
-NOT OF WORKS-

By the failure of one man death came into the world upon the human family. It is an inheritance which none can escape, for even those who live and believe at the coming of the Lord will have to be changed.

The opposite of this death, this eternal death, is eternal life. Eternal life is the gift of God. It can be taken as a gift. It is gotten in no other way. It is free. No strings attached.

But, and here we must be careful to distinguish, there must be a work of some kind performed. This death came as the result of sin. Eternal life cannot be enjoyed unless there is no sin. In fact, if there were a resurrection without sin being taken care of, it would be only to death again. So if life is to be eternal or everlasting, then it must be without sin.

That is why that there could be no resurrection of the Old Testament believers till the work of Calvary was finished. There is where they were redeemed from sin and a resurrection to life made possible.

So theoretically one could take the gift of life without redemption and the forgiveness of sins. One could actually be saved in his sins. But it would be an unfinished work. Any resurrection would only end in death again.

But Christ finished the work. He died for our sins. By faith in Him and His finished work we obtain redemption in which is included the forgiveness of sins. Then any resurrection is truly a resurrection to eternal or everlasting life.

Salvation for the sinner includes the whole finished work. It comes by faith. It cannot be by works. While under sin there is no good work that one can do. Only when one is justified or freed from sin can he do a good work.

Good works then can only come from a new creation. There is only one kind of plant from which you gather figs. There is only one kind of plant from which you can gather grapes. There is only one kind of creation which can produce the fruit of good works -- the new creation. There can be no substitute.

To sum it all up, salvation is a very practical workable thing for here and now, not just an escape for the future. We can rest assured that it is a finished work.

-THE BODY-

Any family or group of believers is a body. This term is not at all peculiar to the dispensation of the Mystery.

In the NT we find two bodies of believers mentioned. This is confusing to many. They are not able to distinguish the one from the other. One of these bodies existed during the Acts period of time. The other came into being after Acts. There is a great difference between the two.

In the body during Acts, the Jew had every advantage. Dispensationally, he was first. The hope was the hope of Israel. It was the return of their Messiah to set up again the kingdom in the land. He was to rule on the throne of David. Many (Gentiles) would come from the East and the West and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So Gentiles would also share in the glories of Israel.

The body during Acts had the hope of their Messiah appearing (parousia) with clouds (of angels) in the air. The greatness and glory of that appearing was to be such that at the approach of the Lord to the earth, the dead would rise and along with those living would be caught up to His presence in the air and come back with Him as He kept on His journey to the earth. From that time they would ever be with Him here on earth.

The blessings of this body were of the earth and material. They were to inherit the land that was promised to Abraham. They were to have a part in the kingdom promised to David and his Seed forever. All thru Acts we find that the realization of the hope of this body was entirely dependent upon the repentance of Israel. At the end of Acts this hope was deferred because Israel did not repent. The coming (parousia) was postponed indefinitely.

The body after Acts was made up of Jew and Gentile on an equality dispensationally. The hope of that body is to see and take part in the manifestation (epiphaneia) in the above-heavens (not in the air). The Jew is no longer first. The hope is far beyond earthly things and entirely outside the earth. The blessings are spiritual. They are in heavenly places, not in the land (the promised land).

To the body of the dispensation of the Mystery, Christ is HEAD, not the Messiah or King.

-THE CONDITION-

"Repent ye therefore... and He shall send Jesus Christ..." This is the heart of the message of Peter in Acts 3:12-26.

The condition for the return of Christ was the repentance of Israel. This could have happened in the lifetime of those who were listening. This would be in perfect accord with the prophecy of Daniel concerning the 70 weeks which would have ended in A D 85. This same condition is voiced in 4 references in Matt. where the Greek particle AN is used to show that the statement is conditional.

1. Matt. 10:23. "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." The Lord has just been speaking about the last days and the persecutions that would come. By this statement He makes it clear that if a certain condition (the repentance of Israel) is met, He would come before they had time to evangelize all the cities of Israel.

2. Matt. 15:28. "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Here again is the same condition. The kingdom does not come apart from the coming of the King. We have some who say that He is already come. Others say that a kingdom will be set up long before He comes. There is much talk about extending and furthering the kingdom these days.

