"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 20:31).

It Is Written

THIS PAPER IS DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF UNDENOMINATIONAL, NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY

Volume I November, 1955 Number I

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

by I. S. Bedingfield

This is a subject of vast importance, and the grandest theme that ever engaged the mind of man. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jno. 3:15). This is God's truth, but what does "believe in" or "believe on Jesus" mean? John said, "For neither did his brethren believe in him" (Jno. 7:5). Does this mean that they did not believe that he existed? We know that it does not. We know that it means that they did not believe his statements, his claims, and his doctrines. For example, I ask the Democrats if they believe in the Republican Party, and they reply, "No.' The reason for this is that they do not believe their statements, their claims, nor their doctrines. The same is true if you ask a Republican if he believes in the Democratic Party, for he does not believe the claims, statements, nor doctrines of the Democratic Party. Another example may be found where Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16). If we do not believe that statement, we do not believe "in" or "on" Jesus, for when we set aside one of his statements we have denied that he is truthful, and thereby have denied his divinity. We see then that to believe "in" or "on" Jesus, we must believe every statement he made, even Mark 16:16, for it is Jesus' words. Therefore, we understand that faith includes obedience to the things believed.

The apostle Paul said, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Hence, we see that we must hear and believe everything that God says. The Bible says that we must *hear* (Matt. 17:5; Heb. 1: ,2). Hence, when we hear Jesus by hearing his words, it is an *act of faith.* The Bible says that we must believe (Mark 16:15,16; Rom. 10:10; Heb. 11:6). Again, we see that when we believe what God says, it is an *act of faith.* Jesus himself said that to believe was the *work* of God (John 6:29). We hear the word of God say "repent" (Luke 13:2-5; Acts 2:38). Therefore, when we "repent," this is an *act of faith* (Rom. 10:17). We hear the word of God say, "confess" (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9; Acts. 8:37). Hence, since faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), and we "confess," it is an *act of faith.*

We hear the word of God say, "be baptized" (Mark 16: 15, 16; Acts 2:38. Acts. 22:16; Rom. 6:3-6; 1 Pet. 3:21). Therefore, when we believe those statements, that is *faith;* but when we obey those statements by being baptized, that is an *act of faith.* Paul brings this out beautifully in Gal. 3:26,27. "For we are all the children of God *by faith* in Christ Jesus" (verse 26) ; then he tells us at the exact point that we become "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "For as many of you as have been *baptized* into Christ have put on Christ" (verse 27). Isn't that plain? The following is additional proof that we *obey faith* and faith is made per-

feet by works: A great company of priests were *obedient to the faith* (Acts 6:7). *"Faith is obeyed"* among all nations (Rom. 1:5). Again: "For the *obedience of faith" (Rom.* 16:26). "Faith works by love" (Gal. 5:6). The Thessalonians had a *work of faith* (1 Thess. 1:3). Noah *built* an ark *by faith (Heb.* 11:7). Abraham *obeyed* and sojourned by faith (Heb. 11:8,9). Faith is dead without works (Jas. 2:17). Our faith is "shown" by our works (Jas. 2:18). Faith without works is like devils faith (Jas. 2:19). Faith without works, is dead (Jas. 2:20). Abraham's faith was made perfect by works (Jas. 2:21-23). We are not justified by faith *only* (Jas. 2:24), because faith without works is as dead as a body without a spirit (Jas. 2:25).

Friend, won't you *obey faith,* by hearing, believing, repenting, confessing and being *baptized* into Christ (Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:27) ? May God bless you to do it is my prayer.—Box 767, Bryte, Calif.

WHAT SHALL WE GIVE UP?

The denominations object that we want them to do all the giving up and come to our platform of unity. What they overlook is that we have already done the giving up. We have given up unscriptural names, creeds, confessions, sprinkling, voting people into the church, closed communion, unscriptural forms of church government, etc. We ask no more than the New Testament asks—we ask no more of others than we do ourselves. Our plea is not for you to join a denomination but to become a child of God, a Christian.

