

Anchor Of The Soul
P.O. Box 401
Spruce Pine, NC 28777

Anchor Of The Soul

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April 2008

“He’s My Brother”

By James Hahn

I am sure most of us have seen the picture of the young boy carrying another smaller boy and he is saying, “He’s not heavy, he’s my brother.” This scene has always had an emotional appeal since everyone recognizes that there is something special (or should be) about being brothers. However, I saw another cartoon recently which (I am sorry to say) seems to reflect the attitude that brethren in Christ sometimes have toward one another. The cartoon opens with a picture of one little boy on top of another beating him unmercifully. Another child approaches and says, “Love your enemy.” The boy doing the beating replied, “He isn’t my enemy, he’s my brother.”

The moment I read that cartoon I thought about the attitude some brethren show toward one another. They, like the little boy in the cartoon, often treat their enemies with more love and compassion than their own brethren. Nearly any wrong or problem is quickly resolved if it involves someone in the world, but let it involve a brother in Christ and instead of trying to resolve the matter we try to destroy the brother.

I am not for one moment suggesting that we should ever compromise truth and right in order to maintain a “peaceful” relationship with our brother or anyone else, however I am saying that there should be an attitude of love and compassion manifested among brethren. I know of churches where the members seem to delight in attacking one another. A kind word about another member is seldom heard. This is indeed sad. Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another” (Jn. 13:35). Paul said, “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another” (Gal. 5:15).

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Lightning Lesson

What is true repentance? Many people view repentance as "feeling sorry" for some wrong that has been committed. While repentance does involve sorrow, it also involves a willingness to change! In 2 Cor. 7:10-11, Paul says, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." It's good to feel sorry, but in order to truly repent, we must change our attitude and our actions! Many people say that they are sorry they sinned, and there may be a degree of sincerity in their voice, but then they make no effort to actually change and do better. We need to remember the words that Jesus spoke to the adulterous woman in Jn. 8:11, "Go, and sin no more." Paul adds, "What shall we say them? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:1-2)

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Characteristics of Bible Miracles (No. 1)

By John Isaac Edwards

A good way to see that miracles have ceased is to observe differences in Bible miracles and “miracles” purported today. Characteristics of Bible miracles are not characteristic of modern “miracles.” Those who claim power to perform miracles as the Lord, His apostles, or those endowed with spiritual gifts in the first century need to explain these differences.

1) **Immediate.** When Peter took the man that was lame from his mother’s womb by the hand, “immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple” (Acts 3:7-8). The man did not receive strength progressively, but instantaneously! Why do “miracles” today not have the same immediate results as Bible miracles?

2) **Faith Not Required.** Today, faith is put as a condition of miraculous healing, and healing is in proportion to one’s faith. If one is not completely healed, then he did not fully believe, or so we are told. Really this is just a dodge! With Bible miracles, no faith is evident in many cases and there are cases where no faith was possible (Lk. 7:11-17; Acts 13:11-12). Why do “miracles” today require things not required in Bible miracles?

3) **All Healed.** Jesus went about “healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Mt. 4:23-24). Acts 5:16 records, “There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.” Nobody was culled out or turned away. At the “miracle” crusades and campaigns today, why are they not healed every one?

4) **Expectation Not Required.** Some are made to believe that in order to see a miracle they must expect a miracle. Bible miracles did not require expectation, but were often unexpected. A good example is when the lame man at the temple gate expected alms, but received a miracle of healing (Acts 3:2-7). Why should we expect today that which was unexpected in Bible days?

5) **Not Advertised By The One Performing Them.** Have you observed how modern “miracle workers” advertise and publicize their “great wonders”? Jesus did not heal for notoriety. In fact, on a number of occasions, He commanded that the healed “tell no man” (Mk. 3:7-12; 7:31-37; 8:22-26). Why is a modern “miracle crusade” preceded by an advertising campaign?

“Anchor Of The Soul” is distributed monthly by the **Spruce Pine church of Christ**. We are a non-denominational church whose only goal is to follow the New Testament pattern.

Meeting Times

Sunday

Bible Class.....10:00 AM

Morning Worship.....11:00 AM

Evening Worship.....6:30 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class.....7:00 PM

Directions

Our building is located at 36 McHone Rd just behind the Mitchell Veterinary Clinic in Spruce Pine. Call (828)467-1463 if you need a ride to services or have any questions about the church.

