christ which is located at the corner of 8th and Oak in Belle, Missouri. Editors of this publication are Jerry McDonald and Robert Notgrass. Staff writers: Richard Notgrass & Thomas McDonald. We have three things on our website (<http://www.bellecoc.com>). First we have an email discussion list where you can ask questions and get answers (all answers will come from the KJV), and we also have Bible corresponding courses. You can either mail them to our Post Office Box (P.O. Box 381, Belle, MO 65013), or email them to bellecoc@bellecoc.com. And finally we have a Youtube program that you can see each week by going to the Youtube link on our website. Past issues of this publication can also be found on our website. We hope that we can be of service to you in the coming years

Service Times:

Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30
Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:00

WHAT CHRISTIANITY MEANS TO ME

Thomas McDonald

*F*irst off I guess the best thing to do would be to start off with why I became a Christian. Well to put it quite simply I knew that my life was not saved and that I was in sin, I also felt that I was being left out on something important. I felt that it was time to take the next step. So what does Christianity mean to me exactly? Well good question.

Christianity means to be part of a family. What is meant by this? Well a family is no different whether it is physical or spiritual. It is made up of brothers and sisters with God being the Father. And just like a family in a physical sense we have our share of problems. Brothers argue sisters argue rivalries but we

are all still a family. So even though we act like a physical family and have our ups and downs doesn't mean that we don't love one another (John 13:34-35). Paul and Barnabas were spiritual brothers, but they didn't see eye to eye about taking Mark with them on their second journey (Acts 15:37,38). Their argument was so bad that they wouldn't even go together (Acts 15:39). But even after all of this we have scriptural proof that Paul and Barnabas worked together later (1 Cor. 9:6).

Christianity is and will ever be a family its self no matter where you go. Whether it is in Japan, Russia, Australia, or Africa. Where there is a Church with sound Christians there is a family. Both Spiritual and Physical. This is what Christianity means to me. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

REPENTANCE

Richard Notgrass

When we read in Acts 2:38 to repent, what were they required to do? We must know what that word means before we can do it. Thayer Greek says to change one's mind this is in agreement with all word studies of the New Testament. Sometimes it is confused with godly sorrow but that leads to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10) "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death". We see that is not repentance but rather something that leads up to repentance. If we used the word that we knew as a child and we did something wrong and our parents corrected us we knew that we Better not do that which we did that was wrong again or we would get another correction. We cried and were sorry that we did that which was wrong but turned around and did it again we did not correct ourselves. When we corrected ourselves that is repentance.

God has dealt with his people over many many years and wanted them to obey him. When they went and worshipped idols he would punish them. After a while they would cry after him and come back to Him, that was repentance. If we are in sin and we are sorry for that sin but we do not turn around from it and go to God we are still in that sin. In Exodus 9:27 we can learn a lesson from the pharaoh of Egypt.

"And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked". The Pharaoh was truly sorry he turned himself around, until things were going good, then went right back and did what he was doing wrong to start with, he would not let the children of Israel go from Egypt. God sent another plague on him and he would do the same thing, that's not repentance. That is what we call fair weather repentance. If things are going smooth we don't need God, if things are going rough we begged for mercy. Another example that we have in the Old Testament is a life of King Saul. (1 Samuel 15:24) "And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice". King Saul died in his sins, I suppose he thought that time would take care of it. Many today think as long as they're doing right that the things that they've done in the past will be ok. In (Ecclesiastes 12:14) Gods word has something to say about that. "For God shall bring every work

into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil".

We have a good scripture that will tell us what repentance really is. (Matthew 21:28-29) 28 "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. We have another good example that Jesus gave if we do not accept God's repentance in this life (Luke 16:27-31) "27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead". Even though one might rise from the dead many would not believe or even listen to them. Jesus had no sins of his own, yet he was willing to be beaten, mocked, spit upon, crucified and died a horrible death, rose from the head the third day, yet very few believe him. Another example that we have of John the Baptist is in (Luke 3:8-9) 8 "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. John wanted some proof that they had repented for the Jews thought just because they were the children of Abraham they were ok, but that was not ok in God's eyes". What is God's repentance? Stop living as the world and turn to God doing His will.

FAITH

Robert Notgrass

Faith is the basis on which our hope of eternal salvation is grounded. Yet, many people are still struggling about how exactly faith works. So many have misunderstood and others have searched for the answers so much, they have themselves all but weakened their faith. Therefore, we want to notice how faith is produced, what real faith can accomplish and some things that weaken faith.

Paul, in his wonderful letter to the Christians who were at Rome, told them that "faith comes by hearing the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Therefore, God needed to present His word for us so that it would produce faith. His evidence was this, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:30-31). Many sit and argue about the Bible in this fashion or in that way. I agree there is much disputing of God's Holy Word. But, I believe that so many have forgotten that the primary reason why God had His word penned for mankind was to produce faith when it was heard. And, we know this is how faith is developed. Have you ever had faith in anyone you thought was dishonest? Surely not! Is God honest? We must know that to have faith in an individual, we must not only trust him, but believe that he has the ability to do what he says he will do. Rest assured, God is able to do what He promises to do.

If we have real faith that is brought forth from hearing the word of God, it will draw us, the sinner, to the knowledge of God's unfailing and unceasing love. It causes us to believe in Christ as (Continued on page 4)