

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?

When Moses posed the question to the children of Israel, *"Who is on the Lord's side?"* (Exo. 32:26), it was definitely time to make a decision. Moses had just been up on Mount Sinai receiving the Old Law and its many precepts. Among those commandments was included, *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . ."* (Exo. 20:4). The Israelites, meanwhile, had just made a golden calf and were caught worshipping it! So, Moses asked the people to choose which side they were going to follow: God's way or man's way? That day about 3000 men were killed because they did not choose the Lord's side (Exo. 32:28).

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Today the same question must be asked of us: *"Who is on the Lord's side?"* Think about the many issues confronting us right now on the national scene and in the religious setting. There are issues like abortion, evolution, homosexuality, divorce & remarriage, Sunday School, and even fellowship, to name a few. Each one has at least two sides; most have multiples. But as Christians, we have but one side to choose. It does not matter what anybody else thinks. The only right course, the only right direction, the only right way is God's way. On every account, we must be on the Lord's side.

Who is right on the issue of abortion? The pro-choice or the pro-life? Both sides have seemingly good arguments but guess what? We are more interested in what God has to say about the matter. And the Bible is the only place where we will be able to find that out! It seems that despite what the doctors and scientists say, God recognizes life at conception! (Psa. 139:13-16; Isa. 49:1; Jer. 1:4,5; Gen. 25:21-24; Luke 1:41-44; Psa. 127:3) He also views the wilful taking away of life (murder) as a sin (Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9; 1 Pet. 4:15; 1 John 3:15). Since abortion amounts to nothing more than terminating the life of a human being before he/she leaves the womb, how can God overlook this terrible sin? He hates all iniquity and thus, does not approve of killing unborn babies. That is where God stands. Now, who is on the Lord's side when it comes to abortion?

Not surprisingly, our world is filled with the theory of evolution. It is being taught in our schools, in museums, on TV and also in the theaters. We have become so bombarded with this man-made doctrine that scholars and scientists alike treat it as a fact, and no longer as a theory. But let's hear from God's side. He may not say it in such impressive

terms, but what the Lord does reveal about the beginning of the world is worth listening to because He was actually there! He tells us in Genesis 1:1, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* More proof can be found in Neh. 9:6; Psa. 102:25; Acts 14:15; and Heb. 11:3. Whether we believe this or not does not matter, does it? God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). He said he created everything. Nothing is said about evolution. Therefore it is the truth and if we want to be on God's side, then we must accept it as it is.

The world has given us many "sides" to the topic of homosexuality. Yet, what does God think of it? Perhaps we can find a clue in his written Word. What better place to look! First, notice how he dealt with homosexuals in the city of Sodom in which he destroyed them with fire and brimstone (Gen. 19:4-25). Since the time of the Old Law, God has expressed disfavor with such immoral arrangements (Lev. 20:13). Next, notice what he says about homosexuals through the apostle Paul in Romans 1:24-27 and 1 Cor. 6:9-10. *"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet:"* (Rom. 1:26,27) Surely this is plain enough for any of us to agree that God sees this "lifestyle" as another sin! Being a homosexual is wrong and if we will be on the Lord's side, we must approach it just as God does. We must not be afraid to speak out against this horrible abomination!

Where does God stand on the issue of divorce and remarriage? Yes, we know what the

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statistics show for our nation and how it is becoming more and more prevalent in our society. We know what psychologists and other marital experts say today, that if you cannot live with your spouse then go find a more suitable one. We also know what Moses said in the OT times about the writing of divorcement (Matt. 19:7,8). But what does God say? That is the only thing that really counts for us. God the Father said *"he hateth putting away"* (Mal. 2:16). God the Son said from the very beginning that a man and woman would be one flesh until death separates them (Matt. 19:4-6). And God the Holy Spirit revealed, *"Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."* (1 Cor. 7:10,11). That is the stand we must take, if we will be a true follower of God. To take any other position is to go against the Lord and be on the devil's side!

Most religious people in the United States believe that Sunday School and its class-type arrangement is scriptural (or at least "there's nothing wrong with it"). But listen carefully to what God says on this topic. Listen . . . do you hear it? No? The silence you hear is for a reason. Absolutely nothing can be found

from the scriptures which espouses the doctrine of Sunday School. It is credited to have been started by a man named Robert Raikes only about 200 years ago! Since then all sorts of "churches" have adopted this system and have declared it as the best way to teach the Bible. However, once again we must side with God. We must speak where the Bible speaks but we must also be silent where the Bible is silent. God's word is as quiet about the class system of teaching as it is about the idea of reincarnation or "Rapture" or Purgatory. Therefore, we cannot encourage Sunday School any more than we can support musical instruments in the worship service.

