

Milk & Honey

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Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

HOLD FAST... SOUND WORDS

Jim Upton

“If a word means anything, it means something” a wise friend once said. Think about it. Serious writers select words carefully, perhaps painstakingly, so they convey just the right thought. God was a serious writer when He wrote the Scriptures; each word was exactly the right one for the meaning He wanted to express. Notice that God did NOT write:

“And great fear came upon all the *chapel*, and upon as many as heard these things” (Act. 5:11) “For first of all, when ye come together in the *chapel*, I hear that...” (1 Cor. 11:18) “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the *chapel* the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10)

Listen carefully to many in your assembly and you may hear things like:

“The correspondent of the chapel...”, “The chapel sent flowers to the funeral”, “The chapel is having a fellowship dinner next Sunday”, “Our chapel is having special gospel meetings next spring”, “The elders in our chapel...”, “Our chapel had fellowship with...” etc.. Really?? It would be very interesting indeed to watch, for instance, a building use its phone to call the local florist to have them send flowers to the mortuary or, to cook a meal, set up the tables, and put the tablecloth and silverware in place. You can envision all sorts of strange, humorous, and fascinating performances by this exceptional structure of wood and cement. These remarkable operations would surely attract the newspapers who would hail this as very advanced technology!

Ridiculous you say. Absolutely. But isn't that what we're often really saying in our everyday conversation?

True, it may not be too important in many instances, but in others it is indeed important. For instance:

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, an upon this rock I will build my *chapel*; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:18)

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the *chapel*, and gave himself for it.” (Eph 5:25)

Christ did not shed His precious blood and suffer the holy wrath of God on sin for the benefit of some building of wood, cement, roofing, and paint. No; that's appalling and perhaps blasphemous. We reject that idea with all the energy in our being.

The word church is, of course, the translation of “ekklesia,” a gathering of called-out ones, an assembly of people — specifically, in the New Testament, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ called out of the world and assembled together by the Holy Spirit. We often — and correctly — refer to such a gathering as an assembly or congregation. In spite of our care to honor the Lord by not calling the building a church and by saying that the assembly meets in a chapel (or hall), we often get careless and refer to the gathered people of God as a chapel; clearly, a chapel is a material structure not an assembled group of people, and most certainly not a very special and blessed people redeemed by the precious blood of the incarnate Son of God.

Then there's that phrase that we often hear, “Time to go to church,” or “After church we went to...” Really? Does the local body of redeemed saints have a starting or ending time on any specific day? Notice also, we would think it strange if one were to say, “Time to go to family,” etc.

Happily, we don't hear the word “assembly” being used to refer to the chapel, such as, “we need to put a new roof on the assembly”, or is that going to be the next step?

Surely we're not protesting about slips of the tongue that most of us fall into at one time or another. But if our thinking is muddled or too indiscriminate — or perhaps we are ignorant of the implication — we need to rethink the matter more carefully.

Nor are we speaking of the legal or incorporated name of a state-recognized body (nor the people of that organization) for the purposes of holding property, handling funds, etc.. Obviously, the assembly and the legal organization involve the same people, but we quickly realize that the legal name (“...Chapel”) has quite a different meaning and is not a suitable reference to God's precious people gathered together by the Holy Spirit.

Why all the fuss? At least three things are involved:

1) Accuracy. Scripture is consistent; we do well to speak and write in harmony with God's mind. He is a serious writer. Honor of His Word is vital to sound growth.

Continued on Page 3

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Tract titles do vary in color.

CERTAINTY

The Bible does not speak of probabilities. It speaks of *certainty*! What it says will happen, happens!

The Bible says it is *certain* you will die. “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27) You may quit smoking, exercise, eat healthy food—all of which are good, but you *will* die.

The important question is, “where will you go when you die?” The good news of the Bible is that you can know with *certainty* that you will go to heaven. (1 John 5:13) Do you want to know how to obtain this certainty? (Turn the card over)

The Bible says, “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8-9)

You can’t earn salvation from judgment. It is a gift which you receive by faith in Jesus Christ.