—Timberland Dr. Messenger
via The Reminder

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Who is more foolish, the child afraid of the dark, or the man afraid of the light?

One way to pray well in public is to practice in private.

EDITORIAL

WHY ATTEND THE ASSEMBLIES?

by L. R. Pamplin

Jesus Christ had a purpose in "building" His church. It wasn't put in the world haphazardly or so that those who wished to might have some place in which to go on Sunday mornings and at other times throughout the week. Many today, both unbelievers and those wearing the name of Christ, feel it unnecessary to attend the meetings of the church, and therefore ask the question, "Why attend the assemblies?" Others are of the opinion that worshipping at various seasons of the year is acceptable with God. We shall attempt to answer this question by examining Holy Writ in an effort to determine God's will concernIng this matter.

As a beginning we shall notice briefly the nature of Christ's church. The word "church" is used in several ways in the New Testament Scriptures. Basically, it means "The Called Out," and is used in one sense to refer to all people throughout the world who have been called out of sin into a life of service for Christ. It is used this way in Matt 16:18, where Christ declared, "I will build my church. . . " and this way in Eph. 5:23-25. The term is used also to refer to those "Called Out" into God's service in any definite locally (I Cor. 1:2, I Thess. 1:1). It is also used to refer to the assembly itself (I Cor. 14: 28,34). The church universal is made up of local congregations (Rom. 16: 16). I mention all this because there cannot be any local church without assembling. On the day of Pentecost when

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the church of Christ had its beginning, right from the start it assembled and "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Surely, if it was necessary for these early Christians to assemble for the above reasons, it is necessary for the church to do so today. The church of the Lord is the same today as it was in the first century.

Not only should one attend the assemblies because it is impossible for the local church to function properly without them, but to assemble together is a divine command. Evidently in New Testament times, some were neglecting the assemblies of the church for the writer of the Hebrew epistle exhorts those brethren not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). In order to be pleasing to God and to have the blessed hope of that eternal crown of life which He will give to the faithful in that last day, we must obey the above command just the same as all the rest of His commands. We cannot and should not expect to enter in through those pearly gates if we have not been obedient to Him in everything. However, to obey this command simply because it is a command of God doesn't show forth a very faithful servant of Christ. One who attends the assemblies of the church, because he "has to" or is afraid that if he doesn't he will go to Hell, may as well not go at all, because it is not doing him any good. This type of individual is missing completely the joys and purposes of the assemblies. If this be the only reason for attending, I doubt very seriously if his worship is acceptable with God. To be acceptable worship, we must worship "in spirit" (John 4:24).

We should attend the assemblies out of love to do so. If we don't love to do this, something is wrong, and the wise person will ask himself, "Why." and he will make a serious effort to find out why. It is one of the joys of life to meet together with other Christians in sweet fellowship to worship the Creator faithfully. It is a blessing to sing songs of praise and adoration to His name and to hear the Master speak to us through His Word. It is truly a shame that so many do not realize that they are missing one of the most inspiring experiences of life. What a tragedy is that people do not have the same attitude as the Psalmist David when he said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1).

The church exists for our good and the good of the community. In the gospel according to Matthew, we find recorded the words of Jesus to the effect that He was going to build His church (Matt. 16:18). In the book of Acts saved people were being added to this church (Acts 2:47). Salvation is in the Lord's church. There is none outside of it. The church is set forth in the Scriptures in one picture as the house of God meaning the family of God (I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6; Eph. 2:19). All truly born again Christians are children of God (Rom. 8:15,16; Gal. 4:7). God is the Father and all of His children are in His family. God's family is the church, therefore all of God's children are in the church. Since this is where we may find salvation, it is highly important to attend the assemblies to learn of how we may obtain it.

The church is a teaching institution. People do not become Christians without first being taught. Hear Jesus: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). Again, He told His disciples before ascending back to heaven to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Man gains his faith from hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). The church of the Lord is the divine institution for making known God's will to a lost and dying world.

