

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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No. 1

THE NECESSITY OF THE BIBLE

In a new year or anytime during the year, God’s word stands out above all other books. It is all inspired by God and is true from Genesis through Revelation. This word is so important that God saw fit to give it to us directly from Himself by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is not the word of man but it is the word of God. “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:21). “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

God’s word is necessary in revealing to us God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, one God yet revealed to us in three persons. The Bible begins in Genesis and reveals God unto us. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). The fool might say there is no God but the Bible says there is.

God’s word is necessary in revealing to us His salvation in and through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Without the Bible, we would not know how God has chosen to save sinners. “Of his own will begat he us with the word of

truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18). Throughout the Old Testament, God prophesies and promises the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to be our Saviour. Many times we see the shedding of the blood of innocent animals to foretell His sacrifice on the cross. The first five books of the Old Testament, the books of Moses, and all the prophets reveal our blessed Saviour. To the Emmaus disciples, Jesus told these wonderful words after His resurrection: “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27). What did Christ suffer? He suffered the hell penalty of our sins in His own body on the cross. God laid all of our sins on His dear Son at a place called Calvary. After He died and had completely paid our sin penalty, He was buried for three days and three nights, and then God raised Him from the grave. My friend, this is the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. When you believe in Him, you have forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. “To him give all the prophets witness,

that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43).

The Bible is also necessary to reveal God’s purpose in our lives as His children. We are saved by grace alone and not of works (see Eph. 2:8, 9). However, after we are saved from the penalty of sin, “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11, 12). We are to live holy, godly lives after we are saved because we belong to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

The Bible is necessary for our spiritual growth as God’s children. If we are going to grow, we must be fed from the word of God. The Bible is God’s growing food for His people. Pastors are exhorted to “feed the flock of God” (I Peter 5:2).

Do you see the necessity of the Bible for salvation, for service and for spiritual growth? Read the Bible and attend a true New Testament church that preaches the word and the gospel.

~ Gladwin Carpenter

WHO CAN DO GOOD WORKS?

In seeking the answer to this question I am thinking not of what man thinks is good works, and who can do them, but of what God calls good works, and the ones that He commands to do good works.

That eternal salvation, and eternal life is a gift from God, is plainly taught in the Word of God. Therefore any one who is honest and willing to know and believe what God says in His word cannot help but see this truth. In Romans 4:5 we read, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Nothing is any plainer than this truth taught in this passage of Scripture. When God says that righteousness is counted to a person who believes in Christ without that person doing any kind of works, of course He means exactly what He says.

Note that is not the godly that He grants righteousness but the ungodly. What do you say to this, my reader friend? If you say, "I do not believe it," you are guilty of a great sin in the sight of God. You are saying that God has lied. That's a mighty bad thing for a person to do, yet many are doing this very thing every day. No, my friend, good works have a place, but good works that man does has absolutely nothing to do with giving him right standing with God. No one has right standing with God who is depending on his own goodness. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scripture. On this basis and on this alone does God count righteous those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who are thus counted righteous are the only ones who can

do works that God looks upon as being good. We read in Ephesians 2:10 "For we (those saved by grace) are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we (God's children) should walk in them." In Titus 3:8 we find these words, "This is a faithful saying and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which believe in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto man." Note carefully that it is those who believe in God who are told to maintain good works.

The question might be raised as to why lost sinners cannot do works that God will look upon as being good? The lost person does not have the Holy Spirit abiding in him. This being true in Galatians 5:22 that "goodness" is a fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, since "goodness" is a fruit of the Spirit, how can that person do anything that God looks upon as being good? Impossible! This being true, the lost person needs to know about it. Just as long as a person thinks he is good, or that he can do good in a way that God will accept him, what does he care about the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ? Absolutely nothing! The gospel of Christ is not for good people; it is God's news for those who are bad. Jesus says: "There is none good but one, that is God" (Mark 10:18). (Of course Jesus and God are one.)