3. Matt. 23:39. "Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.'" Here the Lord was weeping over Jerusalem. It is the people of the Jerusalem of that time and generation that these words were spoken. Those people never said those words and He never returned. The condition of repentance was not met.

4. Matt. 24:34. "This generation shall not pass till these things be fulfilled." THIS GENERATION occurs 16 times and it refers to the generation which killed the Prince of Peace. If Israel had repented, this generation would have seen the fulfillment of "The Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." But Israel did not repent and He has not come.

But He will come some time. Israel will repent some time. The weeks of Daniel will be completed. Israel will at last realize her hope and see Him come. But the Mystery intervenes. The proclamation of Acts 28:28 is still in force.

-ERROR-

"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." Matt. 22:29.

When we come to think about it, does not most, if not all, error come from ignorance of the Scriptures? The Lord was speaking to the Sadducees. They had become so ignorant of the Scriptures and their hope that they denied that there was any resurrection. They did not realize that in resurrection lay all the hope of Israel. The land that was promised could never be fully possessed except thru resurrection. They could not see that they had not only lost their own hope, but that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well.

On every hand today we find much that is parallel. There is much error because of ignorance of the Scriptures. The multitudes follow men and their empty Philosophies rather than the Word of God. Any doctrine with some verse of Scripture pulled out of its context or garbled in some way is swallowed by the multitudes. They do not think.

The primary fundamentals of everlasting life and how to get it are almost totally unknown. Many boast of a gospel of grace but still observe one of the feasts of Lev. 23. Other speak glibly of the dispensation of grace and then require a rite which was necessary to enter the kingdom under the law. Many think that becoming a Christian and joining a church are the same thing. We are bound and blinded today by traditions just as much as they were in the time of Christ. The only difference is that we are even more guilty than they for we have more light (more of the Word).

Some claim that a gospel of salvation by grace and by grace alone is immoral and contrary to reason. It might be contrary to man's reasoning, but none the less, John 3:16 is all that is needed for everlasting life. You find no repentance in John's gospel. No work of any kind required. This is just as simple as the gospel that was shown to Abraham. Abraham believed in God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. That is justification by faith with nothing added.

In regard to the dispensation of the Mystery, one becomes a member by simply trusting (Eph. 1:13). It is true that one has to know what to believe before he can obtain it by faith, but there is no premium on knowledge of the head variety. The head knows, the heart believes.

TRUTH FOR YOUTH

-STUDIES IN JOHN- #29

1. How did the Lord explain the difference between servants and friends? 15:15.
2. Who did the choosing? 16
3. Why were they chosen?
4. What is to be the relationship of the disciples one to another? 17
5. Do Christians love one another in this age now?
6. Why would the world be likely to hate them? 18
7. Is it likely that a Christian is a success as a Christian if he is well-spoken of by the world? 19
8. What comfort will they have if they will be persecuted? 20
9. Why does the world do all these hateful things? 21
10. Who are the greatest sinners, those that have the Word, or those who do not have it?
11. What about the person who hates Christ? 23
12. What was the general result of the words and works of Christ in the world? 24
13. For what reason does the world hate Him? 25
14. Of Whom does the Comforter always speak? 26
15. What will be the mission of the disciples? 27
16. Why did the Lord tell all these things to His disciples? 16:1
17. What man that that killing Christians was doing God a service? Acts 9
18. Why did he do it? John 16:3
19. Why did not the Lord tell all these things to them at the beginning? 4
20. Why does He want them to remember these things later?
21. Where is the Lord going?
22. What question have they failed to ask? 5
23. What were the feelings of the disciples at this time?
24. Why was it best that He go away?
25. What will be the 3-fold work of the Comforter when He comes? 8
26. Why will He reprove the world of sin?
27. Why will He reprove the World of righteousness?
28. Why will He reprove the world of its judgment?
29. If the world judged the Prince of this world, then Who is He? Acts 2:23
30. Was their instruction completed? 12

DEAR YOUNG FOLKS; So glad that a few of you are still sending in your answers to the questions in John. I feel that the work has not been in vain. Some have expressed their appreciation of the help received from these studies. Also have learned that some adult classes have been using them as a basis of class study. It is not too late to join us yet. Just write down the numbers of the questions and after them the answers. Leave some space between for my notes and corrections.

