ON THE HOME FRONT

Gary Colley

We want all to attend the Bible classes at Getwell. It is hard to understand why some come only for the worship services and do not avail themselves of the instructive Bible classes. We know that habits are easy to make but difficult to break, but it can be done! If you are in the habit of attending only one hour per week, please realize that, out of the 168 hours in each week, you give only 1 hour to the Lord and His work. If this shocks you to think of, maybe it will be enough for you to make some good changes in your life. We would like to encourage you to do so very soon.

The Christian life is a wonderful life to live. It is the only life that will bring no regrets when we pass into eternity (Matt. 7:13-14). No other form of life can pay such dividends for ourselves or our families! No other life can bring such happiness and joy. Often, souls defeat themselves by refusing to embrace the Gospel, God’s power to save (Rom. 1:16). The eternal God is the One whom we should praise in moments of joy. He is also the One whom we should seek in times of difficulty. In quiet times of thought and meditation we should trust in God. And in every time and place where we may be found we should thank our Father in Heaven. The wise man Solomon writes: “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil (Prov. 3:5-7).
Some claim that they are one kind of Christian and some another. But one may search his or her Bible through and never find but one kind of Christian. These who so call themselves may be termed hyphenated Christians. But those in the New Testament church were not members of any denomination, since no denominations existed in the first century (I Cor. 1:10-13). They simply wore the name Christian. Only three times in the New Testament is the name Christian used:

1. When Paul was at Antioch, the New Testament says, “The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

2. When Paul taught King Agrippa, he responded, “Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian” (26:28).

3. And Peter said, “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name” (I Pet. 4:16).

It is right to use the proper method or system in obeying Christ, but we should not be called a Methodist-Christian. It is correct to have elders or bishops (from the Greek word episcopos) to rule in the church (Heb. 13:17), but we should not be called an Episcopalian-Christian. It is in harmony with the New Testament for each congregation to be independent, but we should not be a Congregationalist-Christian. And for sure it is correct that baptism means immersion and is to be practiced as the only “mode” of baptism, but we are not Baptist-Christians. Christians are commanded to be holy and must live holy lives to please God, but we should not be a Holiness-Christian. Over three hundred times in the New Testament we are assured that Jesus will come a second time to take the kingdom back to the Father, but we would be wrong to call ourselves an Adventist-Christian. The church of Christ in the New Testament is universal (the meaning of the word catholic), but we are not a Catholic-Christian. The people who obeyed the Gospel in the New Testament were simply called Christians, without any hyphenation! We should be satisfied to be simply Christians today, members of the church of Christ. If we stay with the Bible, as we should, we will not want to be separated from other religious folks by names of human origin. We should prefer to be called by the God-given name of Christian. This name was prophesied by Isaiah to be the “new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name” (Isa. 62:2). Since this is the name given by God, should not all men be satisfied to wear the name “Christian,” without addition or subtraction? We cannot add to or take from what the Lord has given and still go to Heaven at last (Rev. 22:18-19). Let us study to show ourselves approved unto God (II Tim. 2:15).
Why Do People Leave a Denomination for the Church?

Down through the ages of apostasy as reflected in Catholicism and Protestant denominationalism, many honest souls caught up in sectarian error have read and studied their way out of denominationalism. Why do people leave a denomination founded by man to be a member of the church established by Christ?

They Question the Gospel They Know

Many in denominations (both Catholic and Protestant) have only been sprinkled; thus they have never received valid baptism as presented in the Bible at all. Others have been immersed under the delusion that they had already been saved from their sins by faith only or by saying the Sinner’s Prayer. When they hear the simple gospel plan of salvation preached and begin to study the New Testament for themselves, they discover that the preceding things do not constitute obedience to the gospel of Christ.

They also learn that in joining a denomination they have not complied with the Lord’s conditions for being saved from sin. Those conditions are: (1) hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), (2) believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 8:24), (3) repent of all sins (Acts 17:30), (4) confess faith in Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10), and (5) be baptized (immersed) for (“eis” = in order to) the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Realizing that they have not done these things and knowing that eternal punishment awaits those who do not obey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9), they are anxious to leave the denomination, obey the gospel, and be added to the Lord’s church (Acts 2:47).

—Hugh Fulford

IMPORTANT GETWELL BULLETIN NOTICE

In an effort to update our bulletin mailing list and to streamline our bulletin mailing process, we are offering Good News From Getwell in .pdf format by e-mail. If you have not yet replied, please indicate below your preference for receiving the Good News From Getwell bulletin and cut and return this portion of the page to Getwell Church of Christ, 1511 Getwell Rd., Memphis, TN 38111-7299, or fax to 901-743-2197, or e-mail to Brenda@getwellchurchofchrist.org.

☐ Please e-mail the bulletin to me at the following e-mail address: _________________________________
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