Along with being taught, one should attend the assemblies as we have already mentioned to sing (Heb. 2:12; Col. 3:16), and pray (Acts 2:42). It is at the assemblies where we meet the Lord in worship, for Jesus has declared, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Here is where we meet His people (Acts 2:42). Let us not forget that man is naturally a social being, and he needs fellowship. He who believes that the assemblies of the church are not necessary or who is neglectful in his attendance of them is either spiritually dead or very weak, because in so doing he hasn't received his much needed supply of spiritual food which is so very necessary in keeping alive faith.

Yes, the assemblies of the church are necessary for the propagation of the Faith and for man's own spiritual well-being, and we must of necessity have them to fulfill God's eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind.-1711 Bush St., Santa Ana, Calif.

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Should Our Hospitality Be Just For the Church Or For All Men?

by Willie Doan

First, we should love the household of God which is the church, as the Hebrew writer teaches: "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13:1,2). We should never think of ourselves so highly that we cannot love and do good unto all men, as is taught in the Roman letter: "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12: 20,21). Let us hear Christ as recorded by Luke: "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14: 13,74). Hear also the testimony of Solomon: "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Prov. 11: 25). If we are of service to and for all people whether they are friend or foe, the Lord will pay us for our work at the last great day. Again, listen to Solomon: "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Prov. 22:9).

Next, we read in the sixth chapter of Luke to "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:37,38). Too many of us, I am sure, just think that if we "go to church" that this is all we have to do, and again not too few of us are ready to judge someone else, when perhaps it is ourselves that need to be judged. There are also many of us that do not give of our means as we should. Someday we are going to receive our reward, and if we don't receive that good reward, what then? Let us think on these things!

I offer for' your consideration a little poem which I think fits into our theme rather nicely.

KIND WORDS

Kind words are never forgotten
As along life's road we trod,
Kind words will be remembered
For so they are with God.
Kind words will be remembered
On a cloudy, rainy day,
For when kind words are even spoken
They have helped us on our way.
Kind words are like beautiful flowers
With their fragrance soft and sweet,
When just one kind word spoken
To every friend we meet.
When to us kind words are spoken,
Let us return them with the same,

For each kind word is recorded
Whether or not it comes to fame.

Rt. 1, Broken Bow, Okla.

SACRIFICE

By L. E. Atchley

"Sacrifice" is a small word, but it has a lot of meaning if we think of it in connection with our soul's salvation. I fear that there are a good many of us who do not grasp the full meaning of it. There are several definitions given in Webster's dictionary. I'll give only one: "To give up for the sake of something; as, to sacrifice health for pleasure." I believe that I can give a definition that would apply to the christian people of today. We should sacrifice the pleasures of this world for the pleasures of serving the Lord and living a christian life. I fear that most of us are not doing that. We seem to like the worldly pleasures too much to make that sacrifice.

The greatest sacrifice that we have any record of was the one made by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ when he gave up his life on the cross for the sins of the world. Another great sacrifice was that of Abraham when he obeyed God and took his son into the mountain to offer him for a burnt offering (Gen. 23:1-18). We see that Abraham believed in God to the extent that he was willing to sacrifice his only son in order that he might obey God. Then because of his faith and willingness to obey God, his son's life was spared. How many of us would be willing to make a sacrifice like that if called on to do so? I wonder if there would not be far and few.

Now, to us. Since we have learned that Christ made that sacrifice for our sins, we must do a little sacrificing in order that our sins be forgiven. We must have faith or believe (Heb. 11: 1,6; Rom. 10:17). We must repent (Acts. 17:30,31; Luke 13:3). We must confess Christ as our Saviour (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10. We must be baptized (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15,16; Acts 2:38). When we have made the sacrifice of the worldly things and obeyed these commands this puts us into Christ where salvation is. Can we stop there? Will that be enough to save us? No. We must continue sacrificing the pleasures of this world in order to live a christian life.

We should make a great sacrifice in our feelings, removing all hatred from our hearts and develop more love instead. Hear John: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20). Again: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). Hear Jesus: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Which one are we serving, God or mammon? Do we love God? then let us show it by our service to him, by our sacrifice of the worldly things.