We need to remember what God says about man. Man at his best state is altogether vanity (Ps. 39:5). When a person is altogether vanity (and that is God's description of every person at his best state) please tell me how much good there is in

him. It is a universal law that every thing brings forth after its kind. Therefore for a person to do good he must have something good in him to produce that goodness. God puts that something good in every one who has been born from above. That good something is "the divine nature" (I Peter 1:4). Everyone who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is born of God, therefore he can do good works. If we really want to do a good work that will really be a blessing to some lost person, go to that person with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Tell that person that God loved him, and that He has given proof of His love, in that He sent His only begotten Son into this world to die for his sins. Tell him that Christ has put his sin away by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26). Tell him that Christ was raised from among the dead for his justification (Rom. 4:25). Tell him what Christ says about the security and safety of those who believe on Him. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Tell him what a privilege it is to follow the Lord in baptism, thus setting forth what He has done to save him. Can you think of any work that would be a greater blessing to those who are lost than the things mentioned? Those of us who know the Lord Jesus Christ as God's provided sin offering will certainly find that there is plenty of good works to do to keep us busy as long as we live. May the Lord help those of us who know Him to be busy doing these good works.

~ M. E. Wright

CHRIST AS THE FOCUS OF OUR LIFE

The book of Philippians presents four ways how Christ is to be the focus of our life. Paul says that Christ is to be Life's Purpose for us. He writes, "For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Christ is to be the one who gives meaning and purpose to our lives. We are to center our lives in Him "who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5b). We are to glory in Him and His cross (Gal. 6:14) and give Him the preeminence in all things (Col. 1:18). Paul also says that Christ is Life's Pattern for us. He writes, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). He who humbled Himself and was obedient unto the death of the cross can

teach us much about humility, submission, and obedience to God.

Third, Paul says Christ is to be Life's Prize for us. He writes, "I press toward the mark for the prize for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). Some people

Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.
Mark 9:23

act as if salvation is like buying a life insurance policy. To them it's something you do at a point in time. However, salvation is based on something Christ has done. And it is a life changing experience which brings us into a relationship with

the living Christ. Our highest goal must be "to know Him and the power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10a), to know Him in close fellowship, to be with Him often in the Word, in prayer, and in our meditations.

Finally, Christ is to be Life's Power for us. Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Whatever our need, whatever our circumstances, Christ is able to give us the grace and strength we need to meet the challenge. Without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5b), but with Him all things are possible (Mark 9:23). May Christ truly be the focus of our lives as believers.

~ Larry Windham

THREE STAGES IN THE WORK OF GRACE

Saved by grace-Power in salvation. Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." I Corinthians 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." How wonderful this word grace. It is deserving eternal hell and receiving eternal salvation as a free gift. There can be no growth till we are saved by his grace.

Standing in grace-Position of the saved. Romans 5:2 "By whom, also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." This is a new standing, not in nature, under

law, but in grace. If our standing was according to the law then we might lost our standing. Thank God our standing is by grace. If it is by grace then nothing that we could do will ever change that standing.

Growing in grace-Progress of the saved. II Peter 3:18 "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both and now and forever. Amen." We grow in grace as we grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. We gain knowledge of our Lord only through the word of God. We should spend much time and prayer in study of the word of God. One of the greatest investments that we can make is in the study of the Bible, we should search it, memorize it, study it, and hide it in our hearts. If you want to

grow as a Christian spend much time studying the Bible. If we read the Bible as much as we do the daily paper, we would grow in grace.

Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

The second word grace in this verse means graces. This has been my experience. I have not only received grace in salvation but grace on top of grace ever since that day.

Have you received this grace in salvation? He loved us and died on the cross for our sins. He was raised for our justification. We are saved because of this.

~ Charles Ellis

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BRO. GLADWIN CARPENTER

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Notice

The Northeast MS Baptist
Bible Conference will meet
with Union Grove Baptist
Church, Tilden, MS located
on Hwy. 25 south of Fulton,
MS on Friday, February 12,
2010 at 7:00 p.m.

7:00 - Song, Welcome

7:05 - Gladwin Carpenter

Alt. - Bobby Joe Poss

7:30 - Song

7:35 - Chris Duncan

Alt. - Alton Elrod

8:00 - Song

8:05 - Sammy Hardin

Alt. - Billy Little

8:30 - Offering

A meal will be served after
the conference.

The North Central Confer-
ence will meet at First Bap-
tist Church, Belmont, MS on
Tuesday, February 23, 2010.

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