

The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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~ All articles are written by George L. Faull, Rel. D. unless otherwise stated ~

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George L. Faull, Editor

The Sinner's Prayer

--By George L. Faull

INTRODUCTION:

"Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

The following is from Frank Viola and George Barna (Pagan Christianity, Tydale House) pages 189-190

"In our day, the "sinner's prayer" has replaced the role of water baptism as the initial confession of faith. Unbelievers are told, 'Say this prayer after me, accept Jesus as your personal Savior, and you will be saved.' But nowhere in all the New Testament do we find any person being led to the Lord by a sinner's prayer. And there is not the faintest whisper in the Bible about a 'personal' Savior. Instead, unbelievers in the first century were led to Jesus Christ by being taken to the waters of baptism. Put another way, water baptism was the sinner's prayer in century one! Baptism accompanied the acceptance of the Gospel.

For example, when Lydia heard Paul preach the Gospel, she believed and was immediately baptized with her household (Acts 16:14-15). In the same way, when Paul led the Philippian Jailer and his household to

the Lord, they were immediately baptized (Acts 16:30-33). This was the New Testament pattern (see also Acts 2:41; 8:12, 35-37).

Baptism marked a complete break with the past and a full entrance into Christ and His Church, Baptism was simultaneously an act of faith as well as an expression of faith."

"As stated earlier, the sinner's prayer eventually replaced the biblical role of water baptism. Though it is touted as gospel today, this prayer developed only recently. D. L. Moody was the first to employ it. Moody used this 'model' for prayer when training his evangelistic coworkers. But it did not reach popular usage until the 1950's with Billy Graham's 'Peace with God' tract and later with Campus Crusade for Christ's 'Four Spiritual Laws'."

Now notice this was not written by me (George L. Faull). The above quotes come from mainline denominations.

It is only fair to say some trace the prayer of this nature to John Bunyan in 1698 in "Pilgrim's Progress".

The way it's done today evolved from the mourners' seat (Wheellock), the anxious seat (Charles Finney), the inquiry room (Dwight Moody, R. A. Torrey) and the 3 great Baptists named, "Bill"; Bill Sunday (Sawdust Trail), Billy Graham (Altar call), Bill Bright (Sinner's prayer).

Even James Kennedy used the method as most radio and TV

evangelists do. All were rooted in "faith only" and Calvinist doctrine, which claims that God elected men to salvation. Men sought salvation by "praying through". It offers a false security and repentance is seldom even mentioned, if ever.

On the internet, Google "The Sinner's Prayer" and see how many speak against the sinner's prayer and prayerfully consider the disuse of this false plan of salvation.

I remember in the fifties the following camp song: "Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Come in today, come in to stay, come into my heart, Lord Jesus."

PROPOSITION:

The Scriptural goal is to get people to obey the Word of God and come INTO Christ, not Christ INTO our hearts! The first item is in the Bible, the second is man-made.

FIRST - The Apostle Paul begins each of his epistles to the churches speaking about being "in Christ".

In fact, the first mention of "in Christ" is what that epistle is about.

Romans: Christ our Redeemer. "Redemption in Christ" (3:24).

I Corinthians: Christ our Sanctifier. "Sanctification in Christ" (1:2).

II Corinthians: Christ our Victor. "Triumphing in Christ" (2:4).

Galatians: Christ our Liberator. "**Liberty in Christ**" (2:3). "For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ." (3:27)

Ephesians: Christ our All. "Spiritual blessings in **Heavenly places in Christ**" (1:3).

Philippians: Christ our Joy. "That **your rejoicing may be more abundant in Christ**" (1:26).

Colossians: Christ our Perfecter. "**Complete in Him**" (1:28).

I Thessalonians: Christ our Hope. "**Patience of hope in Christ**" (1:3).

II Thessalonians: Christ our Coming Glory. "**That Christ may be glorified in you and you in Him**" (1:12).

SECOND - In addition to these above advantages, let's name a few other important things about being "in Christ":

Romans 8:1, "*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are **in Christ Jesus**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life **in Christ Jesus** hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:39, "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is **in Christ Jesus** our Lord."