Ten Reasons to Assemble With Us..

1. Our sermons are completely Bible based.
2. Our classes are informative and uplifting.
3. We have Bible classes for all ages.
4. Our worship is in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).
5. Our worship is meant to glorify God, not man.
6. We make all of our visitors feel welcome.
7. We are truly a spiritual “family.”
8. We will do everything we can to help you grow closer to God (as we do the same for one another).
9. There are people of all age-groups, including many young families with children. You won’t feel out of place.
10. We are not “just another denominational church.” We have many things to offer that no church in the immediate area is currently offering.

Saved by “Hearing Only”

By Casey Head

What if someone came to you and said that we are saved by “hearing only?” Not faith. Not repentance. Not confession. But hearing only. After all, Mark 4:12 says that “hearing” the gospel leads to “understanding” which leads to “conversion.” And then there is John 5:25 which says, “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” They might also point out John 10:16 where the Son of God says, “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.” What if someone came to you and used these verses to teach their doctrine of “hearing only?” What would you say?

You might point out that they twisted many of the verses listed above and took them out of context. But they would only argue with you tooth and nail and hold firm to their doctrine of “hearing only.”

Perhaps you would show them the numerous passages that teach we are saved by faith (Jn. 8:24; Ac. 16:31; Heb. 11:6), and you would tell them that it is wrong to take one verse that talks about the necessity of hearing the gospel and say “hearing only.” But in response, they would argue that faith is something we develop *after* we’re saved, not something we do *in order to be saved*. After all, faith is a work (Jn. 6:29) and we are not saved by works (Eph. 2:8-10). They would pass over many of the verses you listed and hold stubbornly to their doctrine of “hearing only,” denying the necessity of faith in the process.

Then, of course, they would appeal to your emotions. They would ask, “What about the man who hears the gospel but dies before he believes? What if he has a heart attack right before he believes?” You might respond by showing how emotional appeals don’t change truth.

Now I’ve never heard anyone say that we are saved by “hearing only.” As far as I know this isn’t some new doctrine that is spreading like wildfire throughout the Christian world...so what is the point?

The point is this- every argument that was made above regarding “hearing only” I have heard from the mouths of denominational people regarding “faith only.” I agree that we are saved by faith, just as I agree that we are saved by hearing the gospel. Both are necessary. But can we elevate one and say “_____ only?” What about repentance, confession and baptism? Doesn’t the Bible teach that all are essential? None stand alone in salvation. None are works of merit. All are commanded!

“Hearing only” is a false teaching, but so is “faith only.”

Bible Trivia

Questions Pertaining to Samuel:

1. What was the name of Samuel’s mother?
2. How many times did God speak to Samuel before he finally responded by saying, “Speak; for Thy servant heareth?”
3. Samuel’s two sons, Abiah and Joel, were appointed to what position in Beersheeba?
4. Which king of the Amalekites did Samuel cut into pieces?
5. Samuel died during the active reign of which king?

Prophecies Fulfilled at Jesus’ Death:

6. When Jesus said, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me,” which psalm was being recalled?
7. Which Old Testament passage stated that Jesus would be numbered with the transgressors?

Challenge Question:

8. Name five passages which teach that man has free-will.

Evidence of God and the Bible:

Scientists agree that the sun is shrinking at a measurable rate. Assuming that this rate has been constant, the earth would have been so hot one million years ago that life could not have been sustained. But the evolutionary theory requires billions of years. You do the math!

Answers:

1. Hannah (1 Sam. 1:2); 2. Three times (1 Sam. 3:1-10); 3. Judges (1 Sam. 8:1-2); 4. Agag (1 Sam. 15:33); 5. Saul’s (1 Sam. 25:1); 6. Ps. 22;
7. Is. 53:12

Challenge Question ANSWER From March 2008:

How does the Holy Spirit dwell in Christians today? No doubt, the Holy Spirit dwells in us today (1 Cor. 6:19), but I would contend that He dwells in us representatively, through the word of God, not literally. First, the Bible also says that Christ dwells in us (Rom. 8:10) and God dwells in us (1 Jn. 4:12). Do the Son and the Father dwell in us literally? No! The point is that we have a relationship with God and Christ. It is the same with the Spirit. He dwells in us through the word (Eph. 6:17).

