

"You're NOT Going To Change Me!"

In a recent visit with a denominational preacher, it was noted that we have some real and serious doctrinal differences. "Would you be willing to discuss these in a friendly way?" I asked. He responded: "I'm not going to try to convert you, and you DEFINITELY aren't going to change me!" While the attitude he expressed is very common these days, we think it is wrong on several levels.

1) This attitude certainly conveys the idea: "I'm right, and couldn't possibly be wrong." No one can afford to think that way. Consider Apollos (**Acts 18**). He was a well-educated man from a respected center of Biblical studies; he was an eloquent speaker; and he was highly committed to spreading his message (**vs. 24-25**). But when he arrived in Ephesus, two 'ordinary Christians' (Aquila and Priscilla) recognized his faulty understanding and reached out to him with help (**vs. 26**). To his great credit, he accepted their instruction, changed, and went on to be a faithful and effective preacher of the Word (**1 Cor. 3:4ff**). That would have never happened if he had proudly said: "You DEFINITELY aren't going to change me!" Let us all be open

By Greg Gwin

to the reality that we just might be wrong, and if so we WANT to be instructed "in the way of God more perfectly."

2) This preacher's response also suggests that he isn't really interested in ME! We differ. He acknowledges this. Yet he has no interest in changing my understanding. How can this be? If these differences are significant enough to provoke his 'you won't change me' reply, then they are surely important enough that he ought to want to change me. Yet, he says no. Out of love for my soul he should want to teach me (**2 Tim. 2:25**), but he won't.

3) His reaction to the offer to study our differences also shows that he is content to remain in a divided state. In so doing, he is directly counteracting the desire and prayer of Jesus that we be united (**John 17:20,21**)

His response was a common one, but it exposes some seriously wrong attitudes. Think!



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|--|---|---|---|
| Lisa Carter (Luke's mother) | Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather) | Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt) | Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother) |
| Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters) | Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier) | David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father) | Ruth Addison (gmom of April and Julie) |
| Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter) | Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son) | Betty Bradford | Hazel Gilliland (Toni's relatives) |
| Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother) | Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother) | Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother) | William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother) |
| Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father) | Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt) | Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin) | Charles Hunt, chuck Hunt's dad |
| Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family) | Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad) | Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew) | James Palmer (Rachel Hobbard's grandfather) |

January Birthdays

- 1-David Ogle
- 2-Savannah Spohn
- 2-Chuck Hunt
- 4-Phillip Box
- 6-Erica Seymore
- 7-Sarah Grubbs
- 7-Charles Painter
- 9-Jordan Oldag
- 9-Liseeth Aragon
- 9-Tyler Hudson
- 10-Mallory Randolph
- 11-Spencer Hall
- 11-Shepherd Hall
- 11-Jenna Vaughn
- 15-Michael Bassie
- 17-Anna English
- 18-Scott Vaughn
- 18-Nakia Strickland
- 19-Josh Green
- 21-Jacob Jerkins
- 23-Connor Godwin
- 23-Cristin Chavez
- 25-Caleb Daniels
- 25-Sara Lail
- 27-Blake Bagents
- 27-Hannah Slay
- 28-Holly McDaniel
- 28-Morgan Davidson
- 31-Jennifer Daniels

News and Notes

- We rejoice with our new Sister, Xiang Li, who was baptized into Christ last Sunday!
- Please remember the Lehmann family in TX (friends of the Lauderdale's) whose child Isla had open heart surgery last week.
- Please remember the family of Sarah Chandler whose aunt, Winnie Creel Gibbs, died last week.
- Look in your email to participate in the group meeting.
- Please remember the family of Carroll Sutton who was buried this week. Morgan Cavender and Dustin Marsh are relatives.
- Our new quarter starts today!
- Please pray for our expectant mothers: Amanda Stephens, Brooke Perkins, Fallon Hartsell and Jenna Vaughn.
- Please pray for the Anderson's who have been matched with a baby girl due Jan 31st!

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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Saved and Sure Of Heaven

By Cled Wallace



Thoughts to Ponder

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. (**Ephesians 5:17**)

There is immeasurable satisfaction in the personal conviction that one is saved and sure of heaven. Many think they are saved who are not, and the disappointment of a multitude who regard themselves as sure of heaven must be viewed as appalling. Jesus expresses a warning along this line. "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 who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (**Matt. 7:21-23**) Human speculation cannot point the way to heaven, nor can human feeling or opinion carry reliable assurance that one is saved. Divine assurance is based on the promises of God and a man should heed the divine admonition to "be not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (**Eph. 5:17**)

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

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It is important that the information revealed to guide an honest man into a state of blessed assurance should be both simple and clear. The New Testament is not disappointing in this respect. The Lord's will is expressly stated in words that are immediately understandable by all who have any appetite for assurance. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be con-

demned." (**Mark 16:15, 16**) "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (**Acts 2:37, 38**) There is nothing in this that all should not easily understand, and he who obeys has the promise of God that his sins are pardoned. He is saved. "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." (**Acts 3:19**) It must be clear that a sinner thus forgiven is saved only from his past sins. It is both unscriptural and unthinkable that this pardon absolves him from the guilt and the consequences of

