

July, 2004

Pause Ponder Profit

Come To Our Gospel Meeting

The 26th of July Through
The 1st of August, 2004

Monday Through Friday 7:00 P.M.
Sunday 10:45A.M. & 6:00 P.M.

Speaker: Ron Halbrook
From Shepherdsville, KY



Some Unanswered Questions: “Is There Any Word From The Lord?”

By Ron Halbrook

Some years ago, I heard a preacher present an excellent lesson from Jeremiah 37:16-17 on the subject, “Is There Any Word From The Lord?” Citing many sins and errors which trouble mankind, he agreed with Jeremiah’s answer, “There is!” The Word of the Lord will stop every sin and settle every issue because of its 1. Revelation (Eph. 3:1-5), 2. Inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16-17), 3. Illumination (Ps. 119:105), 4. Eternal Duration (1 Pet. 1:23-25), 5. Completion (2 Pet. 1:3), 6. No Speculation (Gal. 1:6-9), and 7. Salvation (Rom. 1:16).

The speaker emphasized the importance of giving a Bible answer for all we preach and practice, and encouraged the audience to submit questions. When I submitted the questions below, he read the first one only, answered YES but offered no Bible passage, and laid the list down with the comment, “We are not here for this purpose.” Several in the audience, including local members of the church, were disappointed and embarrassed at his response. Here are the questions with Bible answers.

1. Does the Bible give authority for the church to provide a dinner or a kitchen? Did the Lord assign the local church the work of providing social meals, parties, and picnics? Is there any word from the Lord? There is!

The Lord assigned the church the work of gospel preaching, worship, and benevolence to

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destitute saints (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Tim. 3:15; 5:16). Picnics and parties are NOT gospel preaching, NOT worship, and NOT benevolence. "If any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation" (1 Cor. 11:34). If we speak as the oracles of God, no true church of Christ can any more provide kitchens than instrumental music (1 Pet. 4:11).

2. Does the Bible give authority for the church to give money to colleges, camps, and other institutions (such as Southwestern Christian College, Abilene Christian University, etc.)? Is there any word from the Lord? There is!

The church is "the pillar and ground of the truth," proclaiming "the gospel of Christ" as "the power of God unto salvation" (1 Tim. 3:15-16; Rom. 1:16). The church has no authority to finance the teaching of math, economics, science, athletics, welding, camping, and other secular pursuits. People can go to heaven without knowing how to dissect a frog or start a campfire, but they cannot go to heaven without the saving power of the gospel of Christ! If frogs and fires were the message or work of the church, each local church is fully equipped by God to do its own work without donating its money to human institutions to do the work for the church (Eph. 4:16; Acts 14:23; 20:28).

3. Does the Bible give authority for a solo, quartet, or choir to sing in our worship service? Is there any word from the Lord? There is! God ordained all the saints to join in the song service, "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). God did not ordain a few to sing while the rest are entertained, giving their approval rating by clapping, shouting, foot

4. Does the Bible give authority for the church to sponsor ball teams? Is there any word from the Lord? There is! The church is a spiritual institution with a spiritual message and a spiritual mission: proclaiming the gospel to souls lost in sin (1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 1:16). No church of Christ in Bible times had a recreation program, and no true church does so today.

Church sponsored parties and kitchens, donations to human institutions, choirs, and ball teams originated in denominationalism, along with instrumental music, human names, and every other departure from God's Word (Rev. 22:18-19). Any man who practices and defends such departures "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ" and thus "hath not God." He cannot be recognized or received as a faithful saint. To have fellowship with him is to be a "partaker of his evil deeds" (2 Jn. 9-11).

Is there any word from the Lord? There is! To violate that Word is to violate the standard of Revelation, Inspiration, Illumination, Eternal Duration, Completion, No Speculation, and Salvation.

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*The Power
Of God
Broadcast.***



When To Be Baptized: Now Or Later?

By Ron HalBrook

When should a person be baptized? When he understands and accepts the gospel of Christ in his heart, or some time later?

Infants and young children should wait. The Bible does not teach infant baptism. The Great Commission says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16). Faith must precede baptism, but infants and small children do not yet have the ability to understand--much less believe--the gospel.

At some age, we reach an understanding of right and wrong and we have the ability to make a moral choice between the two. It is not merely a matter of choosing to obey our parents, and receiving their approval, or to disobey them, and receiving their disapproval. It is a matter of choosing in a deeper sense, making a moral choice between right and wrong. When a person reaches that age of responsibility and chooses to break the commandments of God, he becomes guilty of sin. Thus, the Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Christ died to save us from the guilt and condemnation of our sins. His death provided a perfect sacrifice for sin: Sin was punished in such a way as to offer pardon to the sinner. He died for our sins, but he did no sin. This is the basis of salvation rather than any merit in ourselves (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:6-8).

Salvation is offered to all men but not forced upon anyone. The conditions upon which we make the choice to receive or to reject salvation include faith in Christ, repenting of sin,

confessing Jesus as God's Son, and being immersed in water by his command (Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:10). There is no merit in man when he accepts these conditions, but he throws himself upon God's love, mercy, and grace by yielding to these conditions.

When we accept the truth of the gospel in our mind, should we delay our baptism until later? No, we should be baptized immediately! Just accepting the truth in our hearts will not save us, for we are not saved by faith alone (Ja. 2:24). We must immediately repent of our sins (Acts 2:38), immediately confess Jesus as God's Son (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10), and immediately be baptized for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38-41).

In Acts 2:40-41, the sinners were baptized "the same day" when they believed the truth--they did not wait. In Acts 8:35-38, the eunuch was baptized as soon as he believed the gospel and confessed Christ--he did not wait. In Acts 16:32-34, the jailer was baptized "the same hour of the night"--he did not wait. In Acts 22:16, Ananias told Saul, "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"--he did not wait.

Why did they not wait? Because until they were baptized, they were still lost in their sins. If they died before being baptized, they would have been lost forever! When a person learns his house is on fire, does he leave immediately or does he wait until a later time to leave? He leaves immediately because he does not want to risk his life! When a person learns the truth of the gospel and knows he is lost in sin (his spiritual house is on fire!), he needs to obey immediately--without delay! We do not know when our life may end through disease or sudden accident, nor when the Lord will return. To obey the gospel is urgent!

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The denominations delay baptism because they teach that a person is saved the moment he believes in Christ, but such teaching is from Satan. We are saved by faith, but only when faith acts to receive forgiveness in baptism. We are not saved by faith only (Ja. 2:24). Dear sinner friend, flee the denominations with their "faith only" doctrine. Obey the original gospel of Christ--be forgiven through the blood of Christ--let him add you to the church of Christ--receive a home in heaven at the side of Christ!

Pause — Ponder — Profit is a monthly publication of the Second and Walnut Church Of Christ, Paragould, Arkansas.

Sunday
Radio 1490 AM 9:00 A.M.
Bible Study 9:45 A.M.
Worship 10:45 A.M.
Worship 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday
Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

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