Love is one of the greatest things in living a christian life. We may at times let our feelings get the upper hand and say things we shouldn't, things which we are sorry of too late. If we would think first and then talk, there would no doubt be many things that would never be said. Hear the testimony of James: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jas. 1:19). Many times we go at this backward. We are swift to get angry and swift to speak our mind while in that angry state. Brethren and friends, let's try to develop that christian love for God, for our brethren, and for all mankind.

Another sacrifice that we should make is that of our finances. Are we making a sacrifice in giving of our means? We may say, "Oh yes, I give a dollar every Lord's day," or five dollars as the case may be. Are we really making a sacrifice in giving that much?

Let us read of a poor widow's sacrifice in Mark 12:41-44. Here many who were rich cast much into the treasury, but this poor widow only cast in two mites which was a farthing. This was very little according to Webster. A farthing in Great Britain is ¼ penny or about a half cent in our money. No, this was not much for her to put into the treasury, yet Jesus said this poor widow had cast in more than all the rest. Why? Because that was all that she had. I'm sure none of us today would make that great a sacrifice of our means.

Our sacrifice should be in our every day living. We should make a great effort to live as Christ and the apostles lived. Christ was a perfect Saviour. Paul admonishes us to follow him, as he followed Christ (I Cor. 11:1). In doing this we would have a great influence with the worldly people as well as our brethren in Christ. We would also be obeying another of the commands written in this great book, the Bible. Hear Paul: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). Paul says that this is a reasonable service. Then why not live our lives in a way that we know will be acceptable unto God in the last day.

Another sacrifice which we should make, and surely not the least, is to be sure that we are at the house of the Lord each Lord's Day, and not stay home one time and entertain company, then go fishing or hunting another, then "go to church" the next and think this will be acceptable unto God. God has made a promise of a heavenly home to all who live in obedience to his word. When we stay away from his house on the Lord's Day we are disobeying him, therefore, we cannot expect a reward for what little we do. Suppose we were told that we wouldd be rewarded one-hundred dollars if we would be in town a certain day and at a certain hour. Would we be there? Would we be on time? I'm sure we would be there and have some time to spare. Otherwise, we would know that we would not receive the reward. Let us think, isn't the reward which our Saviour has promised us worth much more to us than those made by man?

Brethren and friends, I have only given a few of our christian sacrifices. In fact, our whole life as a christian should be one of sacrifice. We should not only he willing but anxious to sacrifice all worldly things, all of man's teachings for the word of God and the pleasure of living a life for Christ, preparing, ourselves for the coming of our Lord and the great judgment, where each of us must give account for the things which we have done while here on earth whether they be good or bad (Rom. 14:10-12; II Cor. 5:10).

Friends, have you made that sacrifice to get into Christ, where salvation is? If not, won't you do it now? Brethren, are you making all the sacrifices that you should in order that you may be accepted by the Saviour when he comes to judge the world? Let us all press forward, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2; read Heb. 5:9 ,also).

—Gateway, Ark.

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CHRISTIAN HOPE

by W. H. Francis

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Pet. 3:15). From this verse it can be seen that Christians are commanded to be ready to give an answer (a good, scriptural one too) to anyone, of the hope within them. In the letter to the Colossians, it is stated to Christians that their hope is *laid up in heaven,* as Paul said, ". . . ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col. 1:5).

In Peter's statement we learn that the Lord God is to be sanctified in our

hearts. Now if we listen to the world of so-called religious people, we might be led to think that some great, mysterious action of a "better felt than told" nature, must take place in the life of a responsible person for *"true sanctification"* to take place. When we study the meaning of the word "sanctify" we find it to mean simply, "set apart or consecrated." Religiously speaking it would mean, "set apart from wrong practice and consecrated or dedicated to doing right." Since this is true, we can and must give reason how this is done.

