

Good News

From Getwell

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The Truth in Love

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The Getwell congregation sends monthly support to the following:

Tennessee Children's Home, Spring Hill, TN
 West Tennessee Children's Home, Pinson, TN
 Potter Children's Home, Bowling Green, KY
 Children's Homes, Paragould, AR

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY ACTIVITY

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.

Worship.....10:20 a.m.

Worship.....5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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ON THE HOME FROM Gary Colley

As members of the Getwell congregation, members of the church of Christ, we all are continually challenged to diligently work in the Lord's kingdom (I Cor. 15:58). Faithfulness is commanded by the Lord and His apostles and cannot be ignored nor discounted without consequences. To walk in the steps of our Lord, we must desire to always please the Heavenly Father by serving to the best of our ability and opportunity (I Pet. 2:24; Jn. 8:29).

A new Christian, or one who has recently placed membership with us, would welcome a visit, card, or phone call.

When our many visitors come to our services, we should make it a point to introduce ourselves, make them feel welcome, and invite them to return. Some may be new to our city and are looking for brethren in Christ to give them a warm smile and handshake. If we think a visit to their home would be helpful and encouraging, let us be sure to get their address and phone number.

We need to take the time when possible to visit the lonely in a nursing home, to shorten the long days and let them know they are not forgotten (Jas. 1:27).

Elderly members of the congregation would also welcome a phone call, card, and/or visit. Ill health and advanced age at times prohibit these from attending the worship services. Their past faithfulness should be complimented by our attention to them.

Those who are known to be in the hospital are generally announced in the bulletin and from the pulpit. We need to make a visit to them or give them a call when they return home.

When one misses one or more of the services, it is sometimes a sign of waning faith, which may lead to forsaking all of the assemblies (Heb. 10:25). We need to encourage them to make their path straight and repent.

Please read John 9:4.

Things God Has Joined Together

Gary Colley

Matthew 19:6 speaks particularly about the marriage relationship and says, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Only two things can dissolve a marriage in God's sight—adultery (Mt. 19 :9) and death (Rom. 7:1-5).

God Hath Joined – In Marriage

In Matthew 19:9, Jesus had just referred to God's original law concerning marriage: "Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). He quotes Moses' law in answering the Pharisees who came tempting Him but shows His law to be superior to that law which is now removed (Col. 2:14; Heb. 10:9-10). Several lessons are evident because God has joined a man and his wife together in marriage:

1. They begin a new home; both parties joined must be ready to leave the domain of father and mother.
2. They are to "cleave" (as if glued) to one another, letting no one or thing come between them.
3. They are to be "one" in purpose, design, and aim for life.
4. Warning is given that no one is to break this marriage asunder (divide it) since God hath joined it together.

God Hath Joined Faith and the Bible

One noted preacher said, "If all the time that I have spent praying for faith was put together, it would be months. I thought that some day faith was going to come down and strike me like lightning. But faith did not come. One day I read Romans 10:17: 'So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.' I had closed my Bible and prayed for faith. Now I opened my Bible and began to read God's word, and faith has been growing ever since." The truth of Romans 10:17 that faith comes by hearing God's word is also emphasized in Acts 15:7: "... that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe"; and Acts 18:8: "the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized." Faith and the word of God are inseparable. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

God Hath Joined Christ and the Church

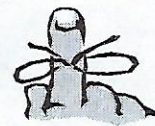
Individuals are often heard to say, "I want Christ but not the church." Or, "I believe one can go to heaven without being a member of the church." If these thoughts are from the Bible, we should all receive and defend them. But, are they?

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised to build His church. Paul made the comparison of not putting asunder (dividing) the marriage to not putting asunder Christ and His church. God has joined them both. Notice Paul's inspired words: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:31-32). Paul further stated, "And [God] hath put all things under his [Christ's] feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). Since the church is the fulness of Christ, if one is in Christ, he must of necessity be in Christ's church (Acts 2:41, 47). Therefore God hath joined together Christ and the church. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

God Hath Joined the Blood of Christ and Baptism

In every age of the world, God has required the offering of blood as a sacrifice for sins: "And without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Jesus, the Lamb of God for the sin offering (Jn. 1 :29), said He shed His blood "for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). His blood was shed in His death on Calvary (Jn. 19:34). Therefore, for man to receive the benefits of Jesus' blood, he must, in some way, come into contact with the death of Christ. Paul describes how man does this: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3-4). God hath joined together the blood and baptism. Have you been baptized? "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

RON'S REMINDERS



Is Death "Precious" in the Lord's Sight?

