

A photograph of a man in a dark suit, white shirt, and striped tie, holding a large, thick Bible. The man is shown from the chest down, with his hands resting on the Bible. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The entire image is framed by a decorative border consisting of a blue outer band and a white inner band with circular motifs at the corners.

BACK TO THE BIBLE

Willie Alvarenga

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BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

It is indeed a great honor to be part of this gospel meeting. I thank my heavenly Father for the opportunity to preach His Word. I also thank the elders for allowing this unprofitable servant to come and proclaim the Word of God to you. May God be with us as we study from His Word!

As we begin this gospel meeting; I want to lay before you my responsibility as a gospel preacher. I promise to speak only the Word of God; for this is what the Bible tells me in I Peter 4:11 "If any man speaks, let him speak according to the oracles of God". It is my conviction that we, as gospel preachers, must speak only what God has told us to preach (I Kings 22:14). We have a responsibility to speak only that which is in harmony with sound doctrine (II Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1).

But, at the same time, you, as members of the body of Christ, and as visitors, also have a great responsibility to search the Scriptures to make sure that what you are hearing from me is the Word of God (Acts 17:11). You need to take the time to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good (I Thessalonians 5:21). We live in difficult times today; and therefore, we must try the spirits to see whether they are from God (I John 4:1). I will try to emphasize these great truths throughout the following days. I want people to have confidence in the preaching of God's Word and not on my opinions, or what I think or like. I'm pretty sure that none of you came this day to hear what I like, but to hear what God says. And, once again, I promise to tell you a "Thus saith the Lord".

Our central theme for this meeting is: "Back To The Bible". Yes, brethren, it is imperative that we, as children of God, go back to the Bible and do things the way God would have us to do. I am convinced that today, more than ever, the people of God, and the entire world, need to go back to the Word of God. This is the only way to survive and not be lost.

Therefore, we will emphasize the need to go back to the Bible in all of the different areas that we will discuss in this gospel meeting. It is my prayer that those of you who have not been living the Christian life the way God would have it, to please repent from this evil action, and return to God to be saved. Also, if you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, we encourage you to do so, before it is eternally too late.

On our first lesson entitled: “**Back to the Bible concerning our knowledge of God’s Word**”, let me discuss with you, a few principles that I believe we need to keep in mind. Concerning this topic, I want to present to you the following points:

1. Our present reality concerning our knowledge of God’s Word.
2. Why knowledge of God’s Word is so important.
3. Principles that can help us to increase our knowledge of God’s Word.

These three points will help us to take seriously the study of God’s Word. May we go back to the Bible, and be known once again, as people of the Book. I believe we have the potential to accomplish this.

Let us notice our first point:

OUR PRESENT REALITY CONCERNING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WORD

There is a famine in the land concerning the knowledge of God’s Word. This is what the prophet Hosea said. Today, many Christians are not interested in the study of God’s Word. Many Christians are not interested in memorizing Bible verses; many are not interested in reading the Bible; many are not interested in teaching the Scriptures to their children; many have not taken the time to be familiar with the Bible. I believe that many Christians have come to a point in which they are not able to teach the Word of God to other Christians, or to the lost of this world. Many Christians have come to a point in which they cannot defend the Word of God against those who teach error. Many Christians have not taken the time to strengthen their faith so that they can be firmly planted in the Word of God. I believe that this is a sad reality we are living today.

We must do whatever it takes to make sure that this does not happen to us. God will not be pleased with those who have no desire to grow in knowledge of His Word.

WHY IS OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WORD IMPORTANT?

Please consider some of the reasons why the knowledge of God’s Word is so important. I also ask you to please share this information with your friends and family. All of us need to be aware of the importance of knowing the Word of God.

Reasons why knowing God's Word is important:

1. God expects us to grow in knowledge (II Peter 3:18; II Timothy 2:15)

It is important for us to acknowledge the fact that God would have us to grow in the knowledge of His Word. A careful analysis of II Peter 3:18 concerning the word “grow” reveals some interesting truths. One of these truths is the fact that this word is found in the imperative mood. This means that God requires, commands us to grow in the knowledge of His Word. Also, the other truth that we learn from this passage is the fact that this word is found in the present tense. This means that God expects us to continually grow in knowledge. This is an ongoing process in which we, as Christians, must be involved.

Also, in II Timothy 2:15, the word “give diligence” denotes the act of striving to do what God would have us to do. We as Christians must have an attitude of diligence concerning the study of God's Word.

Not to obey what God says will result in an attitude that is not well pleasing in the sight of God. If He expects us to grow in knowledge, then, it is our responsibility to do just that. The question is: Are you obeying this command of growing in the knowledge of God's Word? It is my prayer that we are!

2. Knowledge of God's Word helps us to not be destroyed (Hosea 4:6, 14; Isaiah 5:13)

This is one important reason of why you and I must strive to grow in knowledge of God's Word. This knowledge will help us to be prepared to defeat our enemy. Satan wants to destroy us (I Peter 5:8; Matthew 13:39). He wants us to be ignorant in the knowledge of God's Word. He knows that if we are not knowledgeable in the Scriptures, this will make his job a lot easier, that is, as far as destroying us is concerned.

The prophet Hosea said it clearly. A lack of knowledge of God's Word will cause us to be destroyed. Sadly to say, many Christians have become a casualty in the Lord's army. The reason for this: Lack of knowledge and preparation from God's Word. Also, the prophet Isaiah said that a lack of knowledge will result in captivity. How many Christians do we know that are no longer faithful to God? I know several people that once were faithful, but now are members of the denominations. The reason for this: Lack of knowledge from God's Word. Brethren, this may happen to you, and may happen to me. If we are not careful, we may end up being a slave of error and of Satan (I Corinthians 10:12).

3. Knowledge of God's Word helps us to not sin against God (Psalm 119:11).

One of the strongest weapons that a Christian has is the Word of God. Our Father describes His Word as:

- ✚ The sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrew 4:12)
- ✚ Fire & Hammer (Jeremiah 22:29)

God's Word has the power of helping us not to sin against God. This is what David said in Psalm 119:11. Therefore, if this is the case, then, it follows that every Christian who wants to defeat sin must keep the Word of God in his heart. This is the only way to be more than conquerors over sin and Satan.

How did Jesus defeat Satan when he was tempted at the wilderness? A careful reading of Matthew 4:1-12 reveals that God's Word has the power to defeat Satan. Jesus made reference to the Scriptures in order for Him to be more than conqueror over Satan. Brethren, we can do the same. We can make reference to the Bible in our daily living, and by doing so, we can overcome every single temptation that comes our way.