In the gospel of John, Jesus tells just how this is done or how people are sanctified: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We learn that people are sanctified through God's word or as one translator (Weymouth) says by the truth of God's word. This agrees with Peter's statement that the soul is purified in obeying the truth—God's word (I Peter 1:22). When the Lord is sanctified (set apart) in life, he is made leader to follow in his steps (I Pet. 2:21).

Truly, there can be no Scriptural basis to *hope for heaven,* except by following the Saviour. To follow him is simply to take his *word* as our only guide from earth to heaven, because from the Psalms we learn, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). Paul states that the Scriptures furnish all *"set apart people"* unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16,17). Such good works for the *"man of God"* are called a reasonable service (Rom. 13:1)). Then none of these good works are too hard or difficult for us, as we learn from Jesus: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-34). Hear the apostle Paul: ". . . be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Yet the claim is made that God's will can't be understood when it is read, and some even use this as an excuse to refuse to serve the Lord as he directs in his word. Hear Paul again: "Consider what I say; and the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things" (II Tim. 2:7). Small wonder then that David said that the delight of a godly man is in the law of the Lord and in his law cloth he *meditate* (study) day and night (Ps. 1:1,2.

Now it is certain that our Lord wants sincere, intelligent, and heartfelt service or obedience, from alien sinners (Rom. 6:17,18). In Acts 8:37, a lost soul was asked if he believed with all his heart, before he was baptized, and after he was immersed he went on his way rejoicing. We find that this kind of faith must hold even unto death (Rev. 2:10) for the *True Hope* (crown) to be won. "Pure-mindedness" is a requirement of all who would reach heaven as the end of all hope (II Pet. 3:1), and Paul says to keep thyself pure (I Tim. 5:22).

Are we, as Christians, being sure to do *this?* I ask as one who has the right (I Pet. 3:15). Please, let us all take check upon how we are serving our Lord and taking care of our bodies, lest many of the impure things of the world enter our lives through the many avenues of entrance. Remember we are not our *own* (1 Cor. 6: 19,20), dear brethren, and let nothing enter in to defile (make unclean or impure) this body (1 Cor. 3:16,17).

To be sure, to realize our hope we must serve sin no more (Rom. 6:6), but are to feed upon God's word (1 Pet. 2:2) and grow and be a light (Matt. 5:16) and help to others. Be *sincere* and without offense till the day of Christ, said Paul (Phil. 1:10) ; yet sincerity *alone* on our part will not gain the fulfillment of our proper hope. From the Hebrew letter we learn that Christ "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8,9). Again in the Proverbe we are taught that there is a way which *seemeth* right, but ends in death, if it is not right as God's word directs (Prov. 14:12).

As our true *hope* is anchored in God's word and is said to enter into that within the veil (death) (Heb. 6:19), we must always keep this anchor where it belongs. Some of the things

which makes our anchor steadfast are listed. First, obedience to the *gospel* (II Thess. 1:7-9; then being sure we remain true to the one body we are baptized into (1 Cor. 12:13) of which Christ is the Saviour of and it alone (Eph. 5:23). Next, wear no other name as His (Christ's) follower than Christian (I Pet. 4:16; Acts 4:12; 11:26). Then cling to the only true and acceptable worship (Jno. 4:24) that Christ wills for us. Remember the warning against worship after the doctrines of men (Matt. 15:9).

When we truly examine ourselves (II Cor. 13:5), we may be kept out of all manner or forms of worship which are not of faith (Rom. 10:17). In this we know that if we cannot read our practices, we are in sin (Rom. 14:23; I Jno. 3:4). Paul says, "We walk by faith and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). True hope abides now (while we are living) (I Cor. 13:13), but only if we abide in His Word (Jno. 8:31). "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1).

Let us "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines" (Heb. 13:9). Any doctrine not found in the New Testament is surely strange (foreign) to our Lord and will not help us to realize our true hope, but will cause us to fail or come short of it, regardless of how we may feel about such (II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 14:23). Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:1,2), and he says we learn his way in his book, the New Testament (Heb. 10:7).