1 Corinthians 1:30, "But of him are ye **in Christ Jesus**, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"

1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so **in Christ** shall all be made alive."

2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be **in Christ**, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 2:14, "Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph **in Christ**, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."

Ephesians 2:6, "And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places in Christ Jesus*:"

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created **in Christ Jesus** unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Ephesians 2:13, "But now **in Christ Jesus** ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Ephesians 3:6, "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise **in Christ** by the gospel:"

1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead **in Christ** shall rise first:"

THIRD - Though the Bible does not give the sinners' prayer, it does tell us how to get "into Christ":

Romans 6:3-5, "3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized **into Jesus Christ** were baptized **into his death**? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism **into death**: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 **For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.**"

Galatians 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized **into Christ** have put on Christ."

Acts 2:38-41, "38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of

the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 **Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.**"

Acts 8:16, "(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus.**)"

Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them **in (the Greek says "into" the name...) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.**"

1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized **into one body**, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink **into one Spirit.**"

As seen from the Scriptures above, if we are baptized "into" (*eis*) Christ, His death, His Name, His body, we can have assurance for all of the promises spoken of above are "in Christ".

2 Corinthians 1:20, "For all the promises of God **in him** are yea, and **in him** Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

And if we be "in Christ", we are born again: **2 Corinthians 5:17,** "Therefore if any man **be in Christ**, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Galatians 6:15, "For **in Christ Jesus** neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creature.**"

On the other hand, those who only pray the sinner's prayer have none of these advantages or promises as those who have been baptized "into Christ".

The only record we have of Jesus coming into anyone's heart, was Lydia, the seller of purple, whom the Lord opened her heart. **Acts 16:14-15**, "14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: **whose heart the Lord opened**, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained *us*."

How did the Lord open her heart? She heard and attended the things which were spoken of Paul and when she was baptized and her household, she got involved in His work.

FOURTH – Saving faith comes by hearing and obeying the Word of God.

We preachers must preach the Word for success.

There is no faith without hearing the Word. Romans 10:17, "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

No one is begotten, or born again, without the Word. The Word is God's semen. **1 Peter 1:23**, "23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever."

If there is no Word, there is no milk. 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

If no Word, there is no meat for maturing. Hebrews 5:12-14, "12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 **But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full**

age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

1 Corinthians 3:1-2, "1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, **even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat**: for hitherto ye were not able to *bear it*, neither yet now are ye able."

If there is no Word, there is no revelation for knowledge.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16, "14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

(My thoughts are not your thoughts.) Inspiration, illumination, and revelation.

If there is no Word, there is no truth to set men free. John 8:32 "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

If there is no Word, there is no sanctification to make men holy. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

If there is no Word, there is no revelation so men will not perish. Proverbs 29:18, "Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he."

If there is no Word, there is no light, but darkness. Psalms 119:105, 130, "105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. 130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

If there is no Word, there is no faith to please God. **Hebrews 11:6**, "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

If there is no Word preached there is no wisdom unto salvation. 2 Timothy 3:15, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

If there is no Word, there is no sword to fight the good fight. Ephesians 6:17, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

The Word is a defensive and offensive sword.

If there is no Word, there is no harvest for the seed to be planted. Parable of soil – Matthew 13.

If there is no Word, there is no sure word of prophecy so no dawning of the Day Star in our hearts. 2 Peter 1:19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

If there is no Word, there is no mirror to show our sinfulness or how not to dress before the mirror of the world. James 1:23-25, "23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

CONCLUSION:

So, my proposition is proven that God wants us to let the Word to be not only heard but obeyed so that we come **"INTO"** Christ, not just a prayer for Him to come into our hearts.

Do not give a false hope or security to a sincere seeker. Get them to obey from their heart the form of doctrine. **Romans 6:17**, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

Accepted in the Beloved

Ephesians 1:6, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

A young man had inherited much money from the death of his rich father. He and his father had been involved in a serious accident. The boy lived.

It so happened that this was a very intelligent and serious young man. He wanted a wife who was equally so. He found as he sought that it was rare to find such a woman.

He had struggled through college and was deep in debt when he got out. But the windfall did not cause him to be foolish with money. Due to the accident, he knew he would be childless. He knew what he was looking for in his wife.