The Bible also says, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life...” (1 John 5:13)

Read the Gospel of John and see how to obtain eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

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JUST A SECOND

Seconds fly by without our noticing. However, these seconds eventually add up to a lifetime, and then, in a second, life is over.

When we come into this life we do not know how many of these seconds we will have. Some have a great number, others very few. Some see the end of life coming well in advance, others have no notice and are taken in a second.

Knowing that in any given second you might reach the end of your life,

RELIGION OR CHRIST

Most people think their religion will earn them a place in heaven, but sadly this is far from the truth. Why is this?

First, most blindly follow their religion without ever comparing it to the Bible to see what it has to say. Despite what many think, most religions, even well-known “Christian” religions, do not believe what the Bible teaches.

Second, religion is *our attempt to reach God* by our own efforts—church membership and service, sacraments, living the best we can, etc. Simply put, religion teaches us to earn our way to heaven.

The Bible, on the other hand, teaches us that we cannot earn our way to heaven. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The good news of the Bible is that *God has reached man* in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is faith in Christ’s death and resurrection that saves us from sin and hell, not religious deeds.

Salvation is a gift of God to those who acknowledge their sin and by faith accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Read the Gospel of John and see salvation is in a Person, not a religion.

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what have you done to prepare for what follows?

Many assume they will go to heaven for one reason or another, but what if their assumption is wrong? What a terrible shock that would be! Read the Bible and learn how you can be sure of going to heaven. Start by reading the Gospel of John. Here are a few verses you will find there.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

IT WAS NICE TO MEET YOU

Since this may be the only time we meet I want to take the opportunity to share some very good news with you. The good news is that you can know *for sure* you are going to heaven!

You can know complete forgiveness of all your sins, and be saved from God’s judgment of them. And wonderfully you do not have to earn this by religious works.

The first step in receiving this free gift of salvation is acknowledging to God that you have sinned and need forgiveness. (Rom. 3:23)

Then you need to ask God for forgiveness and accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15)

The Bible says, “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9) You can’t earn salvation, but you can receive it free and **be sure** of going to heaven!

Read the Gospel of John and see how you can have the free gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. As you read ask God to show you this wonderful truth.

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whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:36)

The seconds are passing!

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Continued from Page 1 - *Hold Fast...Sound Words*

2) The value of the great salvation Christ has procured. He didn't suffer for sin at the hands of a holy, eternal God on the shameful cross on Calvary for mere material consumables such as a *chapel*. Christ's horrible agony and death was for *eternal souls*, made in the likeness of God Himself. In humble moments we often wonder with amazement why "Christ died for us" — an incredible statement if it didn't appear on the pages of God's holy, inerrant Word. To infer, whether thoughtlessly or ignorantly, that His marvelous redemption covered a meeting place is certainly an affront to the Sovereign of all the universe.

3) It conveys to the untaught mind a terrible error, a totally wrong idea. The chapel is not a source of preaching the Gospel, providing comfort to the troubled heart, or refuge for the seeking soul. It is not a living body which represents the resurrected Savior to the world. It is not in itself a holy thing. It is indeed a tool for these and other purposes, but *only* a tool. Useful? Certainly. To be respected for its purpose? Absolutely — and we should be thankful for such a provision by God to help in carrying out His work.

Let our expressions thoughtfully follow God's perspective, especially in areas so precious to Him and His beloved Son. This may require that we think carefully as we speak and write.

"And He is the head of the body, the *church*, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." (Col. 1:18)

"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the *church* will I sing praise unto thee." (Heb. 2:12) *

Brief History

Some brief history. Spread The Word (STW) began in 1982 as an outreach with the Gospel. A small advertisement was placed in a local newspaper inviting the reader to call a telephone number to hear a message on the noted topic. It always included the words, "For a message that could change your life forever" call the listed number.

In 1983 STW received its 501C(3) status from the IRS. In May of 1986 the first issue of Milk & Honey was published and mailed to assemblies. Thirty-two years later approximately 5,300 copies are mailed monthly, plus those sent by email, primarily to readers outside the United States.

