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## HE PREACHED HIM INTO HELL

by Franklin Camp

He was a member of the church. He said so when questioned about his religion. He was a member of the church, but he could not be counted on to attend the services. He worked six days a week and he had to visit sometimes and when could he go except on Sunday? He worked hard and needed some recreation and Sunday was the only time he had for recreation.

He was a member of the church but he just could not get to Bible study on Sunday morning. He needed the extra hour or two of sleep more than he needed to study the Bible. He attended the worship most of the time and felt that was enough.

He was a member of the church, but he did not come on Sunday night. He had to rest to be ready to go to work on Monday. He had already attended one time and that was enough except for preachers and a few over zealous people. He had eaten the Lord's Supper and that was the only thing that was really important anyway.

He was a member of the church, but he never came to mid-week Bible study. He could not find where the Bible said anything about mid-week Bible classes. He said he was tired on Wednesday night and needed the rest and requested people not to bother him by calling him to invite him.

Continued on Page 4.

# GOSPEL MEETING

October 3 - 9

Aude McKee

7:30 P. M.

FULTONDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST

# IT IS ALL OR NOTHING WITH THE LORD

Jesus says that discipleship demands that one:

1. "Observe all things whatever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19).
2. "Forsake all that he has." (Luke 14:33)

The Lord makes it clear that He will settle for nothing short of complete unconditional surrender to Him by those who want to be His disciples. He refuses to play second fiddle to anything or anyone. He will not permit selective obedience. It is all or none with Him.

The rich young ruler was willing to be a disciple if he could be a disciple and keep his goods. The Lord would not accept that brand of discipleship. (Luke 18:18-23)

Some would-be disciples would have gladly followed the Savior if it had not interfered with their personal affairs. (Luke 9:57-62).

The Lord tells us what he thinks of lukewarmness (half-hearted discipleship). No discipleship at all is to be preferred to it. He had rather one be cold rather than lukewarm. (Rev. 3:16,17).

As long as there is one thing one is unwilling to try to do to serve the Lord and as long as there is one thing that one will not give up to be a Christian - one is not ready to become a disciple.

In our eagerness to make disciples by "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit", let's not forget that at that point one is not only forsaking his sins and receiving forgiveness - he is committing himself to complete obedience and forsaking all for Christ.

In my judgement, we sometimes go overboard in our efforts to remove certain "hindrances" in the way of folks' being baptized. Instead, of impressing them with the idea that they can let nothing stand between them and discipleship - we try to convince them that they can have their cake and eat it too! Until one is willing to follow the Lord in spite of the difficulties and sacrifices that may be involved - he is not ready to become a disciple.

One may have a faulty understanding of the specific duties and sacrifices that will be expected of him as a Christian. He may be unwilling to tackle those duties and make those sacrifices. It may well be that if he understood more about the will of God that he would see that God does not actually require him to do some of the things that gives him the problem or that he might not actually have to give up the things that concern him. But that is really beside the point. He thinks he would have to attend to those duties and make those sacrifices. There is still something that he is unwilling to try, even though he believes the Lord expects it of him. There is still something that he is unwilling to give up even though he thinks a Christian should. He is not yet willing to "observe all" or to "forsake all" for the Lord.

Instead of spending so much effort in trying to convince him, at this point, that such may not really be expected of him - it might be far better to impress upon him that whatever the duty or that whatever the sacrifice that he must be willing to go all the way for the Lord. As long as there is any hindrance real or imagined that he is unwilling to set aside or step over in order to be a Christian - it is just that long he cannot be a disciple indeed. Because discipleship demands a state of mind that is willing to try to do any thing that one believes the Lord expects of him and to give up any thing to serve the Lord.

If we had been impressing this fact upon folks being baptized through the years, we might not have nearly as many problems among brethren and so much half-hearted service in the church today. It might turn some away from being baptized, but we believe it would lead others to be baptized and make disciples indeed. - Editor.

# "THE GOSPEL - GOOD NEWS OR BAD?"

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation... (Rom 1:16).

The word, gospel, means good news. It is good news about salvation that is in Christ. It is good news about what Christ has done to save us. It is good news about how we can be saved. It is good news to the sinner who knows that he is lost and wants to be saved.