Finally, he found his beloved. She was a young widow who was pregnant. He loved her with great devotion, and repeatedly asked her to marry him. One day she said to him, "Tom, I will accept your proposal of marriage, but we will immediately have a family. We will have to prepare for their entrance into the world."

Tom agreed and as soon as they were married, they began to look for an estate to raise their family.

One day Tom said to Susie, "Every decision we make should be based upon your unborn child's welfare and what we plan for him or her."

Susie agreed and added, "It's for our child's welfare." He proudly agreed. When she found that she was to bare twins, they were elated as they knew they could not have any more. He promised her he would adopt them, and they would be his and hers.

They purchased a large beautiful home on forty acres in the country so that the kids could romp and play

and have a few farm animals to help care for so they would learn responsibility. It was a beautiful estate.

They chose a room in the house for a bedroom for a girl and decorated it in a feminine way. They did a boy's décor for a child in case one of them was a boy.

They purchased cribs and prepared for their coming. They were excited to prepare for the children.

They also started a college fund for their children and added to it each dividend check so it would be there when needed.

One day Tom brought home a young stallion to train just in case one of them was a boy. Later, he purchased a mare in case one of the children was a girl.



A playhouse was put in the girl's room and the father's vintage 1957 Chevrolet was placed under wraps for the son when he became of age.

The couple waited expectantly until finally the twins were born. One was a little boy whom they named, John. And one was a little girl, whom they called, Mary. They were one happy family and the young children grew to adulthood to enjoy all that the parents had prepared for them earlier.

QUESTIONS:

- × Did the parents love John and Mary before they were born?
- × Did they predestine that their children would be cared and

provided for and educated before they were born?

- × Was it foreordained that the children should be educated?
- × Did the parents have an intention for their children before they were born?
- × Did the father choose them before birth to walk before him in love?
- × Was it not the fact that Tom chose to give all this to them because they were the children of his beloved?
- × Were the children chosen to inherit through their own merits or by the fact that they were accepted because of his beloved?
- × Did being chosen before birth take away their free will?
- × Could they have run away from the beautiful house and their own room?
- × Could the children have refused to ride the horses?
- × Couldn't the boy have laughed at the 57 Chevy and the girl mocked the playhouse?
- × Could they have refused the college education?

Of course! Yet they were predestined before birth to receive all these privileges and opportunities because they were born to Tom's beloved wife.

Predestination and adoption, and being chosen, is not at all what the religious world makes them out to be.

Before the foundation of the world, God chose us IN Christ, His beloved Son! When we are born again into Christ, He adopts us and predestines us to be holy, without blame, according to the good pleasures of His will and to the praise of His glory.

In Christ we have privileges because we are made acceptable in God's beloved Son. We are redeemed and given the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of His grace. He abounds toward us because we are in Christ.

Ephesians 1:4-8, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation

wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

He has called us and predestined us to be what He wants us to be, namely conformed to His Son's image. **Romans 8:29**, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Those who believe on Christ are given the power or authority to become the Sons of God, and to be adopted into His family. **John 1:12**, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:”

So all this arguing that is done about predestination, election, and free will is a needless and fruitless debate.

It can be said, He loved us while we were yet sinners. In fact, it may be said that He loved us before we were even born. Before the foundation of the world. He chose that those that believe and come into Christ would become His sons and daughters.

He planned for us, provided for us, and took pity on us, not because we were righteous, but because we are Christ's. If we are Christ's, we are heirs of the promise. We can refuse it or enjoy it. **Galatians 3:29**

This is where free will enters the equation. Live as one chosen to be His child and heir. Be a partaker of the Divine nature. **2 Peter 1:4**

Translations for the Word, “Baptizo”



Dear Brother Faull,

I am looking for the translation that actually translates the word, “baptize”, “immersion” instead of transliterating the word “baptism”.

I have checked everything I have on my computer and bookshelf and I can't find it. I know one exists, I've seen it several years ago.

I would appreciate any help you can give. Thank you.