Can you say that your religious life is fully grounded in the New Testament Scriptures (II Tim. 3:16,17) ? Ask yourself all about your religious manner—church, name, worship and all. If you can't read all in God's book, let me persuade you to make a change, and be led by what you can read, will you not? Test your hope. Is it rooted and grounded in the proper way and place? Are you a member of the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16) ? Are you a Christian only (Acts 4:12; 11:26) ? Are you worshipping only with this kind of people (Jno. 1:6,7) ? and in the only way that can be read for true worship as our Lord directs (Matt. 18:20) ?

A grim monster called death will some day engulf us all (Heb. 9:27; I Cor. 15:22). Since death is not the final end for us (I Cor. 15:23), it surely behooves us all to mold our lives with this in view. We are told there are two destinies awaiting, and we shall receive as we do here in this body, *"good or bad."* We learned that the Scriptures furnish us unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16,17). Then it is positive that what we do to serve the Lord which is not in His word, is a bad work. Solomon says, "the wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath *hope* in his death" (Prov. 14:32). This seals the doom for the hope of all the unrighteous and David says that all God's "commandments are righteousness) (Ps. 119: 172). Hence those who are righteous are those who keep His commands. Jesus makes this very clear: "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 which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

Will you not think and act upon what your hope is based, and do so today? Tomorrow may be too late (Jas. 4:14).

423 W. Tyler St., Mangum, Okla.

THE KINGDOM, ITS BEGINNING TIME AND PLACE

by IF. A. Nelson

This subject has been considered and discussed at length many times in the past, yet there are some who do not understand what the Bible teaches on it. The one and only statement recorded in the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, which we find pertaining to this subject, Jesus made: "I will build my church. . ." (Matt. 16:18).

We will consider in this writing, that

the kingdom and the church are synonymous or one and the same thing. Jesus, while here on earth, taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). At this time the kingdom had not come. Again, Jesus called unto him his twelve disciples, and these twelve he sent forth and commanded them to go neither to the Gentiles, or the city of Samaria, but to Israel, and he told them to preach saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 16:18). Somewhere, sometime in the future, he was going to build his church. Hear him again: "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1). The kingdom had not come at this time but was in the near future. Jesus said that some would still be living when it came. Jesus, eating the last lawful passover with his disciples said, "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Lk. 22:16). The passover was kept on the fourteenth day of the first month of the year. This leads us to believe that the kingdom was to come within the year Jesus was betrayed into the hands of sinners by Judas (Lk. 22:47,48). He stood trial (Lk. 23). Pilate gave sentence (vs. 24), and Jesus, having suffered many things by the hands of sinners, was crucified (verses 33,46,47).

"And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimatheia, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God" (Lk. 23:50,51). Jesus was crucified and Joseph still waited for the kingdom to come. Jesus appeared to his disciples after his crucifixion and resurrction, having all power in heaven and in earth and gave the world-wide and age lasting commission (Matt. 28:18-20). They were to tarry at Jerusalem, until "ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). Jesus showed himself alive "by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:3-5). They seemed to look for an earthly kingdom then as some do today, asking him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8). In verse 9 when Jesus ascended on high, the kingdom had not come at this time. In verse 7, Jesus said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Just a few days more and the twelve disciples would receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost as they waited assembled at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and, it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:24). The multitude heard this great noise, and the crowd gathered in bewilderment, because each man heard them speaking in his own language (Acts 2:6-8).

Let us notice a statement written by Paul to the church at Corinth: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (I Cor. 12:28). Again in Acts: "And the same day

there were added unto them (the apostles about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Again: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). The apostle John said he was "in the kingdom and patience in Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9). Hear Paul also: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13-14).

We have found that Jerusalem was the place, and the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ was the time that the kingdom came with power—about A.D. 33—and on the same day, three-thousand souls were added to them (Acts 2:4). The apostles were the first set in the church (I Cor. 12: 28. The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:4-7).--To be continued—Rt. 1 Box 14 B.M., Somerton, Ariz.