In January of 1989 the monthly York Bible study was started with many young attending. It still continues after almost 30 years, but is smaller in size (30-50). We also forward funds to commended workers in the United States. STW directs the Shepherding Conference at Greenwood Hills each Fall. This year's conference is September 20–22. *

The Will of God

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Nevertheless not my will, but Yours, be done. Luke 22:42

The person who has eternal life loves to do the will of God. This is the logical sequence. The man who loves is the man who is anxious to please the object of his love. There is no better test of love than that, and unless you desire to please someone whom you claim to love, then I assure you, you do not love that person. Love always wants to be pleasing and to give itself, and anyone who loves God wants to do the will of God.

If you look at Christ, you see that the whole of His life, His one object, was to do the will of His Father. He did not care what it was; even in the Garden of Gethsemane when He faced the one thing He did not want, even there He said, "Nevertheless not my will, but Yours, be done." He says, "I do not want to drink this cup, but if it is doing Your will, I will do even that." That is love at its maximum and its best, and it is true of all who have His life. The chief end of the true Christian is the glory of God; therefore he spends his time seeking to know the will of God and doing it.

He strives to do it, and he loves to do it. He is controlled by this one idea. Having learned what God has done for him and what God is to him, having realized something of this love of God, he says, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all." Any man, therefore, who has eternal life has this as the supreme object and desire of his life—to do the will of God.

The ultimate manifestation of the possession of eternal life is that it produces certain results in our lives. Fortunately for us they have all been set out in a very brief compass in Galatians 5:22-23, where the apostle Paul speaks of the fruit of the Spirit. These verses are rightly called "the shortest biography of Christ that has ever been written."

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. *

Shepherding Conference

September 20-22

Greenwood Hills Bible Conference

Fayetteville, PA 17222

Mike Attwood, Brian Gunning

Keith Keyser, Mike Stoudt

Men of all ages

Register @ GreenwoodHills.net

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The Old and The New

Bob Gessner

About fifty years ago, there was a man named Tim who faced this latter problem. The world has changed in many ways in fifty years, but in other ways it remains exactly the same. Technology changes many circumstances, but the ways of man never change. Tim was invited to attend some evangelistic meetings by a fellow worker at his place of employment. He came out and was intrigued with the messages. On the last evening, he made a profession of faith in Christ as His Savior. He was visited by believers on a number of occasions after he confessed Christ. It soon became apparent to him that he faced two very difficult decisions.

The first one involved his church attendance. He was born and raised in a church that did not preach the Gospel. He had been attending services faithfully every Sunday since he was a young boy. As he grew in his knowledge of the Gospel, he realized the incompatibility of law and grace. The grace of the Gospel did not mix with the cold formality of his church. Christianity, as taught in the Scriptures, did not go with the revamped religious acts of Judaism performed in the church. But Tim continued to attend services in the morning and then he would go to the Gospel hall in the evening. He found it hard to give up the old. The old was better because it was familiar and it appealed to the flesh. There is a natural reluctance to abandon the old for the new. "But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, The old is better" (Lk. 5:38,39).

The second decision was more in the social world than in the religious. Every Tuesday night for years he went to a clubhouse to enjoy the evening with longtime friends. His supervisor at work was one of them and his next door neighbor was another. He soon became the object of much criticism because he would no longer drink any alcoholic beverages with them. He found things to talk about, but he often cringed at many of the off-color stories that he would hear each week. His friends knew there was a change but he never felt he had the right opportunity to tell them what had happened to him. "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles - when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you" (1 Pet. 4:3,4).

It took him two years, but he finally made the inevitable decision. He stopped going to the church and he stayed home on Tuesday evenings. He literally trembled when he made the decisions. It was tough, but he knew it had to be done. Years later, he had only one regret. He wished that he had done it much sooner. How about you, reader? Are you still holding on to some old worldly ways? Let go of them and your life will begin to blossom for God. *

Milk & Honey Information

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