

Clovis Ragsdale  
Route 3  
Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

VOLUME 8 - NO. 5

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

SEPTEMBER - 1966

## What Must I Do to Become a Christian

HEAR— "If any man have an ear, let him hear." Rev. 13:9 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17.

BELIEVE — Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 8:24 "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." Heb. 11:6

REPENT — "I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Lk. 13:3 "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts 17:30

CONFESS — "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:32 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:9

BE BAPTIZED — "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mk. 16:16 "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38

"THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: AND THE SAME DAY THERE WERE ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS." Acts 2:41.

We know of no one who got lost inside a church.

## The Eldership

In our two previous articles we discussed the organization of the church and the fact, that a man must desire the office of an elder to serve acceptably. In this study we want to look further at the qualifications of an elder.

In 1 Timothy 3:2 Paul says, "A Bishop must be blameless. He also declared the same thing to us in his letter to him. What does the inspired writer mean when he says, a bishop must be blameless? Does lie mean that there is none on earth or who knows a man serving as a bishop who would not blame him for something? Does he mean that an elder must be perfectly sinful? Just what does he mean by this statement?

If any man should possess a high character, it should be the men who serve as elders of the Lord's church. This is precisely what Paul was talking about when he said that an elder or bishop must be blameless. None should be able to make an accusation against an elder of the church stand. It is certainly a tragedy when men are appointed to the eldership who are not above reproach. It is even a greater tragedy when men will continue to serve as elders when their character does not measure up to what the Bible says it should.

The next qualification listed is, That he must be the husband of one wife 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6. I believe Paul meant what he said in this verse. The Bible teaches that an elder must be a married man. The word must carry with it the idea of, a must, obligatory, action or item.

There are some today who teach that must simply means, he must be the husband of one wife if married. They say it really doesn't mean he has to be married to

## AUGUST Contributions

### CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Agnos .....	\$ 5.00
Salem .....	5.00
Elizabeth .....	5.00
Viola .....	5.00
Wheeling .....	5.00
English Bluff .....	5.00
R. R. Hicks .....	2.00
W. C. Woody .....	2.00
Jeff Diles .....	1.00
Ulman Nix .....	2.00
Tom Ary .....	.75
Mrs. Claude Phillips .....	1.00
A Friend .....	1.25

serve as an elder. Also they say, it must means he must not have more than one wife at a time.

I would like to ask this question of those who teach that one does not have to be married to serve as an elder. Did the Lord mean that one must be born again when he used the term in talking with Nicodemus in John 3:2? Did Paul mean that a man must have the other qualifications listed in the book of Timothy and Titus, or can they too be over looked?

Brethern, we should tread very cautiously when we begin to turn aside from the teachings of God's book. We have no more right to tamper with the teachings of the Bible than do those in denominationalism. God has not granted us some special privilege in this respect. We must teach what the Bible teaches, and our practice must ever be that which is prescribed in the Bible.

James Knight  
Pineville, La.

"Life is a lot like tennis .... the player who does not serve well usually loses in the end."

"Some people grow under responsibility, and others merely swell."

# Fulton County Gospel News

PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
FREE SUBSCRIPTION

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID  
MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

SUPPORTED BY:  
CHURCHES OF CHRIST  
IN THIS AREA

EDITORS:  
CLOVIS RAGSDALE  
RICHARD ENGLAND

## Perilous Times - -

By - CLOVIS RAGSDALE

Many nations have achieved greatness in the course of history. Just as many have always, without exception, suffered decay and corruption from within and then fell to enemy nations from without. The same thing happened to Israel. The Bible traces the history of these people from the call of Abraham to the time they killed the Son of God. Their golden age was during the time of David, Solomon, and the Judges. Desiring to be like the people around about, they asked for a king. It was not long until they began to worship idols. Then perilous times descended on the nation. They were carried off into captivity.

The United States of America has become a great nation. During the time that America was becoming a world power, the New Testament church was restored in its original doctrine. The church has prospered. Persecution has been at a minimum in the past. God has often allowed his people to be tested in the past. He may allow the coming generation to experience perilous times as a test.

In his description of the perilous times, Paul, in second Timothy, chapter three, states that people will become boastful and proud. We live in a proud age. Man boasts of his achievements in the field of science and almost all others fields of endeavor. It is true man has conquered many of the secrets of nature. Yet we solve one problem and more problems arise in its place. We lessen the amount of toil necessary to make a living and increase the tension of life to the extent that people are most unhappy and insecure. We create a social order that has so much to offer the people of our time, but neglect principals laid down in the Bible, which will give unto man the peace of mind that passes all understanding. Phil. 4: 7

Disobedient to parents is another problem of the times Paul mentions. So much is being written and said about the problems of the youth of today. Parental authority seems to have broken down. Children do as they please. While much of the blame for this condition must be placed on the parents, yet this attitude on the part of children is so noticeable in the past decade and is growing worse each year. The children of today will become the parents of tomorrow. They will be ill equipped to teach their children because they know nothing but to let children do as they please. In Eph. 6:1 the apostle said: "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this right". Unto parental authority is re-established in our country, the problem of juvenile delinquency will continue to increase. Christian parents, and christian boys and girls need to realize that they must be different from the people of the world if they are to continue to be christians.

