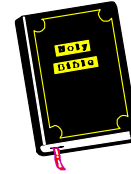


WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



“every disciple that is perfect, shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

DOES THE CHURCH SAVE? (Part 1)

A stock expression with preachers who hold union meetings, as well as some others, is, "We wish to see people saved, and then let them join the church of their choice." Often you hear, "One church is as good as another; the church does not save you." Many people hold the view that membership in the church the Lord built is not necessary to one's salvation.

If one church is as good as another, it must follow that the Mormon Church, built by Joseph Smith, is as good as the church built by our Lord. Mr. Smith was finite, limited in knowledge, and imperfect in character. The Lord is infinite, perfect in character, and possesses all power. Do the two compare favorably?

The Lord ordained that through His church "the manifold wisdom of God" is to be made known (Eph. 3:10). Christ is the head of the church He built (Col. 1:18), but churches built by men exist by no higher authority than that residing in the men who built them. Unless a human institution is as good as a divine institution, it must follow that a church built by a mere man is not as good as the church the Lord built!

"Good Men In All Churches"

It is often said that, "There are good men in all churches." As the world measures goodness, I grant that there are as good men in one church as in another. There are also good men in the world — men who are examples of moral rectitude and in acts of charity. But that does not prove that the world is as good as the church. A Christian possesses all the virtues possessed by the man in the world, and, in addition thereto, is a child of God, honors Him in worshipping as He directs, and gives Him the glory for the acts of charity performed.

If a man is saved because of his moral worth, it must follow that the death of Christ and the grace of God are not necessary to one's salvation, for there were moral men in the world before Christ died to save us. Cornelius was a man of outstanding moral righteousness, just in his dealings with his fellows, and fruitful in acts of charity. But he was not a member of the church the Lord built, and it is declared that he was an unsaved man (Acts 10:1-6; 11:14).

Jesus said, "I will build my church..." (Matt. 16:18). He did build His church (Rom. 16:16). Did the Lord build a church that was useless in the economy of Jehovah and unnecessary in the salvation of man?

- Continued on page 3

Choose the Strait Gate in 2008!

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 40 October 12, 2008

RECORDS 10/5/2008

SERMONS 10/12/2008

Sun 10 AM Bible Study: 62
Sun 11 AM Assembly: 104
Sun 6 PM Assembly: 70
Weds 7 PM Bible Study: 65
CONTRIBUTION: \$2266

AM: Jerry Manning
PM: Jerry Manning
JESUS HAS A LAW FOR MARRIAGE
WHAT GOOD THING SHALL I DO?

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another;
as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.
By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
if ye have love one to another.” John 13:34,35

SERVICES

Sunday 10 AM Bible Study
Sunday 11 AM, 6 PM Assembly
Wednesday 7 PM Bible Study
Office Phone (803) 794-5320
Nursery provided
Bible Classes for all ages

LADIES CLASS

Tuesdays (except 1st) 10 AM

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“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16

- **REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** Beryl Parks, Nina Ruth Meadows (Marcella Klieves' mother), Jack and Elma Berrier, Nathaniel Manning (Jerry and Lynn's grandson), Lynn Drago (Jerry's sister) and Phyllis Johnson.
- Remember Jan Kelleher and Craig Robinson as they recover from surgery.
- Remember Ron Banks and Marilyn Brooks as they struggle with illness.
- Jeanette Reeves continues to struggle with sin. Pray for her repentance.
- Remember all these, our new brothers and sisters in Christ, and brother Manning and those he studies the Bible with, in your prayers.

“I pray for them” - Jesus, John 17:9

“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42

- The Young Ladies Class, **FRIDAYS**, 7 pm at Jamie and Debbie Sheppard's home. Lynn Manning will be teaching. Just for the girls, teens to young adults.
- **New Convert Class** Saturdays 11 am at the building, for all. They're studying about the Bible using Keith Mosher's book, **The Book God Breathed**.
- A new **directory** of church members is available in the foyer.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." -1 Peter 3:8

WORK TEAM SCHEDULE: 10/12—D 10/19—A 10/26—B 11/2—C

Choose the Strait Gate in 2008!

THE GOSPEL'S POWER TO SAVE

There must be some connection made between power and the thing to be moved. There is great power in a locomotive, but it cannot move the train of cars till proper connection is made with power.

There is sufficient power in the gospel to move every sinner out of sin into the blessings of salvation, but that power moves no one until proper connections are made. Preaching is the means of establishing that connection. It is God's way of bringing the sinner under the influence of his saving power. For that reason, Paul was not ashamed to preach it. (Rom. 1:16).

The gospel exerts no power over the heathen who has never heard it, nor over the infidel who will not hear it, and it exerts but little power over him who looks for the power to come some other way. It exerts a power over us for good to the extent that we place ourselves under the influence of its teaching. The cyclone has no power over the man who is safely hidden away in his storm cellar, but it would be foolish for him to come out after the storm and confidently affirm that there was no power in the cyclone, but no more foolish than for a man who will not heed God's word to affirm that there is no converting power in it.

- R. L. Whiteside 1869-1951, Gospel Preacher

DOES THE CHURCH SAVE? (Part 1) - (continued from page 1)

"The Church Does Not Save"

Often you have heard, "The church does not save you." It is meant by those who make such remarks that it is not necessary to be a member of the church to be saved. All who read their Bibles understand that God saves. To pardon is the act of Jehovah. True, one must believe in the Lord before God pardons him (Acts 16:31), but it is not faith that pardons. God forgives. God pardons.

Though one must repent to be saved (Acts 2:38), it is not repentance that pardons or saves the man — God saves! Repentance is an act the man must perform before God will save him.

One must be baptized to be saved (Mk. 16:16), but it is not baptism that pardons. God pardons — God saves! The church does not save you, but consider this: "Are the saved in the church or in the world?"

Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul said they were "**sanctified in Christ Jesus,**" "**justified in the name of the Lord,**" and "**saved**" by the gospel (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 15:1-2). So certain as one is enjoying these blessings, that sure is it that he is one of the number composing the church. The church does not save, but the saved ones are the church.

The Church — The One Body

"**There is one body**" — there is "**but one body**" (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:20). What is the "one body?" "**He is the head of the body, the church...**" (Col. 1:18). Christ is the head of what? "**He is the head of the body, the church.**" If one is not of the number constituting the church; if he is not one of the number composing the body of which Christ is head, is he saved?

When one is prepared in heart and life; when he believes in the Lord with all his heart, repents of his sins, and is baptized as the Lord commands, he is baptized into the "**one body.**" (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:13). In one verse it is declared that one is baptized into the "one body," and in another verse it is affirmed that one is baptized "into Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Hence, to be baptized "into Christ" is to be baptized into the "body" which is the church. From this, it follows that if one is saved without being in the "body," he is saved without being in Christ, for to be "in Christ" is to be in the "one body."

In Christ "**we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...**" (Eph. 1:7). Salvation is in Christ. "**That they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ...**" (2 Tim. 2:10). Obtain what? Salvation. Salvation is where? In Christ. To be in Christ is to be in the "one body," "which is the church" (Col. 1:24).

From this, it follows that if one is not in "the body" he is not in Christ, and if not in Christ, he is not saved. But to be in "the body" is to be in the church. "**He is the head of the body, the church.**" The church does not save you, but the church is the saved ones. (*... to be continued*)

- C. R. (Charles Ready) Nichol, 1876-1961, Gospel Preacher

(Conclusion next week, Lord willing, **The Church Is Blood-Purchased**)