But, what may be good news to one may be bad news to another. As a lad, it was good news that we were going to have chicken and gravy for Sunday dinner - but it was bad news for the chicken. It is a mistake to try to restructure the gospel so that all will receive it as good news. It is bad news for the self-satisfied and/or ignorant sinner that loves his sin and feels no condemnation. The gospel has to first convince him that he is a lost sinner (bad news) needing salvation then it gives him the good news of that salvation.

The good news of the gospel is not that Jesus saves sinners unconditionally, but that Jesus has provided the means and way for us to be saved.

Occasionally someone gets the idea that the only response that man has to make to the gospel is believe it and accept the salvation that comes through it.

But, one must "obey the gospel". (2 Thess. 1:8). All the efforts in the world to try to make "obey" mean something other than "obey" will not change that fact. A paper, recently distributed in this area by a young man who seems to think that he has unlocked the secret by looking at the original word for "obey", concludes that "obey" simply means to properly respond by believing and not by obeying commands or directives. He needs to study the word a bit more. Is he willing to apply the same meaning to children obeying parents (Eph. 6:1), servants obeying masters (Eph. 6:5), and citizens obeying government (Tit. 3:1)? Is obeying parents simply believing them? Is obeying civil authorities simply believing them? Who can believe that?

One must behave according the truth of the gospel (Gal. 4:14). The gospel tells of a pattern of behavior to which we must conform. When one does not walk according to the truth of the gospel, he is subject to censure - as was Peter.

To some, to say that the gospel demands commandment keeping and a code of conduct with corresponding threats of punishment for disobediences is to make it "bad news". It is not bad news to those who really want to please the Lord and those who understand that it is "the grace of God that brings salvation...teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works." (Titus 2:11-14).

It is bad news for those who prefer not to be careful about maintaining good works.

It is bad news for those who do not obey (2 Thess. 1:8).

It is bad news for those who "go on sinning wilfully" (Heb. 10:26 NASV).

It is "good news" for those who "obey from the heart that form of doctrine" by dying to sin, being buried in baptism, and raised to a new life (Romans 6:1-4,17; cf. I Cor. 15:1-4).

It is "good news" for those who "walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:14; cf. 1 John 1:7-2:1).

Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." The same gospel (good news) is to be preached to every creature - but only those who believe the gospel and are baptized will find it good news, indeed. The news for the unbeliever is not so good. - Editor

HELL (from page 1)

He was a member of the church, but he gave very little of his money to the cause of the Lord. The church supported the preaching of the gospel, but not with much of his money. His earnings increased, but not his contribution. He gave \$10.00 a week all his life. The church conducted a radio program, but not with his money. After all, he owned a home, a new car, television and took a vacation every year and it just took all his money to live on.

He was a member of the church, but he never visited anyone. He said that he thought that was what the church paid the preacher to do. If he was sick and no one visited him, it hurt his feelings. He complained of the church not visiting people.

He was a member of the church, but he never tried to teach anyone else. In fact, he did not know where to find the Great Commission. If anyone asked him a question he had to call the preacher to find the answer. The truth is he just did not like to talk with other people about the Bible.

He was a member of the church, but he died. I conducted his funeral. I said, "He was a member of the church but was careless in attendance. He was a member of the church but he did not think Bible study was important, so he never came. He was a member of the church but he did not come to the mid-week classes. He was member of the church but he never gave as he was prospered. His funeral is being conducted in a building paid for by others. He was a member of the church, but no one gathered here today has he taught the truth. He has now gone to the judgment to meet his God and all he can say to God is, 'I was a member of the church.' All that I can say about him is that he was a member of the church."

While these are not the words that I used, it is the substance of what I said. The service was over and as I stood at the door waiting for the men to take the casket and place it in the car I heard someone say, "He preached him straight into hell." But I deny that I did so. All I did was to tell the truth about his life. All that he claimed while he lived was that he was a member of the church. Why should I insult his family and friends and his body by saying he was more? I could not claim for a dead man what he refused to claim for himself while he lived.

This is not fiction -- it happened.

- From The Westview Weekly.

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