ANSWER:

There are several. Here is a list of 55 collected from research by William E. Paul, Impact Publications:

1798 Nathaniel Scarlett, *A Translation of the New Testament* from the Original Greek.

1826 Alexander Campbell, *The Sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ*.

1849 Nathan Whiting, *The Good News of our Lord Jesus, The Anointed* from critical Greek text of Tittmann.

1850 Spencer H. Cone and William H. Wyckoff, *The Commonly Received Version of the New Testament*.

1864 Benjamin Wilson, *The Emphatic Diaglott*, with Interlinear Word for Word Translation.

1864 Henry T. Anderson, *The New Testament* translated from the original Greek.

1869 Thomas J. Conant, Horatio B. Hackett, E. Roddiger, G. R. Bliss and A. C. Kendrick, *The New Testament, The Common English Version*, Correct by the American Bible Union First Edition.

1870 John Bowes, *The New Testament* translated from the purest Greek.

1876 Julia E. Smith, *The Holy Bible* translated literally from the original tongues.

1877 John August Richter, *The New Testament*, Revised and Corrected from the Sinaitic, Vatican, Alexandrian and other old copies of the original Greek.

1878 Joseph B. Rotherham, *The New Testament*, Newly Translated from the Greek Text of Tregells and Critically Emphasized.

1885 W. D. Willard, *The Teachings and Acts of Jesus of Nazareth and His Apostles* Literally Translated out of the Greek.

1886 John W. Hanson, *The New Covenant, Containing and Accurate Translation of the New Testament*.

1891 John A Broadus, Alvah Hovey, Henry Weston, *The New Testament*, American Bible Union, 2nd Edition.

1897 Joseph B. Rotherham, *The Emphasized Bible*, a New Translation, 3rd Edition.

1904 Adolphus S. Worrell, *The New Testament Revised and Translated*.

1908 John W. Genders, *The Holy Bible for Daily Read, and New Arrangements*, A New Revision.

1929 George N. Le Fevre, *The Christian's Bible, New Testament*. A Translation from the Greek Chiefly of the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus.

1955 Hugh J. Sheffield, *The Authentic New Testament Edited and Translated from the Greek*.

1960 Vincent T. Roth, *A Critical Emphatic Paraphrase of the New Testament*.

1963 Angelo B. Traina, *The Holy Name Bible containing the Holy Name Version of the Old and New Testaments - A Revision of the Sacred Name New Testament*.

1970 Lloyd D. Snow, *The Restoration of the Original Sacred Name Bible*.

1973 Chester Estes, *The Better Version of the New Testament*.

1980 Stanley L. Morris, *The Simple English Bible, New Testament*.

1980 Robert R. Tucker, *The Easy Bible, A Literal Fundamental Translation* (Baptized/Immersed)

1981 *May Your Name Be Inscribed in the Book of Life, A Messianic Jewish Version of the New Covenant Scriptures* (Anonymous)

1982 Randolph O. Yeager, *The Renaissance New Testament*.

1985 Hugh J. Schonfield, *The Original New Testament* Revised Edition.

1988 Hugo McCord, *McCord's New Testament Translation of the Everlasting Gospel*.

1989 David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament*, A Translation of the New Testament that Expresses its Jewishness.

1994 Harold Littrell, *The English Study Bible New Testament with Notes*.

1995 James Veitch, *The Radical and Revolutionary*, The Origins and Early Development of Christianity commonly called, the Acts of the Apostles.

1995 *The Christian's Bible, Its New Contract Writings* (Anonymous)

1995 William E. Paul, *The New Testament An Understandable Version*.

1998 Paul R. McReynolds, *Word Study Greek English New Testament*.

1998 Christian J. Koster, *The Scriptures*.

1999 G. Allen Walker, *Modern Literal Version of the New Testament*.

2000 Hugh McCord, *The Everlasting Gospel* 4th Edition.

2001 James S. Trimm, *Hebraic-Roots Version New Testament – A Translation of the New Testament*.

2002 B. E. Junkins, *A Fresh Parenthetical Version of the New Testament*.

2003 Michael P. Johnson, *The Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible*.

2003 Walter L. Porter, *The New Testament*, a Conservation version.

2004 Dennis Beatty, Editor, *The Essential New Testament*.

2004 John Henson, *Good as New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures*. Be dipped.

2004 Moshe Yoseph Koniuchowsky, *Restoration Scriptures True Name Edition*.

A Christian's Weather Forecast
God REIGNS
 The **SON SHINES**
 So, expect **SHOWERS** of Blessings!