Another trait of people in these times is that they will be unthankful and unholy. Man needs to realize that he is product of the love of God. We owe to God everything that we have and that we are and every hope to be. A considerable part of every prayer should be us-

ed in thanking God for the many blessing we have. The one who thanks God for his blessings is the person who will remain humble and holy in his sight. It is natural that when we loose our dependence on God we become unthankful toward him. We forget God and become an unholy person.

The third verse states: "Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good." The above mentioned describes the actions and habits of so many people in our time. We read about these things in the papers, we see it in our friends and neighbors, and we may practice it in our every day lives. With so much strife among nations, so much crime at home, and the problems among classes of people, the struggle between good and evil becomes a constant battle to be fought in the minds of men. With so many more people in the world today the magniture of sin becomes very staggering. This helps to create the perilous times. - (To be continued).

## Bridges - -

When anything in life brings pain,  
Or anyone upsets my day,  
If I can build a bridge to God,  
His peace will chase my fears away.

When problems leave me tense,  
unstrung,  
And peace of mind cannot be found,

If I can build a bridge of faith,  
He'll lift me up to higher ground.  
If I can build a bridge of trust  
To span the tensions of my day,  
God's grace and understanding love

Will be a light upon my way.  
No difficulty large or small,  
Can come between my Lord and me,

If I can build a bridge of prayer,  
To feel His presence constantly,

—Unknown

"When you take responsibility upon your shoulders it leaves no God can be the only result of a better insight into truth.

## The Shield of Faith

ORBIE ROBBINS,  
Elizabeth, Arkansas

God has not left man to fight a great spiritual warfare without ample protection against the adversary, the devil. Paul said above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked Eph. 6:16. The Bible is a shield of faith against every dart of error. Ps. 91:4 — His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

(1) Peter the first Pope of Rome — Catholicism claims infallibility of the Pope, and wants Peter accepted as the first Pope. That point of false doctrine is quenched in Gal. 2:14 where it is said Peter stood condemned and Paul had to rebuke him. Further the Romish doctrine of celibacy of the priests is exposed before that false idea originated. It is shown that Peter was a married man, whose wife's mother was heralded by Christ Matt. 8:14. Paul specifically mentions Peter's married state in I Cor. 9:5.

(2) The church is non-essential — The teaching that the church is non-essential was fully exploded before its inception. Paul showed that the church was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28) thereby making the church of as great a value as that blood, or else Jesus Christ was defrauded of his life. Secondly it is known that he gave himself for the church, and is the savior of it (Eph. 5: 23-25). Surely this could not be said if the church were non-essential! Christ is also the head of the church (Col. 1:18). He is not the head of any nonessential organization! Our shield of faith quenches this fiery dart.

(3) The Bible doesn't say "not to". — Almost every presumptuous sin enters in by this excuse, "The Bible doesn't say not to." The whole idea is condemned in the scriptures before it was ever used. Peter declared that God's divine power hath given us all

things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). Therefore anything that God has not furnished to us in divine instruction does not pertain to life and godliness and stands condemned for religious use. Paul says that faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17) and that whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). If the Bible does not authorize it, then it is not of God! All are condemned who go beyond the doctrine delivered unto us (Jno. 1:9). Thus this arrow is quenched.

(4) There's nothing in a name — How often you hear, "There's nothing in a name"; "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." This is supposed to justify using human names in the field of religion. Our shield of faith still protects us! Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. This should forever quieten those who would vilify scriptural names. God's choice of a name is shown in Acts 11:26, "And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Paul said, "And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the father by him." Col. 3:17. None need be ashamed of wearing the name Christian, and it only, for it is approved of God (1 Pet. 4:17) "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God in this name." This quenches that dart.

(5) Man is saved by faith only — Multitudes have been taught, "That we are saved by faith only is a very wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." But long before this erroneous doctrine arose, the scriptures had given the truth to quench it. "Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead being alone." (James 2: 17) And this is even more plainly taught in James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only." Faith alone is not enough. We must do the will of the Father. (Matt. 7:21) Christ is the author of

eternal salvation unto all that obey him. (Heb. 5:9) Faith must obey.

(6) One can't fall from Grace. There are many people who have accepted the falacious idea: Once saved always saved. They believe it is impossible to fall from God's grace and be lost after once having been in God's favor. Paul showed that thousands had fallen, and then warned: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:1-12) Because they could fall, Christians were told: "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." (Heb. 3:12) Can we then contend that it is impossible to depart?