The reason why many Christians are falling in sin is because they are not taking the time to keep the Word of God in their hearts. May I encourage each and every one of us to study and keep the Bible in our hearts? Brethren, this is the only way to survive the attacks of Satan.

4. Knowledge of God's Word helps us to be saved (James 1:21; II Timothy 3:15).

We must be knowledgeable in the Scriptures because this knowledge, when put into practice, can help us to be saved. God's Word has the power of being able to save us. This is what James, the brother of Jesus, said: "Received with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). If this is the case, if God's Word can save us, then it follows that we must strive to the best of our ability to know God's Word. The study of God's Word can help us to be wise unto salvation. Only God's Word can show us the way to salvation. Men cannot do this (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; 16:25).

Therefore, let us consider this important reason of why we must grow in the knowledge of God's Word. Do you want to be saved? If your answer is yes, then, please consider every possible way of how you can know God's Word. Let us also share God's Word with others so that they also, may have an opportunity to be saved.

5. Knowledge of God's Word helps us to be ready to give an answer and refute error (I Peter 3:15)

This is another important reason of why we must grow in knowledge of God's Word. Error abounds in this world. We have to fight against the forces of Satan. These evil forces can be seen in the following: Atheism, Gnosticism, Materialism, Unbelief, Humanism, etc. We as Christians must be prepared to give an answer concerning what God thinks in His Word. Are we prepared to deal with Atheists and Humanists? Are we prepared to give an answer of the hope that is within us? (I Peter 3:15). Are we prepared to answer the arguments that are being made against the essentiality of baptism? Are we prepared to teach people about the one true church? Are we prepared to teach people about the New Testament worship?

Brethren, we must take seriously the study of God's Word. God expects us to be ready to give an answer. May God help us to study His Word in such a way that we grow in the knowledge of it.

Having consider some of the reasons why we must grow in the knowledge of God's Word; let us now consider some advices of what you and I can do to accomplish the task of knowing God's Word to the fullest.

THINGS WE CAN DO TO GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD

1. We must have the proper attitude towards the Scriptures (Psalm 119:97; Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16; I Peter 2:1-2).

What is your attitude concerning the study of God's Word? Is the study of God's Word a priority for you? Brethren, we must have the proper attitude towards the Scriptures. We must love and cherish the Word of God in our lives. If this attitude abides in our hearts, we will be able to make the time to study and learn God's Word.

2. We must take time to read the Bible (I Timothy 4:13).

How often do you read the Bible? When was the last time you picked up your Bible and spend some time reading it? The Bible commands us to read the Scriptures (I Timothy 4:13). Let us spend some time with God, studying His Word. But, at the same time, don't just read the Bible, but also make plans to be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only (James 1:22). Notice the following poem:

“READING THE BIBLE”¹

It is **ONE** thing to “read the Bible through;”

¹ Johnny Ramsey, *“Back To Bible Preaching”* (Abilene, TX: Quality Publications, 1982) p. 16

ANOTHER thing to read to **LEARN** and **DO!**
SOME read it as their duty”—once a week,
But no instructions from the Bible seek.

One reads to “bring himself into repute”
By showing others how he “can dispute!”

While **OTHERS** read “because their neighbors do;”
To see how **LONG** ’twill take to “read it through.”

SOME read it for the wonders that are there—
How David killed a lion, and a bear.
While **OTHERS** read with uncommon care—
HOPING to find “some contradiction” there!

One reads “with father’s specks upon his head,”
And “sees” the things just as his father **SAID!**
Some read to “prove” a pre-adopted creed,
Hence understanding but **LITTLE** what they read;

For every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that “all important” end!
So **MANY** people in these latter days
Have read the Bible in so **MANY** ways

That **FEW** can tell which “system” is the best;
For **EVERY** party contradicts the rest!
But read it **PRAYERFULLY**, and you will see
Although **MEN** contradict, God’s **WORD AGREES!**

For what the early Bible prophets wrote
We find that Christ and His apostle’s quote.
SO TRUST NO CREED THAT TREMBLES TO RECALL
WHAT HAS BEEN PENNED BY ONE AND VERIFIED BY ALL!

Let us read the Bible with the intent of learning as much as we can. Ezra read the Scriptures (Ezra 7:10); Jesus read the Scriptures (Luke 4:16-17). And we, as Christians, should do the same!

3. We must take time to memorize the Scriptures (Psalm 119:11, 16; Deuteronomy 11:18).

How many Scriptures have you memorized so far? Do you love the Scriptures so much to the point that you commit them to memory? You, as a Bible teacher, do you encourage your students to memorize the Scriptures? We, as parents, do we

encourage our children to memorize the Scriptures? It is my prayer that all of us take the time to memorize the Word of God.

Memorizing God's Word

God's Word, Holy Word
We must treasure in our hearts

For this is what the Bible
Tells us all the time.

With much prayer and meditation
We can accomplish this holy task

Of committing to memory
The oracles of God.

Our minds have the ability
To memorize the Word of God

So put aside all of the excuses
And start memorizing the Law of God.
Willie Alvarenga

Brethren, we need children mighty in the Scriptures. We need young people mighty in the Scriptures. This will help them to survive in a world full of error. We need more elders mighty in the Scriptures so that they can refute error when this is presented by those who have no respect for the authority of the Scriptures. We need more preachers mighty in the Scriptures so that they can fill their sermons with Bible, instead of their opinions. We need to go back to the Bible and be known, once again, as people of the Book.

4. We must spend money buying tools that will help us to understand God's Word.

How many Bible dictionaries do you have at home? How many Bibles, Commentaries, Lexicons, and tools that can help you in your study of God's Word do you have at home? Brethren, we must be willing to spend money buying those tools that can help us to understand the Word of God. It is interesting how Christians do not think twice about buying a CD that contains worldly music, but will not spend a few dollars buying a Bible dictionary. How many parents buy things that will not

help them grow in the knowledge of God's Word, but refuse to buy a Bible for their children when they ask for one? Brethren, this is not right. We must be willing to spend money buying those tools that will equip us to be better prepared to face our enemy—Satan.

5. We must pray to God for wisdom (James 1:5-6).

When was the last time you prayed to God asking for wisdom? The Bible says that if we pray for wisdom, God will give it to you! We must pray to God and ask Him to create in us an attitude of humility to accept our wrong doings, and to change for the better. I believe that through prayer and the study of God's Word, we can become knowledgeable in the Scriptures. Therefore, let us take time to pray to our heavenly Father, and ask Him to help us have the right attitude towards the study of His Word.

CONCLUSION

It is my prayer that God continues to help us to grow in the knowledge of His Word. Brethren, let us go back to the Bible concerning the knowledge of God's Word. May these truths that have been emphasized in this lesson be in your heart always! God bless you!

BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING THE NEED FOR EVANGELISM

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Proverbs 11:30; Daniel 12:3; Titus 2:11; I Timothy 2:4; II Peter 3:9. All of these passages emphasize the great need to take heed to one of our responsibilities called: Evangelism. Our topic for this lesson is: Back to the Bible concerning the need for evangelism. Oh how I wish that every single Christian in this world heard this lesson today. There is a great need to go back to the Bible concerning the Great Commission, which sadly to say, has become the Great Omission in many congregations.

Brethren, it is the purpose of this lesson to encourage all of us to be more evangelistic in spirit. This is the kind of Christians that God would have us to be. In this lesson, we will discuss several reasons why you and I need to go back to the Bible and preach the gospel to every creature. Consider the following reasons:

We need to go back to the Bible concerning evangelism because...

1. It is a command from God.
2. It is our responsibility to care for the souls of men.
3. It is the only way to accomplish church growth.
4. We have what it takes to do it.

It is my prayer that you will consider all of these reasons carefully. May all of us be obedient to God's desire concerning evangelism. With this in mind, let us consider the first reason why we must go back to the Bible concerning the need for evangelism:

THE DIVINE COMMAND

Yes brethren, evangelism is neither an option nor a suggestion given by God, but a command to be obeyed. This is what we learn in the pages of the New Testament. The passages already quoted establish the fact that evangelism is a work to be done by Christians. When God says something once (Mark 16:15), it is important. When God says something more than once (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8), then, we must take whatever God commands seriously. He wants us to obey this command because He is interested in the souls of men. According to the Bible, God desires for all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4; II Peter 3:9; Ezekiel 33:11). This truth that God wants people to know is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the only power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16; John 8:32).

It is imperative that we, as Christians, remember who we are. And, according to the Bible, we are fishers of men (Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17; Luke 5:10). We have been given a command to go out and reach out to the lost. Therefore, we must get up, and start looking for souls the way Jesus did (Luke 19:10). Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. This should be our priority! Are we being obedient to this command? Remember, not to obey will bring serious consequences (Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:48).

Also, let us consider...

WE MUST CARE FOR THE SOULS OF MEN

Yes brethren, we have a great responsibility to care for the souls of men. God has commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:31). There is no greater manifestation of love than to share the saving message of salvation with our neighbors. If we want to be in heaven some day, then, we must wish the same for our friends and family members.

Someone said the following:

“Jesus has no hands but our hands to guide people to Him. Jesus has no feet but our feet to carry the gospel to the lost. Jesus has no mouth but our mouth to tell others what He did on the cross for all men.”

There is a great need to be more like Jesus in respect to evangelism. We must have compassion for the lost (Matthew 9:36-38). The Bible describes the terrible condition of those who have not obeyed the gospel:

They are:

1. Separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2).
2. Slaves to sin (John 8:34).
3. Far from God (Ephesians 2:13-14)
4. Dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1-4)
5. Headed to eternal destruction (Romans 6:23)

These are the horrible conditions which people who have not obeyed the gospel find themselves in. What are we doing to help people change this sad condition? God has given us a responsibility to fulfill. This responsibility consists in teaching the gospel to a lost and dying world. We have the solution to the sin problem. This solution is called the gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16).

If we don't fulfill this responsibility, we will find ourselves having someone singing to us:

“When in the better land, before the bar we stand, how deeply grieved our souls will be; if any lost one there should cry in deep despair, “You never mentioned Him to me. You never mentioned Him to me, You helped me not the light to see; You met me day by day and knew I was astray, yet never mentioned Him to me” (Church Gospel Songs & Hymns, p. 561).

Can you imagine so many people being lost because we did not take our responsibility to preach the gospel seriously? Brethren, let us go back to the Bible and preach the gospel the way God would have us to preach! We have a great responsibility to fulfill, let us not ignore it.

Having considered these points so far; now let us consider another reason why you and I need to go back to the Bible concerning the need for evangelism.

THE ONLY WAY TO ACCOMPLISH CHURCH GROWTH: EVANGELISM

According to the Bible, evangelism is the only way to accomplish church growth. There are many methods and ways that are being presented today in order to accomplish church growth. Most of them are not in harmony with the New Testament teaching concerning church growth. I am convinced that the best method to accomplish this is through the preaching of the gospel. We must go out and teach the lost about what Jesus did for them on the cross. We must get up from our pews and go into the community to proclaim the gospel of Christ. This is the way the early Christians did it; and this is the way we must do it today. The church needs to have a 20/20 vision. This means Acts 20:20, going from house to house preaching the gospel.

As we consider the New Testament, we can see how quickly the church of Christ grew in number. We ask the question: How did they do it? Answer: They went everywhere preaching the Word (Acts 8:4). Let us consider briefly the growth of the church of Christ in the first century:

1. 2:41 – About 3,000
2. 4:4 – 5,000 men
3. 5:14 – The number of the believers multiplied
4. 5:28 – They had filled all of Jerusalem with the gospel of Christ
5. 6:7 – The number of the disciples multiplied
6. 11:24 – Much people were added to the church
7. 12:24 – The Word of God grew and multiplied
8. 17:6 – The world was turned upside down

Why did they accomplish this? I believe they had the right attitude towards evangelism. They considered a Great Commission not a Great Omission. They had compassion for the lost souls of this world. They were convinced that people were lost without the gospel. They wanted to bear much fruit for the Lord. Notice that these brethren went everywhere preaching the Word; even in the midst of persecution. We can see a clear lesson here:

First Century

Acts 8:1-4

21st Century

Persecution = Evangelism

No Persecution = No Evangelism

I am convinced that if these attitudes are not in our hearts; we will never accomplish the same results they had in the first century. Brethren, if we want to grow in number, let us do the same thing. Let us not be ashamed to preach the gospel; even in the midst of persecution. Let us prepare ourselves to go out and teach people about the gospel plan of salvation. Let us continue to invite our friends and family to hear the Word of God. It is my conviction that this is what God would have us to do.

Now, let us consider another very important point from our lesson:

WE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE IT

Yes brethren, we have what it takes to preach the gospel. With God's help, we can go out and proclaim the message of salvation. Notice some of the things that we have in order to accomplish this very important task.

1. We have God's help and protection (Matthew 28:20; John 16:33; Hebrews 13:5).

Preaching the gospel of Christ is not an easy task. Nevertheless, we can do it! Jesus has promised to be with us, even until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). He was with the early Christians, and will be with us if we do His will. Satan will try to discourage us from doing this. But, remember, God is with you (I John 4:4).

