

Plain Path

Weekly newsletter of the Fry Road church of Christ

Sunday, September 7, 2014

Volume 19, Number 36

“Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path... Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart” (Psalm 27:11-14)

FORGIVENESS COMES BY TURNING TO GOD

by Joseph Casimier

We currently live in a society where sinful conduct is actually glorified and rationalized. Satan tempts us through these views and deceitful lusts and is called “the god of this age who blinds the minds of those who do not believe” (2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 3:13; 1 John 2:15-17). Yet here is a clear view of the effects of sin, “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.



But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” (Isa. 59:1-2). Sin not only separates us from God, it leaves us “without hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12).

The good news is that God has made known the wonderful promise of forgiveness and salvation available to every person (John 3:16; Acts 3:19). It is unfortunate, however, that there is so much adverse teaching on how forgiveness comes. Religious feelings and prejudice can cloud human minds to the beautiful truth of God on the subject of forgiveness and any other Bible subject.

For example, you may have seen

one. Perhaps someone gave you a tract entitled, “God’s Simple Plan of Salvation.” One such tract said one should offer this sinner’s prayer: “Heavenly Father: I come to you in prayer asking for the forgiveness of my sins. I confess with my mouth and believe with my heart that Jesus is your Son, and that He died on the cross at Calvary that I might be forgiven and have eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven. Father, I believe that Jesus rose from the dead and I ask you right now to come into my life and be my personal Lord and Savior. I repent of my sins and will worship you all the days of my life. Because your word is truth, I confess with my mouth that I am born again and cleansed by the blood of Jesus! In Jesus name, Amen.”

It is interesting to note that in the Bible, there is not one single per-

(Forgiveness, continued on pg 2...)

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(Forgiveness, *continued from pg 1...*)

son who was commanded to “pray the sinner’s prayer.” Consider these Bible examples of conversion: the birth of 3000 babies on Pentecost (Acts 2:37-41), others at Jerusalem (Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:7), Samaria (Acts 8:5-13), the Eunuch (Acts 8:35-39), Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-30; 22:1-21; 26:12-18), Cornelius (Acts 10:34-48), at Antioch where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:19-26), Lydia and her household (Acts 16:13-15), the Jailor and his family (Acts 16:30-34), the Corinthians (Acts 18:8), and the Ephesians (Acts 19). On baptism, the tract mentioned above stated, “You should be baptized in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ as a public testimony of your salvation, and then united



with a Bible believing church without delay.” Nowhere in the Bible do you read that people were baptized or told to be baptized “as a public testimony of one’s salvation.” You do read in the Bible that baptism was for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), to wash away sins (Acts 22:16), to put one into Christ (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13), to put one into the kingdom (Col. 1:13), to unite the sinner with the death of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:3-4), and for salvation (1 Pet. 3:21; Mark 16:15,16). It is striking to realize the spiritual blessings of Christ identified with Bible baptism. So, is baptism necessary in order to obtain forgiveness? Of course it is! The fact that it doesn’t fit into the doctrine of other religious bodies doesn’t change the Lord’s will and teaching. The answer to the question, “What must I do to be saved?” is clearly set forth in Acts 16:30. Here is the phrase “to be saved” used in the sense of being rescued – rescued from sin and from Satan. Jesus did not come just to make the world a better place or to simply raise the standard of mankind’s moral concepts. As

the Savior, Jesus came to rescue people from sin and the horrible punishment of hell! (Mat. 1:21; Luke 19:10). “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*” (1 Tim. 1:15). “*The Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world*” (1 John 4:14). Thanks be to God “*that Christ died for our sins*” (1 Cor. 15:3) and that we have “*redemption through His blood*” (Eph. 1:7).

Jesus instructed His disciples to “*...preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved*” (Mark 16:15,16). So the call of the gospel is a call to forgiveness, a forgiveness grounded in the death of Christ on the cross at Calvary. God spoke through Jeremiah of the new covenant, “*For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more*” (Heb. 8:12). W. E. Vine says that “forgive” means primarily “to send forth, send away.” So when sins are forgiven they are “sent forth” and no longer considered in the relationship. Forgiveness also carries with it the idea of manifesting grace and mercy to the individual. These two words and

(Forgiveness, *continued on pg 3...*)

THIS WEEK'S DAILY BIBLE READINGS

NEW TESTAMENT READING

ROMANS 11 - 16

September 7 - 9

OLD TESTAMENT READING

JUDGES 10 - 16

September 10 - 13

I TIMOTHY 4:13

FAMILY NEWS & NOTES

News and Notes of Interest
to Fry Road Members

Because of the large number of visitors to our services, we would ask those wishing to identify with the congregation to do so by expressing this interest directly to the elders.

Sick and Shut-Ins

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

"...I was sick, and you visited me..."
Matthew 25:36

Updates for friends and family members should be given to Bob regularly to keep necessary items up-to-date, and included in Plain Path.

An Important Note

There has been a problem with drivers (non-attendees) trying to bypass the light by running through our drive. There have been a number of cases where children and adults have nearly been hit. In the near future, a cable blocking the Fry Road entrance will be installed as a safety measure. An exact installation date will be announced prior to blocking the entrance.

Sermons:

Next Sunday:

The Body of Christ

Tonight:

The Conversion of David

(Forgiveness, continued from pg 2...)

concepts are sometimes spoken of together; one has to do with forgiveness, unmerited favor, and the other with relief of consequences (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Heb. 4:16; 2 John 1:3). To be forgiven, even of the worst of sin, is a great and wonderful blessing through Jesus Christ. It takes place in the mind of God when one's faith responds by obedience in immersion in water.

It needs to be noted that Simon the sorcerer was commanded to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22), but he had already believed and had been baptized (Acts 8:13). Simon was a believer who had sinned and was instructed on how he could obtain forgiveness (see also 1 John 1:1-9). The example of David teaches us the attitude we should have towards our sin, that God will pardon the penitent, which the consequences of sin often follow despite pardon, and that forgiveness comes by turning to God (Psalm 51). The example of Jonah teaches us that you can't run from God, that forgiveness comes by turning to God, and that it is both easier and better to obey God. (Mat. 12:41),

"God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). The Bible shows that God's love always stands in readiness to offer and provide His way of salvation (Rom. 5:8). Our eternal destiny depends on what we do in response to God's simple plan of salvation, turning to God in simple obedience that we might receive forgiveness, *"for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Rom. 6:23).



FOR THE RECORD

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

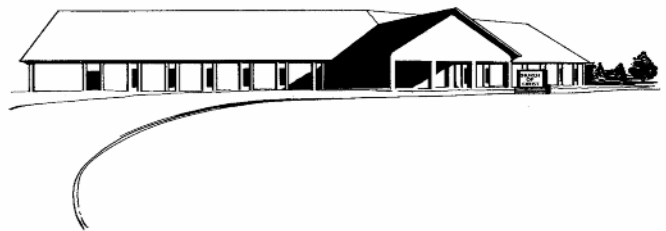
MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONG STANDING AGREEMENT, THOSE SERVING PUBLICLY ARE REMINDED TO PLEASE DRESS IN A MANNER RESPECTFUL OF THE GOD WHOM WE SERVE.

ELDERS:

Ruben Amador
Matthew Heaton
Donnie Mangrum
Steve Voss



DEACONS:

John Coleman	Ken Dunsmore
David Ellison	Ray Farrell
Aubrey Garner	Steve Geraci
Steve LaGrasta	John Light
Steven Martin	Mike McMurray
Jason Mock	David Stevenson
Glenn Tomblin	

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Assembly	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Assembly	6:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:30 PM

EVANGELIST & EDITOR:

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