

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements
Rodney Ellis

Song Leader
Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper
Randy Ellis Jack Calvert
Preston Ellis Pete Rowland

Prayers
Jerry Schnelle Melvin Potts

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements
Rodney Ellis

Song Leader
Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper
Preston Ellis Pete Rowland

Prayers
Dee Minter Joseph Barry

WEDNESDAY

Announcements
Jon Barry

Song Leader
Jack Calvert

Prayers
Preston Ellis Cole Meador

Invitation
Bryan Garlock

ABOUT US

Elders
Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons
Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Dave Massey

Evangelist
Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday
Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday
Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ
2301 Franklin Drive ■ Texarkana, AR 71854 ■ (870) 772-0746

Volume XXIII **July 22, 2018** **Issue 29**

Loving the Truth
Bryan Garlock

Please read Acts 6.1-7. In Acts chapter six, the apostles guided the church in Jerusalem by having them pick out seven faithful men who would oversee the support of the neglected widows. One of the men chosen was Nicolaus, a proselyte (one who converts from one religion to another) of Antioch (v. 5). When Luke – the writer of Acts – first mentioned proselytes, they were men who had converted from paganism to Judaism (Acts 2.11). Converting to Judaism – the Jewish religion – required those who were not native Hebrews to be circumcised (men only) at whatever age they were, to believe in the God of Israel, and to embrace the law of Moses and all its demands.

The fact that Luke mentioned Nicolaus was a proselyte sets him apart from the others who surely were native Jews. What is interesting, however, is that he did not just convert from Judaism to Christ, but from paganism to Judaism to Christ.

Nicolaus, then, was a man who loved the truth with all his heart. Apparently, he was willing not only to leave paganism – a form of idolatry – and obey the true and living God of Israel, but he was willing to accept the Messiah – whom Moses foretold.

It has been said that one may be honestly mistaken when in error, but after learning the truth and rejecting it, he ceases to be honest. However, when Nicolaus was shown to be wrong, he loved the truth enough to humbly correct himself, always striving to be right with God. This is necessary to have the honest and good heart that bears fruit (Luke 8.15). On the other hand, a person who recognizes the truth and for whatever reason is not willing to denounce his false religion and pledge allegiance to true religion, does not love the truth, but has believed a lie and will be damned (Matt. 5.6; John 7.17; 2 Thess. 2.10). BG

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Where Are the Holes in Your Jigsaw Puzzle?

Berry Kercheville

2 Timothy 3:14-17

“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable...that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Among Christians, this is a very well-known text. We like to emphasize the “God-breathed” part, the “teaching, reproof, correction, and training” part, and the “every good work part.” However, there are certain parts that we either overlook, or at the very least, do not give the importance that it deserves.

For example, we have often understated the significance of “all scripture.” All scripture includes parts of the Bible that have been typically relegated to an occasional read-through. Have we personally put the kind of Bible study into Leviticus, Chronicles, Psalms or the Prophets as we have Matthew, Acts, or 1 Corinthians? That alone exposes a deep flaw. We readily proclaim that “all scripture” will make the man of God complete, but do not follow up by actually pursuing *all* scripture. The unspoken conclusion is, there are a

number of books that really aren’t necessary to become equipped for every good work.

Let’s be honest, is it not true that the reason we have minimized deeper study of certain books is that we do not think some books are as important as others? After all, why do we need to know Zephaniah, Nahum, or Obadiah? Verse 14 gives the answer. Paul commanded Timothy to “continue in the sacred writings,” which is none other than the entire Old Testament. What part of the Bible will make us wise for salvation by faith in Christ? The Old Testament. Sound impossible? Is that confusing? Indeed. This is the very opposite of what we may have been taught. But the reason for continuing in the sacred writings is even more shocking – it is what will “*make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*”

But why would a saved person like Timothy need to be made wise for salvation by faith in Christ? The answer must be that salvation by faith is not a one time event; it is a life-long process. Living by faith is not complete at baptism, and the Old Testament is critical to growth.

1 Timothy 1:5-11

“The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions. Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.”

Notice that those who have “swerved” desire to be teachers of the law but do so without understanding. Why? Because the law is not written for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient. Paul said the law is good if it is used lawfully. That means it can also be used unlawfully. The law certainly is used properly when it convicts

us of sin. But when it is used as the primary goal of our lives, it will become useless. Why? Because “*the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*” To better understand Paul’s point, what if every week preacher exclusively taught against practicing the various sins listed in this text and others? You might say, “I would get tired of that. Is someone in this church doing these sins? Is there nothing more to the Bible than commands against sin?” This kind of preaching has often been urged because it seems to be the proper approach to correcting bad behavior. But it is neither biblical nor effective.

Lasting change does not happen simply by emphasizing the need to obey the scriptures or defeat false doctrine. These goals sound good, but left by themselves, are distractions from the true goal. The aim is to know and love God. This is the reason God foretold the work of the Spirit in Christ as circumcising our hearts, causing us to love him and carefully obey him (Deut. 30:6-8; Ezek. 36:25-27).

In 2 Corinthians 3:3, Paul contrasted the “ministry of death carved in letters of stone” and the “ministry of the Spirit.” He said, “We are a letter from Christ...written with the Spirit of the living God on tablets of human hearts.” Explaining more fully our transformation process, he said, “*We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit*” (2 Cor. 3:18). By this we learn the correct approach to Bible study so we can be successful in our goal of loving God from a pure heart. We are to study to see a full picture of God’s glory. As that is accomplished, transformation will happen!

Let’s summarize the difference between studying to simply follow commands and studying to see the glory of God and be transformed. Just the commands without a full picture of the glory of God becomes mechanical and checklist. More importantly, it is not successful or enjoyable. I enjoy serving my wife because I know her and love her. What if after our vows, she had said, “Okay, I’ve made my promise

to submit my life to you, so what are your commandments so I know what I have to do to stay in your good graces?” I would have been devastated. I’m not interested in that! I want you to love me like I love you.

What about Your Jigsaw Puzzle?

Israel knew God’s laws, but Jeremiah said that in the new covenant God would write the laws “on their heart.” How can this happen? Consider the Bible as 66 jigsaw puzzles that fit within one giant jigsaw puzzle that gives us a perfect picture of God and Jesus. In order for us to fulfill God’s desire that we know him and love him, we will need a complete and accurate picture. That is why Paul said, “*All scripture is profitable...*” If we study simply for commands, how much of the puzzle have we assembled? For example, have you ever studied Isaiah, chapters 13-24? It is a large section in which God gives prophecies of the destruction of ten nations in Isaiah’s time. Now why would I want to study that! *Because it is part of the picture of God that gives us a unique side of God we cannot see elsewhere.* Without it, we have a hole in our puzzle-picture of God.

What happens when we have holes in our puzzle? We are seeing a *different God* than the one who truly exists. Without a true picture, we cannot love the true God. Without a complete picture, we cannot be made into the image of the true God. And if we are not in his image, he will not recognize us as his bride for our eternal marriage to him. The Pharisees made erroneous applications because they had gaping holes in their picture (John 5:39). They knew the commandments, but they did not know or recognize the God who gave them. And they misused the commandments because they could not fit them into the true picture of God.

Where are the holes in your puzzle? Leviticus? Chronicles? Psalms? The Prophets? Revelation? Those are some big holes.

Via focusmagazine.org
berrykerch@gmail.com