(7) Baptism is not essential for salvation. Possibly one of the most vicious attacks against any part of the scriptures is on baptism. False doctrine declares that baptism is not essential, that man can be saved without it as well as with it. But, the Bible met this false teaching before it ever arose. Jesus plainly taught: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk. 16:16) The factors that assure salvation are plainly given. One must believe and be baptized. Any fifth grader can analyze this statement and fully explain what Jesus said. But it takes a theological student four years of work in religious seminaries to perfect a "dose" which he thinks will get around it. On Pentecost Peter said: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38) Paul said: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death." (Rom. 6:4) One could enter Christ and reach the blood shed in his death by no other means. This is our shield of faith against this dart.

God's word has amply shielded us against all these fiery darts of Satan and all other "darts" of false doctrine which he might hurl. In order to make use of this shield we must study the bible.

## "Reactions In Conversion"

The word conversion, immediately suggests a radical change. Man, because of his sinful nature, is an unfit associate for God. His thinking, his affections and his actions, are diametrically opposed to God's way. Thus before our lives can be brought into harmonious communion with God, our ways must be changed. In fact, every department of man's nature must be affected by this conversion, and unless every department of his nature is affected, there has not been a true conversion.

The first reaction that takes place in conversion, is the intellectual reaction. Since the way of man is not in himself, and since it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, (Jer. 10:23) he must be taught the right course of life to follow. No conversion can take place apart from being taught of God. In John 6:44, 45 Jesus made it clear that no man could come unto him unless he had first heard and learned of the Father. In the great commission, Jesus commanded that teaching the gospel was the first step in bringing man to salvation. Every example of conversion found in the new testament, was preceded by teaching. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith comes by hearing God's word, how then shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? Thus through being taught, man's intellectual nature begins to react, he begins to think, reason, believe, understand, and finally purpose to obey.

The second reaction that must take place in man's nature, is the emotional reaction. The gospel was designed to affect more than just man's intellect. The gospel presents the story of the greatest manifestation of love known. This story of the cross, is to touch the heart of man, and cause him to obey, being motivated by love. Otherwise conversion would be only a mechanical reaction. In Rom.

2:4 Paul tells us that it is the goodness of God that leads one to repentance. Unless man reacts from the standpoint of love, his conversion is meaningless. Jesus taught in Matt. 22:37, that man must love God with all his heart. Philip taught in Acts 8:37 that belief with all the heart was a prerequisite to acceptable obedience. Paul taught in Rom. 6:17, 18 that freedom from sin comes through obedience from the heart.

The third reaction man experiences in conversion is the reaction of will. This would suggest that conversion is not an impulsive reaction, but rather it must be reasoned, planned, and purposed. In Luke 14: 26-33 Jesus taught that before one takes up the cross to follow him, he should first count the cost. He concluded this teaching by saying, "whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple". Then again we learn in Heb. 11:6 that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. These scriptures suggest that planning and determination are necessary in conversion. When a person acts upon a thing by impulse, there is a greater chance that he will fail to be stable. This is illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the sower. Some seed fell upon the rocky ground, it sprung up, and then when the sun grew hot, it withered away. Jesus explained that this was a person who with joy received the word, but when faced with trials or persecutions, became offended. Thus we must will or purpose to obey the Lord, and serve in faithfulness.

The fourth reaction in conversion is the physical reaction. After being taught about Jesus and his will for us, after coming to love the Lord with all our heart, and after considering the cost of Christianity, we must then obey his will. The intellectual reaction might be termed as faith, the emotional reaction as love, the reaction of will as repentance, and the physical reaction as obedience through baptism. In Acts the second chapter, Peter's sermon pricked the hearts of many, the facts presented in his sermon convinced them that

## News of the Area

AN AREA WIDE MEETING is being planned for September 1967 in Salem, Arkansas. Brother Jimmy Allen has already agreed to come to do the preaching. Plans are being worked on to make this one of the largest meetings ever held in the area. Churches of Christ for many miles around Salem were represented in a meeting in Salem recently in which the Elders and the preacher (Wesley Hylton) told of their plans. The other congregations represented in the gathering promised to help in advertising and personal work in preparation for this great event. You will be informed more about this coming meeting from time to time in this paper as well as by other means.

THE JEFF CHURCH OF CHRIST is to have a lectureship October 3 to 8, 1966. Speakers and subjects are: MONDAY — How to understand the Bible — Charlie White; TUESDAY — Harmony and Happiness in the home — Harlan Hurd; WEDNESDAY — Will the good people of-all churches be saved? — Wesley Hylton; Thursday - Does every person have a right to his own belief? — David Elkins; FRIDAY — Have miracles ceased? Landon Saunders; SATURDAY — Has the kingdom of God been established? — Richard England. Time of the services will be 7:30 P.M. CST.

Jesus was the Christ, being convinced of this they were deeply stirred emotionally, they asked what they could do, and being told, they considered it and obeyed the command to repent and to be baptized. In Gal. 5:6 Paul tells that faith avails only when it is worked by love. This simply teaches that obedience is necessary before faith and love will avail. Again Paul teaches in Rom. 6:17, 18 that freedom from sin takes place after one obeys the gospel. Thus when every department of man's nature reacts to the gospel, true conversion takes place.

Harold Turner