Some people have accused us of being too harsh when it comes to "fellowship". They say we are creating divisions and not promoting Christian unity when we "dis-fellowship" erring brethren or alien sinners. We merely want to do what is right in the sight of God. We want to be on the Lord's side. This means we cannot "fellowship" those whom God instructs us to "*withdraw*" from (2 Thes. 3:6). Neither should we "fellowship" those whom even God refuses fellowship with. For example, he does not draw nigh to those who refuse him (Jas. 4:8; Deut. 31:18). He does not abide with those who transgress the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9; Isa. 59:2; Mic. 3:4). If God will not fellowship these, how can he allow his children to do so? That is why God tells us to have "*no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*" (Eph. 5:11) and to avoid those who are contrary to the Gospel (Rom. 16:17). Now will we take the Lord's side?

Sometimes it may be very difficult to take a stand on the Lord's side. When we do, the majority will certainly disagree with us on all the key issues. But keep in mind another warning from Moses to the children of Israel in

Num. 14:9. *"Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not!"* If we will be on the Lord's side every time, then who can ever defeat us?

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Why did Elihu wait until last to speak to Job?
2. How did God make us, according to Psalms 139?
3. What were people trying to do to the gospel of Christ in Galatia?
4. Who wrote the book of Titus?
5. When the sons of Judah captured Jerusalem, what did they do to it?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Who was Abram's father? **TERAH (Gen. 11:31)**
2. What hour was Jesus crucified? **THE THIRD HOUR (9:00 am) (Mark 15:25)**
3. Why did the Lord want Jeremiah to buy land while Jerusalem was under seige? **TO PROVE THAT GOD HAD A FUTURE PLAN FOR THE LAND (Jer. 32:15)**
4. Did David, or did he not, sit with deceitful men? **NO (Psa. 26:4)**
5. What did Moses feel his weakness was that would prevent the Pharaoh from listening to him? **HIS SPEECH (Exo. 6:30)**

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR CHURCH-GOERS

1. Thou shalt recognize that church-going is a fine art which demands the best preparation of which thou art capable.
2. Thou shalt go to church regularly, for a prescription cannot do thee much good nor be effective if taken only once a year.
3. Thou shalt get in condition for Sunday by refraining from late hours and activities that clash with the will of God during the week, especially on Saturday night.
4. Thou shalt go to church in a relaxed state of body and mind, for the absence of tension is a primary requisite to successful worship.
5. Thou shalt remember that worship in church is not a gloomy exercise, therefore go in a spirit of enjoyment, radiant and happy to enjoy thy religion.
6. Thou shalt sit relaxed in thy pew, for the power of God cannot come to thy personality when thou art rigid and full of tensions.
7. Thou shalt not bring thy problems to church, for six days are sufficient for thee to think upon thy problems, but the church service giveth thee a supreme opportunity to let the peace of God bring thee insight for thy intellectual processes.
8. Thou shalt not bring ill will to church, for the flow of spiritual power is effectively blocked by harboring a grudge against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt practice the art of spiritual contemplation by the daily use of Scripture reading and prayer so that thou be not a stranger to the God whose Presence thou canst enter in the sanctuary.
10. Thou shalt go to church expectantly, for great things have happened to those who worship in spirit and truth -- and the spiritual miracle can happen unto thee according to thy faith.

-- copied from Benjamin F. Swartz --

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
April 1 - 3	Fairview Church Oxford, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
April 3 - 8	West Broad Street Wedowee, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
April 18-22	Hopkinsville, OH	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
April 29 - May 1	Owens Rd. Church Prattville, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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BOBBY'S PRAYER

*Dear Father, there is this other boy
tonight
Who's praying to a god that's made
of wood:
He asks it to take care of him tonight
And love him -- but it won't do any
good.*

*He is so far I cannot make him hear.
I'd call to him and tell him if I could
That You'd take care of him, that You
are near
And love him -- but his god is made
of wood.*

*I know he'd ask You if he only knew,
I know he'd love to know You if he
could.*

*Dear God, take care of him and love
him, too,
The other boy whose god is made of
wood.*

-- Selected --