2. We have God's Word with us (The Bible, the gospel).

As we go out to preach the gospel, we must realize that we have the Word of God with us. If you have a Bible, then you can teach someone about what Jesus did for them. Teaching the gospel is not difficult. If you notice, the apostle Peter, Paul and others, preached the gospel, which consists in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 1:16). This is the message Peter proclaimed to thousands of people on Pentecost day (Acts 2:22-47). This same message can be proclaimed by us

today. Therefore, be familiar with the gospel message of salvation, and proclaim it to the lost with conviction and love.

3. We must realize that we have Bible tracts, literature and other means to share the gospel.

Today, more than ever, we have so many tracts and literature that we can share with people. All of this literature is available for us. We have no excuse whatsoever to not teach the gospel to the lost. Notice some of the ways we can share the gospel with the lost: We have Television (In Search of the Lord's Way, Gospel Broadcasting Network, The Truth In Love, and many more.), the Internet, Radio, and other Scriptural ways to share the good news of salvation. We can point people to Christ using these teaching tools.

Let us take advantage of these ways to preach the gospel. I'm pretty sure that this is what God would have us to do.

CONCLUSION

In this lesson we have considered the reasons why you and I need to go back to the Bible concerning the need for evangelism. May God give us the wisdom, the desire, and the strength to accomplish this task that is before us. Remember that Jesus came to seek and save the lost. Let us do the same thing through the preaching of the gospel.

BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN HOME

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

How many of us would like to see our children in eternal punishment? How many of us would like to see our families destroyed in eternal punishment? Without any doubt, I know for sure that the answer to these questions is an emphatic NO. All of us want the best for our families. All of us want our families to be in heaven some day. Well, if we really care for our home, then, we must strive to go back to the Bible concerning what God says on the Christian home. What do we mean by a “Christian home”? When you analyze the word “**Christian**”, you learn that a Christian is a person that follows Christ. We find a reference to this word three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16). Therefore, a Christian home is a home that follows Christ, and His will.

Throughout the Bible we have great examples of families who did the will of God. For example, Joshua, a well known man of the Old Testament, once said: “**As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord**” (Joshua 24:15). As a head of the home, he led his family in the right direction. This is the kind of leadership and homes we need today.

Therefore, with this in mind, let us consider a few reasons why you and I need to go back to the Bible concerning the Christian home. Let me share with you the following points:

1. Our present and sad reality concerning some homes.
2. Why we need to go back to the Bible concerning the Christian Home.
3. Ingredients that can help us to have successful homes.

Please consider this lesson carefully, since the destiny of our families depends upon our reaction to the Word of God.

A PRESENT AND SAD REALITY CONCERNING SOME HOMES TODAY

There is no doubt that we are living in difficult times today. All you have to do is watch the news and before you know it, there is information about families in crisis. Most homes have no respect whatsoever concerning the authority of the Scriptures. Most homes today are not following the will of God. I believe that our nation is the way it is

right now because there is no respect for the Word of God. What is it that we are seeing today in most of our homes? Notice the following:

1. No respect for the Word of God.
2. Parents who don't care about their children learning the Word of God.
3. Homes where prayer is not important.
4. Homes where parents are killing their children.
5. Homes where children are killing their parents.
6. Homes where young girls get pregnant at an early age.
7. Homes where immorality prevails.
8. Homes where children have no respect for their parents.
9. Homes where marriages end up in divorce.
10. Homes where husbands and wives are unfaithful one to another

Why is this taking place today? I believe the answer can be summarized in one word "Forsaken". Yes, most families have forsaken God and His Word. When a family departs from the counsel of God, trouble awaits. So, as we can see, our present reality is a sad one.

The question is: what can we do to avoid having our homes destroyed by our enemy Satan? I believe we need to seriously consider going back to reasons why we need to go back to the Bible concerning our homes. Therefore, let us consider a few reasons why we need to go back to the Bible as a home.

REASONS WHY HOMES NEED TO GO BACK TO THE BIBLE

May I ask you to please consider the following reasons why we need to go back to the Bible concerning our Christian homes? I believe that, if we consider this reasons, and apply them to our daily Christian living, we will be able to make it in this world full of sin.

Reasons:

1. Only the Bible can help us save our homes.

Yes brethren, only the Word of God can help us to save our homes. God's Word has the power that we need to overcome Satan. Please notice the power that God's Word has:

1. God's Word has power to overcome sin (Psalm 119:9, 11). When the Word of God is hid in the heart of every member of the home, then, and only then, we can overcome the attacks of Satan. Therefore, we as a family, must strive to the best of our abilities to study and live the Word of God so that we can be

more than conquerors over sin. When the Word of God is present in the lives of our children, then, wise decisions will be made by them. Respect for God will abound in the home.

2. God's Word has the power to make us wise people (Deuteronomy 4:6; II Timothy 3:15). We need more wise people in this world. People who will take the time to think twice before sinning against God. But, only God's Word has the power to make us wise. I have seen throughout the years how so many families have made it through because they kept the Word of God close to their hearts. I've known families where their sons become gospel preachers. I've known families where their daughters marry gospel preachers. I've known families where the Bible is at the center of their homes. I've known families where success is always at the center of their lives. The question is: Why? The answer is simple: They allowed the Word of God to guide their steps in life (Psalm 119:105). If we want to be wise, we must go to God's Word, and consider what she teaches about the home.

2. Only God, through His Word, can bless our homes.

Yes my friends, only God can bless our homes. But, if we depart from Him, He will not bless us; but, if we remain close to Him, He will bless us. God's protection for the home is only promised to those who do His will. Notice the following promises:

1. Psalm 34:19 "Many are the afflictions **of the righteous**, but from all of them, God will deliver him"
2. II Peter 2: "The Lord knows how to deliver **the godly** from temptation..."

We must ask God to bless and protect our homes from the evil one. When was the last time you asked God to protect and bless your children? When was the last time you asked God to bless and protect your wife or husband? We must keep in touch with God so that He may bless and protect our homes.

God has promised to help us:

1. Romans 8:31 "If God is for us, who can be against us?"
2. Hebrews 13:5 "I will never leave you nor forsake you"
3. I Corinthians 15:57 "But thanks be unto God who gives us the victory through Christ"
4. Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who gives us the strength"
5. Exodus 14:14 "God will fight for us..."

Let us have confidence in God. He can bless our homes! Let us consider these reasons why we must go back to the Bible concerning the Christian home.

Now, with this in mind, let us consider some ingredients that can help us to save our homes from destruction.

INGREDIENTS NEEDED FOR A SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN HOME

The following ingredients must be present in our homes in order to be able to survive. Please consider having them in your home, that is, if they are not present at this time.