OBEYING THE FAITH

by J. W. Bedingfield

A self-styled "missionary" declares: "Salvation is by faith. Jesus has promised salvation to all who believe him." Since so many people are accepting the doctrine that salvation is by faith alone, I would like to investigate the proposition that salvation is by obedience to the faith.

The apostle Paul says of Christ: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8,9). Notice, salvation to all that "obey" him, not to all that "believe" him. The devils also "believe" (Jas. 2:19). Again: "Without faith, it is ¡mpossible to please him," but James says that we are not justified by faith only (Jas. 2:24), so let us make a careful study of the relationship of our faith to our salvation.

To believe in Jesus Christ is more than merely to believe that the Man, Jesus, lived on earth. We must also believe that He was the Son of God, that He died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He rose from the dead. Paul tells us that gospel, which he preached, which they believed, by which they were saved, was the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4). That is the Christian faith, and we must obey it. The apostle Paul in the Roman letter says: "By whom (Christ) we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith. . . " (Rom. 1:5). Again he says that the gospel of Jesus Christ is now made manifest by the Scriptures and the prophets "for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26).

Hear Peter: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (I Pet. 4:17). Hear Paul again: "In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1:8). Yes, indeed, we must obey that faith.

In the Roman letter we find written: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteous.. ness, indigation and wrath" (Rom. 2: 7-10). How then, can a man who believes in Jesus Christ, obey that faith? He must die (be dead) to sin (Rom. 6:2. He must be buried with Christ, by baptism. Then as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, he should rise to walk a new life (Rom. 6:4). Christ rose from the grave to die no more; we should rise from the water to sin no more. After Christ arose from the grave, death had no more dominion over us (Rom. 6: 9-12).

To those members of the church at Rome, Paul says: "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you. Being

then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6: 17,18). Obeying "that form of doctrine" was obeying the death, burial, and resurrection. It was obeying the gospel of Christ. It was being obedient to the Christian "faith."

Having then been obedient to that " faith, we can see how that we are "justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:12). We see then, that our Christian faith is, as a door, or access, set before us. Our obedience to that faith, is our entering through that door into his grace, where we can rejoice in hope. Also, we understand how that Paul received "grace and apostleship by obedience to the faith" (Rom. 1:5).

Hear Peter concerning obeying the truth: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22). Peter here referred to the gospel of Christ as the "truth." Hence "obeying the truth" was obeying that "form of doctrine," that death, burial, and resurrection. It was obeying that Christian faith.

Our prayer would be that all who have faith in Jesus Christ, would be obedient to that faith, that they might have access into his grace, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that they might reap glory, honor, immortality—eternal life.

Our prayers and best wishes go out for the staff of *It Is Written* and all of its readers.—Box 441, Magalena, N. M.

NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

"Brother and Sister A. H. Howell, of Elk City, Okla., visited with us last Lord's Day (Oct. 16). We enjoyed having them with us very much. Brother Howell spoke for us on the subject of 'Peace.'

If the Lord wills, I will begin a meeting at the church of Christ, at Somerton, Arizona, on Oct. 30th, through Nov. 6th. I would like to get acquainted with as many of the brethren as possible, while I am out that way.

We request all brethren who are traveling this way to stop and meet with us at Magdalena. Also to remember the church at Carlsbad, N. M., where a small but faithful group meet regularly for worship. At Aztec, N. M. a very zealous and faithful group meet in their new building, at South Park Avenue in Aztec. All will receive a hearty welcome at all of these churches in New Mexico."—J. W. Bedingfield, Box 441, Magdalena, N. M.

In an earlier report, Brother Bedingfield stated that by contacting him at "Ann's Court," on Highway 60, those passing through Magdalena, N. M. on the Lord's day would find a place to worship.—Ed.

"The church of Christ which meets here (Lugert, Okla.) is going along in our usual steady, firm and scriptural way. We are thankful we are able to keep our worship services true to what we can read in the New Testament. We invite all to pay us a visit and worship with us, if your faith is of like precious with us."—W. H. Francis, 423 West Tyler St., Mangum, Okla.