You who have been studying biology or botany know that one of the best ways of identifying a plant is to examine the fruit. In some you may tell by the bark or the leaves. But the surest method is by the fruit.

So it is with people. You can tell who is a Christian and who is of the world by their fruit -- their actions and their conversation.

A while back I had occasion to be in a high school and there was one class that I observed in particular. It was made up of boys, upperclassmen, and there was no evidence in either conversation or acts that any had a Christian home for a background. It was a very sad situation. Not a one seemed to have the backbone and moral uprightness to be and act like a Christian gentleman ought.

I am mentioning this in particular, but I realize that too often the same is true also of the girls. Many have little or no idea of what a Christian lady is or should be.

I am in no way trying to start a moral reform among those of the world. That would be just a waste of time. In the sight of God they would be no better. People are lost without Christ whether they are good or not. But what I fear is that some of you who are exposed to such groups may be carried away by their example. There is danger that you forget Christ in the crowd and become conformed to the world.

I am sure that none of you would want to become a castaway. That is being useless and laid on the shelf because you have lost your testimony. Paul kept his body under subjection lest such a thing should happen to him. He would have lost the joy of his salvation. He would not have had a testimony. His peace would have been gone. Do not look at the world; look to Christ.

- THE EDITOR'S DESK -

Your editor has not been at his desk very much lately. There have been no rainy days in which we could work inside. So every hour has been spent outside trying to get things done before the cold wet weather sets in. We finished painting the barn and got one coat on the grain shed and the workshop so far. We also spent some time in the cornfield and have that about half husked and hauled in. We do it the hard way; husk it and throw it on the ground and then haul it in with wagon and tractor.

In spite of all the resolutions to speed up this paper, still a month behind the schedule. I am now writing this on Oct. 24th. But we are bound to have some rainy days and then maybe we will get caught up a little.

Three frisky little calves have come lately. Their names are: Honest Abe., Honest John, and Jennie Lee. The last one is a daughter of Janell, grand daughter of Rosa Lee's Swiss Jane, and great grand daughter of Rosa Lee of Woodlot. May she live up to her pedigree.

We just had 114 new plates made for the Addressograph to be used for this issue. Thanks so much for all the new names and addresses sent in, Greetings to all you new friends. Hope that you like our company.

Remember that there is a Bible class at my home each Tuesday nite at 7:30. You are welcome to come.

Also remember that TRUTH FOR TODAY is published monthly and is free. Sent to anybody anywhere upon request. We are always glad to have the names of your friends and relatives who might be interested.

Back copies of TTT are still available. None back of #39. They are free.

Miss Ethel Haskell of Springfield, Mo. spent the afternoon with us Oct. 15th.

Your editor was at a conference in Cadillac, Mich. Oct 3 and 4. Was picked up for this trip by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Smith of Joliet, Ill.

Recent correspondence has been full of questions, especially on the subject of resurrection. Glad for this. Some classes are taking up the subject anew for more detailed study. It just may be that we do not know very much about it, as one man has suggested in his letter.

If folks are led to study the Word, our purpose has been accomplished.

Happy to receive your letters.

- ABOUT BOOKS -

By Sir Robert Anderson; on hand are 4 copies of The Silence of God @ \$2.50, \$2, \$2.25, and \$2.50 resp. One copy of The Gospel and its Ministry \$2. Seven copies of The Bible and Modern Criticism @ prices ranging from \$2 to \$2.75.

Have 3 copies of How to Enjoy the Bible by Bullinger. One is \$3.50 and the others \$3.75 each.

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New books by C. H. Welch; Job and the Enigma of the Ages 45¢. Ecclesiastes 60¢. The Dispensational Frontier 8¢ ea., 12 for 60¢, 25 for 90¢, or 50 for \$1.50

Companion Bibles have been going fast. In buckram \$12. In quarter leather \$16. Full leather \$24.

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