Ingredients:

1. **Love** for God, one another and His Word (Mark 12:30; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9; Philippians 2:1-4; Psalm 119:97).
2. **Respect** for God and one another.
3. **Knowledge** of God's Word in every member of the family (II Peter 3:18; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Proverbs 22:6).
4. **Holiness** towards God (I Peter 1:15-16; 2:11; Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:8).
5. **Hate** towards sin and the world (I John 2:15-17; James 4:4; Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16; Romans 12:9).
6. **Communication** with God through prayer (I Thessalonians 5:17; Colossians 4:2; Romans 12:22; Matthew 26:41).
7. **Desire** to be in heaven with God (Philippians 3:20; John 14:1-3).

These are only but a few ingredients that you and I can consider from God's Word. If these ingredients are present, then, this will be a sign that we are heading in the right direction. May I encourage each present home to abide in the will of God. This is the only way to make it.

CONCLUSION

May God help us to be in heaven some day! May God help us to consider this information so that our homes may be blessed by Him. Therefore, let us consider going back to the Bible concerning the Christian home.

BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

Titus 2:1; II Timothy 1:13; I Peter 4:11; II John 9-11; I Timothy 4:1. All of these passages help us to understand that there is such a thing as sound doctrine, and false doctrine. Based on this, we ask the question: Does it matter what one believes so long as he or she is sincere? Does doctrine really matter as long as you are sincere? Most people are answering in the negative saying that doctrines does not matter. Nevertheless, when we consider what the Bible teaches, we realize that doctrines really matters. Why? The reason is simple: what we believe in this life will determine where we will spend eternity.

As we consider the pages of the New Testament, we realize that there is such thing as sound doctrine, and false doctrine. The Bible tells us that there is the doctrine of God, Christ, and the doctrines of men (Matthew 15:7-9; I Corinthians 14:37).

Now, having said this, let us consider the lesson entitled: Back to the Bible concerning the importance of Sound Doctrine. Therefore, it is the purpose of this lesson to discuss the following points:

1. What is sound doctrine
2. Reasons why sound doctrine is important
3. What the church can do to avoid falling into false doctrine

May God help us and give us the wisdom that we need to do His will. May the Lord help us to stay faithful to His teaching found in the Scriptures.

WHAT IS SOUND DOCTRINE?

The Greek Word for sound doctrine is **hugiaino didaskalia**. The word sound denotes that which has not been corrupted, and is healthy. The word doctrine or teaching refers to the teachings of God in the Bible. Therefore, when we talk about sound doctrine we are talking about that teaching which has not been perverted by the doctrines of men.

A SAD REALITY

Sadly to say, many today have departed from the sound teachings of the New Testament. Many are teaching error in the following ways:

1. Instrumental music during worship assemblies
2. Worship of the church
3. Dedication of Babies
4. Handclapping during singing
5. Women leading worship services (praying, teaching)
6. The Lord's Supper on Saturday instead of Sunday
7. Fellowship with denominations
8. Baptism not essential to salvation
9. Marriage, divorce and remarriage

These are some of the things that are taking place in many congregations of the Lord's church. The Bible speaks clearly concerning these perversions that are taking place nowadays.

We, as the Lord's church, have a great responsibility to remain faithful to the teachings of the New Testament concerning worship and many other aspects of the doctrine of Christ. With this in mind, let us take a look at some of the reasons why sound doctrine is important, and why you and I must remain faithful to God.

SOUND DOCTRINE IS IMPORTANT

The Word of God provides several reasons why sound doctrine is important. May we take God's Word seriously and consider very carefully these reasons.

SOUND DOCTRINE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT COMES FROM GOD

Yes brethren, sound doctrine comes from God as we see in the pages of the New Testament. The Bible tells us that God's Word is inspired and therefore, we can surely come to the conclusion that sound doctrine comes from God. The following passages show us the truth about the Bible being the Word of God.

1. **II Tim. 3:16-17** Every Scripture is inspired of God.
2. **II Peter 1:20-21** Holy men of God spoke being moved by the Holy Spirit.
3. **II Cor. 2:13** Words taught by the Spirit.
4. **I Cor. 14:37** What Paul wrote were the commandments of God.

5. **John 17:17** Thy Word is Truth.
6. **Psalms 119:89** forever is Thy Word settled in Heaven.
7. **Psalms 119:160** the sum of Thy Word is Truth.
8. **Jeremiah 2:1** The Word of the Lord came to me saying.
9. **Exodus 5:1** Thus saith the Lord...

Therefore, since it is the case that the Bible came from God, and it is the Word of God, we can come to the conclusion that we do not need any other book that claims to be the Word of God. The Bible of the Jehovah's Witnesses did not come from God. The book of Mormon did not come from God. Any other book that claims to be inspired must be rejected. We do not need the Bible plus other books that claim to be the Word of God in order for us to understand the will of God. The Bible is sufficient for us, and we do not need any other books of men.

Brethren, it is imperative that we understand this truth from God. We must realize that the Bible is the Word of God. There is no error in the pages of the Bible. Therefore, sound doctrine is important because it comes from God. All teachings that are contrary to the Bible come from men, but not from God.

SOUND DOCTRINE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE NOT OBEYING IT WILL BRING SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Yes brethren, not to obey the doctrine of Christ will bring serious consequences. There are many passages that establish this very truth. But, the question is: what are the serious consequences of not obeying the doctrine of Christ. Notice what the Bible says about this.

1. Not to obey sound doctrine will result in a person not having the Father or the Son (II John 9-11).
2. Not to obey sound doctrine will result in a person worshiping God in vain (**Matthew 15:7-9**).
3. Not to obey sound doctrine will result in a person being a cursed (**Galatians 1:6-9**).
4. Not to obey sound doctrine will result in a person being lost in eternity (**Matthew 7:21-23**).

These are serious consequences that a person must consider before trying to depart from the teachings of the Bible. Brethren, our souls will be in danger if we do not obey the sound doctrine of Christ.

Do we want to experience these terrible consequences? Do we want to be lost in eternal punishment for not obeying the sound doctrine of Christ? If your answer is no to each of these questions, then I urge you to please consider not departing from the teachings of Christ. Let us be faithful to the teachings of the New Testament.