PSALM 116:15 RE-EXAMINED

It is a passage quoted at nearly every funeral, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15). It sounds beautiful and poetic. It seems to suggest that death, in spite of how it feels, is not really such a bad thing. But is any death really

How It's Used

I am sure I've quoted this passage several times in funeral ceremonies. And I'm sure I will quote it many more times, but I will never again quote it without explaining the context and the meaning. I had always taken this passage to mean something like, "God is pleased when His saints die and come home to Him." Or perhaps, "In God's sight, the death of His saints is really a good thing and not a bad thing."

Is that really what we want to be telling people who are grieving, that God thinks this is a good thing? That God is happy about their loved one's death? I suppose it might be easier to accept that interpretation if we are talking about someone who lived a long life, but what about a 35-year-old mother of three? Is her death really a good thing in God's sight?

The Context

Psalm 116 is not a long psalm. And it's not hard to understand the overall meaning. Go read it. I'll wait. Okay, now that you've read it, you can probably see the whole psalm is praising God for a life preserved. It's about being saved from death, not about death being a good thing.

The psalmist wrote about an occasion on which he almost died, saying, "The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish" (vs. 3). Sheol is the realm of the dead. The psalmist is saying he was in the grip of death.

The psalmist cried out to the Lord, "O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!" (vs. 4). When the Bible (especially the Old Testament) talks about the "soul," it is simply talking about a person's life in the most natural sense. A person's "soul" is simply his being, his existence, his life. So, the psalmist cried out for God to save him from dying.

Then, in exuberant praise, the psalmist declares that the Lord did save him (vs. 6). And the Lord saved him because the Lord is gracious, righteous, and merciful (vs. 5). Now the psalmist's soul can rest because he has been saved from death (vs. 7). He is no longer anxious or afraid as he was before.

Verses 8 and 9 are the most telling: "For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling; I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Read that last line one more time, "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." The psalmist did not die as he thought he might, that's the whole point of the psalm.

The psalmist continues in his praise to God for saving his life, wondering what sort of gift he should give to God to show his gratitude. He promises he will be faithful to the Lord, paying his vows and offering sacrifices of thanksgiving. All this praise because God kept him from dying.

The Meaning of "Precious"

So we are left wondering, why would a person say his own death would be "precious" in God's sight in the context of saying how horrible death is and how thankful he is to have been saved from it?

Perhaps we need to look deeper into this word translated *precious*. It simply means something is expensive, rare, or costly. It does not mean something is loved or adored. The word means the thing in question isn't something to be ambivalent about or taken lightly.

Which, of course, is precisely what the psalmist is saying: God doesn't take the death of His saints lightly. God values His saints and their death is a costly thing in His sight. Which is why, in the case of this particular psalm, God preserved the life of His saint.

Applying the Psalm

After understanding the context of the psalm, a person might think twice before reading it at a funeral. But then again, it is an incredibly appropriate passage to read at the funeral of a Christian (as long as its meaning is explained).

The death of any of God's people is not something He takes lightly. In God's sight, the death of a ninety-year-old is just as "costly" as the death of a twenty-year-old. Human beings somehow think the death of a twenty-year-old is somehow more costly, but God doesn't seem to think so. He takes all death seriously. He takes death so seriously that He sent His son to earth to defeat death.

As Christians, our confident expectation is that God will save us all from death. Because of the atoning blood of Jesus, we are God's saints and all of His saints will once again "walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Our hope is in the Resurrection. Like Lazarus, Jesus may not save us from dying, but He will most certainly save us from staying dead. We will be raised never to die again.

Jesus is the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Him, though that person dies, he will live again (John 11:25). We no longer fear death, because death has been, is being, and will be defeated (see 1 Corinthians 15). We no longer fear death, because we will be saved from it. We will be saved because, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful" (Psalm 116:5)

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Wes McAdams
Think April 2019