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sins he may commit subsequent to his baptism into Christ. Provisions, both ample and divine, are made to insure the Christian's entry into heaven but these provisions are conditional and call for cooperation on his part. The apostle John has something to say about this. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:6, 7) "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. And hereby we know that ye know him, if we keep his commandments." (I John 2:1-3) The Christian must walk in the blood-sealed commandments of the Lord or else sin will conquer him and keep him out of heaven. As an aid, he has constant and instant access to a throne of grace through Jesus our Advocate. It was to Christians Paul wrote: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof." (Romans 6:12) "So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Romans 8:12, 13)

There are some strange and harmful ideas afloat regarding the sins that Christians commit. A Dr. Pettingill has a "Bible Questions Answered" column in a Chattanooga daily paper. A querist approached the doctor with a hypothetical question on divorce and declared that "the Scripture says that she commits adultery. Will that be a sin and keep her from being saved and going to Heaven at the end of time?" The doctor's answer will bear some looking into. He says in part:

"The question of 'being saved and going to Heaven at the end of time' is not settled by such considerations. Everyone who is born again is saved and is sure of Heaven."

That is, if I understand the matter, the contention is that if one has been "born again" and "is saved" and commits adultery he "is sure of Heaven" anyhow. I take it that "such considerations" would not be limited to adultery. There are other sins besides adultery, a long list of them. If "Everyone who is born again is saved and is sure of Heaven," even though he commits adultery, why should he not be equally "sure of Heaven" even if he commits some or all of the other sins catalogued in the scriptures? This certainly gives a saved man plenty of latitude in the way of sin. The doctor must have sensed that this needed some sort of qualification so he remarked that "God will doubtless deal with them in chastening. For whom the Lord

loveth he chasteneth.'" Incidentally, his use of this text is a perversion of it. The implication is that a Christian suffers the consequences of his sins only in this life. Doesn't a sinner suffer the same consequences for the same sins in this life? Is he also chastened of the Lord?

It is well enough that we examine the scriptures on this matter of sin and its consequences as it affects the Christian. Paul wrote to Christians and sounded this warning: "Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." (I Cor. 6:9-11) "For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (Eph. 5:5-7) "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." And we are blandly told that if a Christian does such things his "going to Heaven at the end of time is not settled by such considerations." "But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8).

It seems to me that a man is pretty badly mixed up where his understanding ought to be, if he thinks that such sins will cause a sinner to go to hell forever, but cannot keep "one who is born again" out of heaven. "One who is born again" has committed himself to the will of God and vowed that he will accept divine leadership. He reneges on his vows, turns back to sin, and "is sure of Heaven" anyhow! The Bible does not teach it. Besides, if I read my New Testament aright, a man who chooses to remain out of Christ and rejects the gospel, will fail to reach heaven even if he never commits adultery and keeps the rest of the Ten Commandments. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things have passed away: behold, they are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17) This new creature can be tempted, he can sin, he can fall from grace, "and is sure" to miss heaven unless he walks in the light with Christ. When a man becomes a Christian God does not grant him the indulgence for the sins he may afterward commit, implied in the theory of the impossibility of apostasy. He is on the other hand warned against falling, given a course in prevention, and told how to get back in case he does fall. Better listen to God and turn down the theories of men.

- Bible Banner, September, 1941



Where is Your Hope?

By Stephen Rouse

When the things that we lean on begin to crumble, we quickly find out where we are really putting our trust, our hope. As David wrote, "some trust in chariots and some in horses..." There are a host of different things we might put our trust in, or hope for..

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God." - David (Psalm 20:7)

We live in an increasingly unstable world. Locally, nationally, internationally—there has been much in the news lately to show us just how quickly our stability can crumble.

When the things that we lean on begin to crumble, we quickly find out where we are really putting our trust, our hope. As David wrote, "some trust in chariots and some in horses..." There are a host of different things we might put our trust in, or hope for:

- Some hope for a place where all people are accepted and treated equally.
- Some hope for protection from outside terror for themselves and their families.
- Some hope for a place to flee when their home becomes a place of hostility.
- Some hope for leaders who will bring justice and peace to their people and the world.

The fact is, if our hope is in any of these things happening in this world, we will often be disappointed, even disillusioned. Jesus Himself said, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

We should pray for our communities, our families, our nations, and the world (1 Timothy 2:1). We should pray for our leaders, and those who would become our leaders (1 Timothy 2:2). But we should not put our hope in any of these things (Psalm 118:8-9).

The amazing thing is, God offers all of these things that we might hope

for, but in a spiritual way:

- In God's kingdom, all people are accepted and treated equally as they turn from their ways to God's ways (Isa 2:2-4).
- In God's kingdom, we find protection from our great enemy, Satan, who seeks to destroy us eternally (John 17:15; 1 Peter 5:8-9).
- In God's kingdom, we can find refuge when the whole world might turn against us (John 16:33).
- In God's kingdom, we have the Creator of the Universe as our leader, who will ultimately bring justice and peace to the world (Luke 18:7; Rom 16:20).

Lord, help us to seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness, for in You we have all we need and all we long for. Help us to put our hope completely in You, not in the things of this world, whatever they may be. You alone must be our strength, our shield, and our unshakable hope.