SOUND DOCTRINE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT TEACHES US HOW TO REFUTE ERROR

Only sound doctrine can help us to refute error. False doctrine cannot remain standing because it is not the doctrine of God. Please consider how sound doctrine helps us to refute error:

1. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error of salvation by faith alone (**James 2:17-26; Gal 5:6**).
2. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error of baptism not being essential to salvation (**Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; I Pet. 3:21**).
3. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error that babies are born in sin (**Ez. 18:4, 20; Mark 10:14**).
4. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error that once you are saved, you are always saved (**I Co. 9:27; Rev. 2:10; Ga. 5:4; Js 5:19-20; 2Pt 2:21-22; John 15:2, 6**).
5. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error that worldliness is acceptable (**I John 2:15-17; He. 11:24-25; Rom. 12:2; 13:14; Ga. 5:16; I Pet. 2:11; II Co. 6:17**).
6. Sound doctrine helps us to refute the error that the Bible is not inspired (**2 Ti. 3:16; 2 P. 1:20-21**).
7. Sound doctrine help us to refute the error that the Bible cannot be understood (**Eph. 3:4; 5:17; John 8:32**).
8. Sound doctrines helps us to refute the error that Christ is not deity (**John 1:1, 14; 8:58; I John 5:20**).
9. Sound doctrine helps us to refute the error that the church is not important (**Acts 2:47; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23; 1:4; Matthew 16:18**).
10. Illustration: Crispus was not baptized in **Acts 18:8** (Answer **I Cor. 1:14**) Crispus was baptized!

Therefore, as we can see, sound doctrine can help any Christian refute error. Let us remember that we, as the people of God, must be always ready to give an answer (**I Peter 3:15**). **In order for us to be able to refute error with sound doctrine we must...**

1. **I Thess. 5:17** Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good.
2. **II Tim. 2:15** Study, handling aright the Word of truth (Gr. Orthotomeo from orthos "straight" and temno "to cut" - lit. to cut straight).
3. **II Pet. 3:18** Grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
4. **Psalms 119:97** Love God's Word.
5. **I Pet. 2:2** Desire the pure milk of the Word.
6. **James 1:5** Pray for wisdom.
7. **Acts 18:24** Be powerful in the Scriptures.
8. **James 1:22** Most important, be a doer of the Word!

Therefore, Sound doctrine is important because it help us to refute error. Let us take the study of God's Word seriously so that we can be ready to refute error at any time.

WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO IN ORDER TO AVOID FALLING INTO FALSE DOCTRINES?

This is a very important question that each of us need to consider. What are some of the things that we, as members of the body of Christ, can do to avoid perverting the teachings of the New Testament? Let me suggest a few things we can do.

1. Let us have respect for the authority of the Scriptures (Colossians 3:17).
2. Let us conform to the simple teachings of the New Testament on worship, salvation, etc.
3. Let us study the Bible to be able to handle aright the Word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).
4. Let us grow in the knowledge of God's Word (II Peter 3:18; I Peter 3:15).
5. Let us not be deceived by the teachings of men (Colossians 2:8; I John 4:1).
6. Let us teach on the importance of sound doctrine more often (Titus 2:1).
7. Let us teach on the fundamentals of the faith, so that our people may be strong in the Word of God.

May we, as the body of Christ, consider these principles very carefully; doing this will help us to not go beyond what has been written. Let us remember that only the faithful to the teachings of the New Testament will be in heaven some day. Will you be among the saved ones? I truly hope so!

CONCLUSION

In this lesson we have considered why sound doctrine is important. May God help us to go back to the Bible, and respect the teachings of God found in the Holy Scriptures. May God keep us away from drifting away from the teachings that lead to salvation. May we remain faithful to the Word of God!

BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING HOW TO BE SAVED FROM SIN

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

Yes brethren, the world needs to go back to the Bible concerning what a person must do to be saved from sin. The subject of salvation is a very controversial one. Why is this the case, some one may ask? Well, there is so much that is being said concerning what a person must do to be saved from sin. For example, the following error has been taught by many concerning salvation:

Denominations say that in order to be saved, one must...

1. Accept Jesus as your personal savior
2. You must pray Jesus into your heart
3. Faith alone will save you
4. Just confess Jesus as your savior and you will be saved
5. Accept the Lordship of Jesus and you will be saved
6. Touch the radio and pray, and you will be saved
7. Send your contribution and the Lord will give you salvation
8. There is nothing you can do to be saved from sin, Jesus did it all
9. Flip your headlights on and off to show that you are being saved

These are some of the errors that have been taught concerning what a person must do to be saved. The question that we should consider is: What does the Bible teach concerning salvation from sin? With this in mind, let us consider in this lesson several points:

1. The need to go back to the Bible concerning what a person must do to be saved from sin.
2. The Bible's teaching concerning what a person must do to be saved from sin.
3. The need to obey today, not tomorrow.

Let us learn as much as we can from this lesson. This will help us to be ready to give an answer concerning the subject of salvation.

THE NEED TO GO BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING WHAT A PERSON MUST DO TO BE SAVED

As we have said, there is a great need to go back to the Bible concerning the subject of salvation. There is so much error that is being taught on this. The question is: Why must we go back to the Bible concerning salvation? Let me suggest a few reasons why:

1. **There is so much confusion concerning salvation** — we already pointed out that there is so much error being taught concerning salvation. People are confused because one preacher teaches something about salvation, and the other teaches something else. People are confused about who is right on the subject of salvation. Many people do not want to obey the gospel because they are confused. Satan knows that if he can get people to be confused about salvation, this will cause them to be lost. Satan knows that Jesus is the door to salvation (John 10:9). Therefore, he has created many doors / plans of salvation to confused people. But, people need to know that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (I Corinthians 14:33). Man is trying to confused people about salvation; but God says in His Word that you can know the truth, in order to be saved (John 8:32). What people need to do is go back to the Bible and learn what God says about salvation; not what man teaches. Man can compared what God says, with what man is teaching today. You can pick up your Bible and learn about the plan of salvation that God has stipulated in His Word. Later on in this lesson we will consider what God says about salvation.
2. **We are commanded to teach what God says; not what man says** — we can clearly see this throughout the Scriptures. We are commanded to teach the Word of God, not the doctrines of man. The apostle Peter said: “If any man speaks, let him speak according to the Word of God...” (I Peter 4:11). We are commanded to preach the gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15); we are commanded to preach the Word (II Timothy 4:2); we are commanded to speak what God says (Jonah 3:2; I Kings 22:14). We need to take heed to what God says in His Word. If everyone was to obey this, trust me, everyone will be teaching the truth about salvation. But, since this is not the case, we can clearly see that man has decided to teach his doctrine, but not the doctrine of Christ, concerning salvation. It is imperative that we realize the serious consequences of not teaching the Word of God in truth. Paul said: “Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel of Christ” (I Corinthians 9:16). Friends, woe is unto all those who are not preaching the correct plan of salvation. Such people will be lost in eternal punishment. People need to know what God says about salvation.