COOKING LESSON:
*Nothing cooks our goose quicker
 than a boiling temper!*

Some minds are like concrete –
 thoroughly mixed and
 permanently set!

SOMETHING TO PONDER:
 Life is short, death is sure...
 Sin the cause, Christ the cure!

Necessary Attitudes for Discipleship

One day Jesus questioned His disciples who they thought that He was. Peter gave the correct verdict. He said, "Jesus was the Christ of God."

Jesus cautioned them not to tell anyone this truth at that time. He then affirmed that He had many things to suffer, and that He must first be rejected by the Jews and their leaders.

He told them He must die and then be raised on the third day. He then added, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it." **Luke 9:20-25**

This is the cost of discipleship! Let us look at this cost in a brighter light.

At this time, Jesus did not want His Messiahship known publicly. The apostles were not to broadcast this truth. Why? Because there was no way at that time to prove beyond doubt that He was the Messiah.

It is in His resurrection that He proved His Messiahship. The resurrection is the keystone to His divinity. His Messiahship was not to be revealed to others till He had suffered at the hands of the Jews.

He then went into the mountains and was transfigured before some of the disciples. While transfigured, He spoke to Moses and Elijah of His decease at Jerusalem. These two men were then overshadowed with a cloud, and they saw no man save Jesus only. It was a vision.

Then a voice from the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, hear Him."

It is neither Moses and the Law, nor Elijah and the prophets whom we now hear, but Jesus, the Son of God.

This event was also not to be known. I have always wished that I had been a little bird and could have heard all that Moses, Elijah, and the Lord spoke of on that day. In this life, we will never know what was said. We are only informed they spoke of what the death of Christ would accomplish in Jerusalem.

Upon going down the hill, Jesus came upon a demon possessed young man that His disciples could not heal. Jesus healed him. While they wondered at His power, He said, "Let these sayings sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men."

It is obvious Jesus wants us to observe carefully what He is saying. With this background, we begin our lessons on the cost of discipleship.

SCENE ONE:

Jesus knew that He was going to die in Jerusalem.

The disciples did not understand this even though He told it to them. They still had in mind an earthly kingdom. As a result, they begin to quarrel among themselves about which of them would be the greatest.

Jesus took a child and set him among them and said, "Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth Him that sent Me, for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE TOWARD SELF THAT WE MUST HAVE TO FOLLOW JESUS.

We must have an attitude of humility to be His disciple.

SCENE TWO:

The disciples met a man who was casting out demons.

They forbade him to do so because he did not accompany them. Jesus answered them, "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." Of course this man was not a fraud or an empty cloud without rain.

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE WE MUST HAVE TOWARD OTHERS WHO ARE TRYING TO DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL THOUGH THEY DO NOT ACCOMPANY US.

SCENE THREE:

Next, they tried to come into Samaria.

Jesus had set His face toward Jerusalem to die. The Samaritans seeing He was determined to go there, would not receive Him. James and John wanted to call down fire from Heaven to destroy them. This is what Elijah would have done. Jesus answered, "Ye know not what manner of spirit that ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy man's lives, but to save them."



THIS IS THE ATTITUDE WE MUST HAVE TOWARD THOSE WHO REJECT JESUS.

We must think salvation not damnation, constructively not destructively.

SCENE FOUR:

As they journeyed, there came a man rushing out to Jesus saying, "Lord, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest."

It was an impulsive statement. I wish there were more like him. At least he knew he wanted to go where Jesus was going. The Lord cautioned him with this statement, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath no where to lay His head."

These are not words of complaint. He's not seeking pity. He is not

throwing out a cute little barb. This is the demand of discipleship! It may mean giving up one's home. It may mean that your roots must be dug up and you be transplanted. This is the condition of following Jesus. You must be willing to be detached from your own bed.

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE TOWARD HOME ONE MUST HAVE TO BE HIS DISCIPLE!

SCENE FIVE:

Now the scene moves to another man.