The **Spruce Pine church of Christ**
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As we study...

“The Battle of Armageddon”
Sunday, April 13, 2008 @ 11:00 AM

- What is the battle of Armageddon?
- Will God’s people be fighting in a literal battle in the valley of Megiddo in Israel?
- ...and more importantly, what is the overall message of the book of Revelation?

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God’s Word is Supreme

By Byron Smith

While Psalm 119 is commonly known as the longest chapter in the Bible, it would be better known as “The Psalm of God’s Supreme Word,” for the obvious theme of the psalm is the word of God. Many of the verses therein allude directly to “the law,” “Your word,” “Your precepts,” and “Your statutes.” A casual reading of this psalm indicates the writer’s deep admiration and reverence for God’s word. Notice some of the observations the writer made as he reflected upon the excellencies of God’s word.

He loved the word of God. Notice his words, “Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day” (vv. 97). Again he said, “Therefore I love your commandments more than gold, yes than fine gold” (vv. 127)! Do you love the word of God as the Psalmist did? If you do there will be evidence of such love in your life. How much time do you spend feasting upon the treasures of God’s word? Do you possess an enthusiastic delight in what God has spoken? The Psalmist said again and again that the word was his “delight.” Verse 77 reads, “Let your tender mercies come to me, that I may live; for Your law is my delight.”

The Psalmist **wanted to know the word of God.** He requested of God, “Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law” (vv. 18). “Teach me your statutes. Make me understand the way of Your precepts...” (vv. 26-27). Over and over he would petition God, saying, “teach me” (vv. 12, 33-34, 64, 66, etc). This is one of the outstanding attitudes demonstrated by the writer. He had a genuine desire to know what God wanted him to know. He was teachable. Do you have a sincere interest in knowing what God says, or do you have the apathetic mentality that says “ignorance is bliss?” Maybe you are afraid to learn God’s word because of what it will require of you. Certainly, God’s word requires much. It demands respect and complete adherence. But once again, note what the Psalmist said: “**Blessed** are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord! **Blessed** are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart” (vv. 1-2)! Whatever God’s word demands, it will be worth it!

I urge you to read “The Psalm of God’s Supreme Word” in it’s entirety. You need to develop the same admiration and reverence for God’s word that the Psalmist possessed.

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Frozen Talons

One winter day, a carcass was floating down the Niagara River upon a cake of ice. An eagle, soaring above the river, spied it and dropped down upon it. He sat there leisurely devouring his easy prey. The swift current began bearing him rapidly downward to the fall. But was he not safe? Could he not leap in a moment into mid-air from his dangerous post? Could he not stretch his great pinions and float off into safety at the very brink of the awful cataract? Had he not done that a thousand times before in his bird experience? So he floated on! But by and by came the thundering roar of the great cataract. The cloud of white mist that marked the fatal brink of the fall was towering almost above him. It was time to leave. So he stretched out his great wings for flight. But he could not rise! Unnoted by him his talons, sunken in the ice, and the flesh of his prey, had frozen hard and fast in the bitter winter day, and his fate was sealed! He flapped his great wings. He struggled with all the power of muscle and sinew. But all in vain. In a few moments he was swept over into the abyss to his death. He had waited too long! ... How will you escape if you neglect? Your immortal soul is in instant and unceasing jeopardy of eternal death. God offers His Son Jesus Christ as your escape. What will you do with Him?

-James H. McConkey

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

By Andy Mitchell

The most important question of all! When the Jews at Pentecost realized they had crucified the Son of God, they said, "What shall we do?" (Ac. 2:37). When Jesus appeared to Saul, Saul said, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" (Ac. 9:6). The jailor said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Ac. 16:30).

There is something I must do! The scriptures mentioned above show that we have a role and responsibility to take in our salvation. Some people say that there is nothing we can do for our salvation. But these scriptures show there is something WE must do. God has already done his part in providing atonement for our sin. He has provided the gift. We then need only to take it.

Things that MUST be done!

- Hear. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17)
- Believe. "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. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Lk. 13:3)
- Confess. "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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9-10)
- Be Baptized. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Ac. 22:16)
- Be Faithful unto death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

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