These are two reasons why we need to go back to the Bible and teach people what they must do to be saved from sin. Now let us consider our following point:

THE BIBLE'S TEACHING CONCERNING WHAT A PERSON MUST DO TO BE SAVED

MAN CAN UNDERSTAND GOD'S WILL CONCERNING SALVATION

God has spoken very clearly concerning salvation. As I pointed out, God is not the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). He has told us exactly what a person must do to be saved. On this matter, let me suggest to you that the Bible teaches that we can know the truth concerning salvation. There are some that argue that a person cannot understand or be completely sure about his or her salvation. I'm here to tell you that this is false teaching. Any diligent student of the Word can understand God's will concerning salvation. I know that there are some things difficult to understand (II Peter 3:18). I know that there are secret things that belong to God (Deuteronomy 29:29). Nevertheless, the subject of salvation can be understood.

For example, Jesus said "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). This passage argues that we can know the truth. The apostle Paul said that God's Word can be understood (Ephesians 3:4; 5:16-17). Man is able to tell the difference between Satan's plan of salvation, and God's plan of salvation. God has given us the ability to understand His Word. With this in mind, let us take a look at the Bible and learn about Jesus, and see how in Him we can find salvation.

JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO BE SAVED FROM SIN

The Bible teaches that salvation is found in Jesus. The following passages help us to understand this truth.

1. John 10:9 He is the door to salvation
2. John 14:6 He is the way to salvation
3. Acts 4:12 There is no salvation outside of Christ
4. Romans 8:1 Salvation is only in Christ
5. II Corinthians 5:17 New life is in Christ
6. I John 5:11 Eternal life is in Christ
7. II Timothy 2:10 Salvation in Christ
8. Ephesians 1:7 Redemption is in Christ
9. Hebrews 5:9 Jesus is the author of eternal salvation
10. John 1:29 Jesus is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
11. I Peter 1:18-20 We are redeemed by His blood

All of these passages serve the purpose of conveying the truth that salvation is found only in Christ Jesus. Therefore, in order for someone to be saved, he or she must be in Christ. With this in mind, let us consider our following point:

GOD HAS A PLAN TO SAVE MEN FROM HIS SINS

Sadly to say, there are many today that teach error concerning salvation. There are some that argue that a person can be saved in any way he wants to. They argue that salvation is like coming to a church building, in which you can come to the building by driving through any street that you desire, and still get to your destination. I'm here to tell you that this is NOT the case. God only has one plan to save man from his sins. This plan is called "Obedience to the gospel".

The Bible teaches that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). If anyone wants to be saved, he or she must obey the gospel of Christ. But, the question is: What is the gospel of Christ? Well, according to the Scriptures...

1. The gospel is the message that Jesus sent His disciples to preach (Mark 16:15).
2. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).
3. The gospel consists in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

This is the message God has chosen to save man from sin. This is the message that man must obey in order to be in heaven some day.

HOW WERE MEN SAVED FROM SIN IN THE FIRST CENTURY?

This is a good question that can be answer in the pages of the New Testament. You and I can go to the pages of the Bible and learn what those people in the first century did in order that they may be saved. So, as we study the New Testament, especially the book of Acts, which is known as the book of conversions, we can clearly see what men did in order to be saved.

According to the Book of Acts:

1. The gospel was preached by the apostles and the early Christians (Acts 2:22-25, 32, 36-41)
2. Man heard the gospel of Christ (Acts 2:37)
3. Man believed in the gospel (Acts 2:37; 8:12; 18:8)
4. Man repented from his sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30)
5. Man confessed Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10)
6. Man was baptized for the forgiveness of his sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

There was not a single person that was instructed to pray the sinner's prayer in order that they may be saved. Every one of them was instructed to obey the gospel of Christ. They did so by hearing, believing, repenting, confessing and being baptized into Christ. This is exactly what the whole world needs to teach concerning the plan of salvation.

THERE ARE BLESSINGS WHEN YOU OBEY THE GOSPEL!

Yes my friends, there are many blessings when you obey the gospel of Christ. The Bible teaches that all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). This is the reason why people need to obey the gospel of Christ. When you are baptized for the remission of sins, you are also baptized in order to be in Christ (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:4). Everyone who obeyed the gospel in the book of Acts was added to the church, which is the body of Christ (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23; Colossians 1:18). With this in mind, let me show you a few of those blessings:

1. Forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14)
2. Reconciliation (Ephesians 2:13-16)
3. A place where there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1)
4. A new life (II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:4)
5. Hope of eternal life in heaven (Titus 1:2; I John 5:11; John 14:1-3)
6. A privilege to be part of the family of God (Ephesians 2:19)

These are only but a few blessings that we enjoy in Christ Jesus when we obey the gospel. Each of these blessings can be yours if you only give your life to Christ, in obedience to the gospel. Having said this, now let us encourage you to obey the gospel today, and not tomorrow, for tomorrow may not come.

YOU MUST OBEY TODAY!

The Bible teaches that obedience to the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, must be done today and not tomorrow. There are passages in the Bible that show man the need to obey today. For example, the apostle Paul said: "Today is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:1-2). The Hebrews writer said: "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7; 4:7).

WHY MUST YOU OBEY THE GOSPEL TODAY?

The Bible gives us the answer to this question. Notice the following information which helps us to understand why we must obey today, and not tomorrow:

1. **You may depart from this life any moment** (James 4:14; Job 14:1-2; I Samuel 20:3; II Samuel 14:14). This may be your last day upon this earth. Are you ready to depart? What if you died tonight? Will you enter heaven some day? These are questions that you must ask yourself each day. Many people made plans yesterday, but are no longer alive today. We must be ready at all times, for our departure may be at any moment.
2. **Jesus may come again any moment** (Matthew 24:36, 44; I Thessalonians 5:1-2). The Bible teaches that Christ may come at any moment. When He comes, everything will be over. All opportunities to obey the gospel will be over. Please, do not wait until this happens, and then you realized that it is too late. Obey the gospel of Christ today, before it is eternally too late.

These are two strong reasons why people need to obey the gospel today. May God help you to consider these reasons, before it is eternally too late.

CONCLUSION

In this lesson we have considered the reasons why we must go back to the Bible concerning salvation. May God help us to make the proper preparations to be ready to meet the Lord some day. Let us go back to the Bible, and teach this information to a lost and dying world. Let us be committed to the teachings of the New Testament concerning salvation. Let us help people not be confused about the subject of salvation, and let us all teach the same thing.