He spoke to him and said, "Follow me." The man replies, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus answered him and said, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God."

Is Jesus cruel? Will He not let the man go and bury his own father? No. Jesus is not cruel. The man's father is not yet dead. He wants to wait till his father dies and the family affairs are in order before he follows Jesus.

Obviously, this is an unselfish request and the Lord will grant it? No! The call to follow Christ must be obeyed immediately, not after family obligations have been met.

Christ is headed to Jerusalem to die on the cross. The call beckons Him there. He goes in spite of His mother and His brethren. The calling to do the Will of the Heavenly Father is superior to that of meeting the obligations of our earthly parents.

Had his father just died, Jesus would no doubt have gone and raised him from the dead. He never met a funeral procession that He did not raise the corpse to life. If the man was to be His disciple, he must leave the supposed earthly obligations to others and follow Jesus and preach the Kingdom of God NOW!

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR EARTHLY FAMILY – OBLIGATIONS WE MUST HAVE IN ORDER TO BE HIS DISCIPLE.

SCENE SIX:

Now another rushed to Him and declared, "Lord I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house." Jesus answered, "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God." Don't despise the man. He had been caught up in the person and ministry of Jesus. His problem was one of wanting to first meet the obligations of friendship and etiquette.

But by Jesus' answer we learn that following Jesus goes before such obligations. One does not follow Jesus after he goes back home and discloses to his friends what he intends to be done with his estate.

Elijah had allowed Elisha to run home and kiss his parent's good-bye. But the preaching of the Kingdom is more serious business than that of the prophets. There is no time for this disciple to run home and settle his estate or bid farewell. There is no time to argue with those who would not have him go. He needed him now! It is necessary that the one who plows must keep his eyes straight ahead. He must not look back at his estate nor at what his friends would think, nor at some girl's expectation for his return. Such a one is not fit for Christ's plowing. He must plow a straight furrow and not look back.

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE ONE MUST HAVE TOWARD ONE'S FRIENDS, SWEETHEART, AND ESTATE IN ORDER TO BE HIS DISCIPLE!

SCENE SEVEN:

It is after the above scenes that Jesus sent out seventy preachers into every city in which He would come.

Some had responded to these terms of discipleship! Jesus now laments, "The harvest is truly great but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest." Having sent these forth, He continues His approach to Jerusalem and death. Jesus had

sought followers. He had laid down the demands of discipleship and few had followed. He practiced what He preached.

He despised the things of this world. He had demanded what He Himself was already doing. He had left home. It was not that He was unnatural. He loved His family. On the cross He provided for His mother. But He never provided for her at the expense of obeying the Heavenly Father. He wants us to remember our friends, but He came late to Mary and Martha in their grief because He was busy doing the work of God. He would not turn back from Jerusalem. He would let nothing defer Him from His appointment with death. He does not demand of us what He will not do Himself. He set His face toward Jerusalem and He would not look back. He recognized that such is not fit for the Kingdom of God.

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE JESUS DEMANDS OF HIS DISCIPLES AND IT IS THE KIND OF LABOURERS FOR WHICH WE ARE TO PRAY.

CONCLUSION:

It is obvious from the above that Jesus expects us to be disciples now and at all costs. Our attitude toward fame, family, friends, and fortune must be one of denial. We cannot be disciples in name only. We must not be shouters of, "I'll go as soon as such-and-such is accomplished." Excuses must not be in our attitudes.

There are to be no "estates settled", "kids raised", "father buried", "needs met", "spouses pleased", "money raised", or any other plausible excuse.

Paul did not consult with flesh and blood when he decided to follow Jesus. He never sought his parents' will, a sweetheart's okay, Professor Gamaliel's advice, a rich uncle's approval. He sought immediately to advance the Kingdom of God. He sought God's righteousness.

This is the kind of discipleship that took the message of Christ around

the world in one generation. It can be done again! Oh, determine to leave and forsake all for Christ, if necessary. Purpose to follow Jesus at all costs.

Pray the Lord of harvest that there may be more labourers. Set your face right now toward the Heavenly Jerusalem. Take up your cross daily and don't look back!

A snowflake is one of God's most fragile creations but look what they can do when they stick together!



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