

Good News

From Getwell

Published by
Getwell Church of Christ

1511 Getwell Road
 Memphis, Tennessee 38111-7299

Phone: (901) 743-0464

Fax: (901) 743-2197

E-Mail: mail@getwellchurchofchrist.org

Website: www.getwellchurchofchrist.org

ELDERS

Dewey Murray
 Ransom Reaves

MINISTERS

Bradley Smith, Minister
 Ron Wallace, Assoc. Minister
 Daniel P. Phillips

Publishers of

THE SPIRITUAL SWORD

Alan E. Highers, Editor

Home of

The Spiritual Sword Lectureship

Radio Program

The Truth in Love

WHBQ-AM 560 / FM 87.7

Sundays, 8:00 a.m.

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.

Volume LX

August 18, 2019

Number 28

ON THE HOME FRONT

We are extremely blessed here at Getwell with a terrific resource at our hands, the Spiritual Sword. This quarterly has been published by Getwell since 1969 and a corresponding lectureship since 1976. Presently Alan E. Highers serves as editor. An unsung hero who works behind the scenes is Reed Thomas who serves as liaison between Getwell, the typesetter and the printer. Brother Thomas works closely with brother Highers and has a role with the success of the journal. On the other side of the coin, Paul Sain has worked tirelessly with the printing of the lectureship book, also being a talented faithful gospel preacher.

Keeping all this in mind the elders decided when brother Smith took over the pulpit duties, to use the Spiritual Sword as a class study book. The issue he began with is "How Can We Grow." Brother Highers always does an excellent job with each issue by with this issue (to use a baseball term) he hit the ball out of the park. This issue is packed with methods and ideas that have been utilized by congregations in other areas. These ideas are conveyed to us by very faithful and talented writers. I personally am taking time to study each article.

Brother Smith is doing a competent job teaching from the journal. Hopefully the Getwell family is absorbing the information from the journal put forth by brother Smith. Getwell and congregations all over the brotherhood have so much room and potential for growth. As our Lord said, "the fields are white already to harvest." John 4:35. I often think of this passage when traveling the tri state area in the fall and see the cotton fields white waiting for the harvesters. Let us not forget our Lord's marching orders, "to go into all the world and preach the gospel." Mark 16:15.

Ron Wallace

Can I Be Saved Like the Thief on the Cross?

Bradley Smith

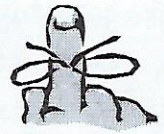
For some reason, many people in the denominational world reject Biblical teaching about baptism. Instead of being honest with the Bible and realizing that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), that baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), that baptism washes away sins (Acts 22:16), that baptism places one in Christ (Gal. 3:27), and that baptism is essential to salvation (1 Pet. 3:21), they will run to one argument. "My preacher says that I can be saved like the thief on the cross. The thief on the cross did not have to be baptized, so neither do I." On the surface, some may think that this is a sound argument. Is this the case?

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:42-43). This passage from Luke is the most commonly used accounts when dealing with the thief on the cross. It is true that in this verse, the thief on the cross was not immersed for the remission of sins. Why is this the case, if baptism is really essential to salvation (and it is, 1 Pet. 3:21), why then was the thief on the cross not baptized?

Consider this illustration: You are driving down the road and you are pulled over by a police officer. The officer asks to see your driver's license. You reply, "My great-great-great grandfather did not need a driver's license, so neither do I!" How would the officer reply? Chances are, he would say something to the extent of, "The law was different then. Just because it was alright for him to drive without a license does not mean that it is alright for you to do so."

Such is the case with the thief on the cross. He was saved prior to the death of Christ on the cross. Hebrews 9:15-17 tells us that the death of Christ brought about the new law. Since the thief on the cross lived in the period of time in which the law of Moses was in effect, he was not required to be baptized. We cannot be saved like the thief on the cross because the law is different. We are not living under the law of Moses, but under the law of Christ, the New Testament. We could list any number of New Testament verses that tell us that we must be immersed in water in order to be saved (see first paragraph). Even though the argument about the thief on the cross may sound valid at first, we must remember that he lived under the old law, and we live under the new. No, I cannot be saved like the thief on the cross today.

RON'S REMINDERS



The Despair of Atheism

Part 2

ATHEISM IMPLIES THAT LIFE IS MEANINGLESS

A brief look at the writings of unbelievers reveals that meaninglessness naturally follows from the concept of atheism. Atheistic philosopher Alex Rosenberg penned a book titled *The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life Without Illusions*. *Harper's* magazine reviewed the book, saying: "Rosenberg is admirably frank about the implications of scientism [atheism—KB]." The back cover of the book quotes from the *New York Times Book Review*: "The work of a well-informed and imaginative philosopher." At the beginning of the book, Rosenberg declared: "This book aims to provide the correct answers to most of the persistent questions.... Given what we know from the sciences, the answers are all pretty obvious...." He then provided a list of questions with his concise "pretty obvious" answers following each question:

- Is there a God? No.
- What is the nature of reality? What physics says it is.
- What is the purpose of the Universe? **There is none.**
- What is the meaning of life? **Ditto.**
- Why am I here? **Just dumb luck.**
- Does prayer work? Of course not.
- Is there a soul? Are you kidding?
- Is there free will? Not a chance!
- What happens when we die? Everything pretty much goes on as before, except us.
- What is the difference between right and wrong, good and bad? There is no moral difference between

them.

- Why should I be moral? Because it makes you feel better than being immoral.
- Is abortion, euthanasia, suicide, paying taxes, foreign aid, or anything else you don't like forbidden, permissible, or sometimes obligatory? Anything goes.
- What is love, and how can I find it? Love is the solution to a strategic interaction problem. Don't look for it; it will find you when you need it.
- Does history have any meaning or purpose? It's full of sound and fury, but signifies nothing. Does the human past have any lessons for our future? Fewer and fewer, if it ever had any to begin with.²

Graham Lawton, Executive Editor of *New Scientist* magazine, penned a brief article titled, "What is the Meaning of Life?" He began with his blunt, one line answer: "The harsh answer is 'it has none.'" He went on to say: "Your life may feel like a big deal to you, but it's actually a **random blip of matter and energy in an uncaring and impersonal universe.**"³ Stephen J. Gould, one of the most recognized evolutionary paleontologists of the 20th century, wrote about atheism's meaninglessness with his customary flair: "We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures; because the earth never froze entirely during an ice age; because a small and tenuous species, arising in Africa a quarter of a million years ago, has managed, so far, to survive by hook and by crook. **We may yearn for a 'higher answer'—but none exists.**"⁴