BACK TO THE BIBLE CONCERNING OUR FAITHFULNESS TO GOD

By Willie Alvarenga

INTRODUCTION

Revelation 2:10; 12:11; I Corinthians 15:58; II Timothy 4:7-8; Genesis 6:22. Each of these passages teach us about faithfulness; something every Christian must strive to practice. It is my prayer that all of us will consider the need to go back to the Bible concerning our faithfulness to God. Therefore, in this lesson, we will consider very carefully the following points:

1. Our present reality concerning faithfulness to God
2. The command to be faithful
3. The why of faithfulness
4. The how of faithfulness

Let us consider what the Bible teaches on the subject of faithfulness. May we remember that without faithfulness we will not be able to enter heaven some day (Hebrews 12:14). So, with this in mind, let us consider our first point:

OUR PRESENT REALITY CONCERNING FAITHFULNESS

What is our present reality concerning the church's faithfulness to God? How faithful are we to God? How much do we strive to maintain our faithfulness to God in this world full of sin? Sadly to say, many today are not faithful to God. This horrible attitude happens in the area of worship, where many Christians forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1-4). Many Christians prefer to go somewhere else, instead of coming together to worship God. On one occasion a father took his family to a baseball game. The following Sunday, the local preacher spoke to him and asked him why they were absent last Sunday. The father replied: "we went to a baseball game. But, don't worry, as we were driving down to the park, I kept telling my kids that God is important and that we must obey him". Sadly to say, this father was not being faithful to God in his example to his family.

Others are unfaithful in doctrine. Many have perverted the plan of salvation, the worship of the New Testament, and many other things that are being practice at this time by many congregations. Instead of being faithful, they have become disobedient like the people of Israel in the Old Testament.

Therefore, as we can see, many today are unfaithful to God. Why is this happening? Well, I believe that a lack of respect for the authority of the Scriptures causes people to become unfaithful. Also, a lack of reverence for God causes people to become unfaithful. May God help us to stay away from these sinful attitudes.

THE COMMAND TO BE FAITHFUL

There are many passages in the Bible that exhorts us to be faithful in all of our ways. It is imperative that we, as the people of God, consider very carefully what God says concerning faithfulness. Many of the passages already mentioned speak to the fact that we must be faithful to God.

1. He expects us to be faithful in His doctrine (I Corinthians 4:6; II John 9-11; Revelation 22:18-19; Colossians 3:17).
2. He expects us to be faithful in our worship to Him (John 4:23-24; Colossians 3:17).
3. He expects us to be faithful in our preaching of His Word (Jeremiah 23:28)
4. He expects us to be faithful in holiness (I Peter 1:15-18; Leviticus 11:44; Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16; I Peter 2:11; I John 2:15-18; James 4:4)
5. He expects us to be faithful even in the midst of difficulties (Revelation 2:10; 3:5; Acts 8:4)

God expects His people to be faithful in all of their ways. We cannot share our faithfulness with God and Satan. Jesus said it very plainly: We cannot serve God and Satan (Matthew 6:24). Therefore, the command to be faithful can be seen very clearly in the pages of the Holy Book. Are we taking heed to these exhortations?

Now, with this in mind, let us take the time to consider another very important point: The why of faithfulness.

THE “WHY” OF FAITHFULNESS

Do we have any reasons in the Bible of why we must be faithful to God? I believe we have more than plenty of reasons why we must be faithful. Let us consider a few of these reasons:

- 1. We must be faithful to God because He deserves our faithfulness.**
Yes, God and Jesus deserve that we be faithful to them. They have done so much for us. God created this earth in which we live. He has given us everything that we need to live. One of the greatest manifestations of God’s love is His Son dying on the cross for all of us. Jesus suffered so much for you and for me. He went through many trials and suffering so that we may be able to have the hope of

eternal life. Based on this, we must strive to be faithful to them. Therefore, God's faithfulness to us should cause us to be faithful to Him. Are we faithful to God?

2. We must be faithful to God because our faithfulness helps us to bring others to Christ. Yes, our great example in faithfulness will help us to bring more people to our Savior, Jesus Christ. When people see Christ in our lives, they will want to be like Jesus. But, when we are not faithful to God; this will cause us to become a stumbling block to others. I know many non-Christians who will not obey the gospel of Christ because of Christian who are not faithful to God. They have become a bad example to others. Brethren, this is dangerous and could cause us to lose our soul in eternal punishment. God has commanded us to be good examples to others (I Timothy 4:12; Matthew 5:16). We cannot be the light of the world and the salt of the earth when we become unfaithful to God. Therefore, this is a great reason why we must be faithful to God. Our behavior can either help or avoid someone from entering heaven some day.

3. We must be faithful to God because our faithfulness will bring us great rewards. There are great rewards when we are faithful to God. Let us consider a few of these rewards:

1. We become great examples to others (Matthew 5:13-16).
2. God will be glorified through our faithfulness (Matthew 5:16).
3. We will be showing God that we love Him (John 14:15).
4. We will receive the crown of life and righteousness (II Timothy 4:7-8; James 2:12; Revelation 2:10).
5. Our names will be in the lamb's book of Life (Revelation 20:14-15)
6. We will be in heaven some day (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8-9).

These are great rewards that could be ours if we strive to maintain faithfulness in our lives. Do you want these rewards? If so, please, may I encourage all of us to be faithful no matter what comes our way.

Now, let us consider for a few minutes the HOW of faithfulness.

THE "HOW" OF FAITHFULNESS

Is faithfulness possible for us as Christians? Can we live the Christian life the way God would have us to live? Now, even though some may say no, the Bible tells us that we can live faithfully, even though we live in a world that is under the wicked one (I John 5:19; Jeremiah 51:5). The apostle Paul told the Philippians that they could shine in a world full of darkness (Philippians 2:15). Notice what he wrote: "That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world". This passage tells us that we can practice faithfulness to God.

It is imperative that we remember that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). Therefore, being this the case, let us consider how you and I can remain faithful to God.

We can remain faithful to God by practicing the following:

1. By resisting the Devil (James 4:7).
2. By studying and practicing the Word of God (Psalm 119:9, 11; James 1:22).
3. By praying to God continually (Matthew 26:41; I Thessalonians 5:17)
4. By avoiding evil companions (I Corinthians 15:33; Proverbs 1:10)
5. By not loving the world (I John 2:15-17)
6. By keeping your mind busy on pure thoughts (Philippians 4:8)
7. By keeping in mind the terrible consequences of not being faithful (Romans 6:23)

I strongly believe that these principles, when practiced, can help us to be faithful to God. May I encourage all of us to consider and practice each one of them. Remember, this is the only way to make it to heaven.

CONCLUSION

In this lesson we have considered our present reality concerning faithfulness, the why of faithfulness and the how of faithfulness. It is my prayer that we carefully consider each of these points. It is my desire that all of us be in heaven some day. But, in order for this to take place, we must... “Be faithful unto death...” (Revelation 2:10). God bless us all to that end!