"I closed a meeting at Somerton, Arizona on November 6th. Very good attendance and interest was shown, by both Yuma and Somerton. We appreciated very much the visitors from La Habra and Bellflower, California. I had hoped to get to meet you, while out that way, but hope to be back that way in the near future, so I will look forward to meeting you then.

As you probably know, I plan to meet John Burnett of Somerton on the class question late in November or early in December. Bro. W. A. Nelson will set the date. Following the debate, I plan a meeting at Yuma, and if the Lord wills, I will come to see you brethren at that time."—J. W. Bedingfield, Box 441, Magdalena, N. M.

"I am writing in regards to the proposition made by the Somerton, Arizona church of Christ. They asked

us here at Aztec to have the heat put in the church building and send them the bill of which we want to express our greatest appreciation. We are having difficulties with the Gas Company in piping it to our line. We hope to have it in soon.

Also want to thank Sister Paul R. Bruce of Carlsbad, N. Mex. for her interest in the church here. We received a check for $10.00 from her."

C. R. Dobbs for the Aztec N. M. church of Christ, Rt. 1, Box 19, Aztec, N. M.

"The church of Christ in Sacramento meets at Brother Herman Brown's residence in a room built on the back of his garage. The address is 228 Bryte Ave., Bryte, California. The service is held at 10:00 A. M. on Sunday. We are at present looking at two lots, which if allowed to build a meeting-house on them, we plan to buy. Although it will be some time before we are able to erect a building, we shall have the site for it when we are in a position to build. Quite an interest has been shown in the past month and we have found two new members and their families who are now meeting with us. We sincerely hope that should anyone be passing through they stop and fellow. ship with us."—LaVerne McCluskey, 1829 Laurel Lane, West Sacramento, Calif.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS (Oct.)

F. T. Berkshesser	$ 2.00
R. C. Clements	$ 5.00
Somerton church of Christ	$10.00
Anonymous	$10.00
J. W. Bedingfield	$ 5.00
S. B. Kennedy.	$ 1.00
L. E. Atchley	$10.00
L. C. England	$ 1.00
Lugert church of Christ	$10.00
Sacramento church of Christ	$ 5.00
Stilwell church of Christ	$ 5.00

(Nov.)

Somerton, Ariz. church of Christ	$10.00
Bellflower, Cal. church of Christ	$10.00
Furnish Canyon church of Christ (Kenton, Okla.)	$10.00
West Side church of Christ (Nocona, Tex.)	$25.00
H. I. Pamplin	$ 5.00
L. R. Pamplin	$ 5.00
E. L. Pamplin	$ 5.00
Mrs. James Vanderpool	$ 2.00
R. H. Peel	$ 2.00
Mrs. Jewell Cadwell	$ 5.00
G. L. Crowson	$ 2.00
L. C. England	$ 1.00
B. 0. Weakly	$ 2.00
E. 0. Nayes	$ 5.00

This is the total contributions up to Nov. 7, 1955. We hope that we haven't missed anyone. Thank you all for your cooperation.—Ed.

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A STATEMENT

To the brethren and readers of *It Is Written*

I understand that Bro. Clements has turned the editorship of *It Is Written* over to Bro. Leonard Pamplin of Santa Ana, Calif. To those of you who do not know Bro. Leonard, I would like to take this opportunity to tell what I know of him. I have known him since he was a small boy, and have watched him grow up and make that noble confession and was baptized while we were living there.

He was reared in a loyal christian home. Bro. Leonard began taking an interest in the work of the Lord soon after he became a christian. Lately I understand that he is taking a big part in the work in Southern California.

I believe Bro. Leonard to be a loyal christian, and one worthy of our support both in finances and material for the paper. I am sure that he will work to the best interest of all to publish a paper that we can be proud to give to to friend to read.

Let's all send Bro. Leonard some material for the paper along with some money to pay the expenses and show him we are for him and the work he is undertaking. He had a big job there, but I believe he will be able to handle it with the help of the brethren.

Yours in Christ,
L. E .Atchley
Gateway, Ark.