

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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January 27, 2019

“Why Some Fail to Obey the Gospel” #1

By Brian Meade

The Bible teaches us that the gospel is God’s power to save us from our sins (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18), gives us a new beginning (Romans 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17), reconciles us to God (2 Corinthians 5:18), and gives us the hope of heaven as our eternal destiny (Colossians 1:5).



If the gospel does so much to improve our circumstances and standing with God, and is the ONLY way of doing so, you would think that everyone would come to the same conclusion about the need to obey it immediately. One would think that everyone would love to start over with a “*clean slate*” in having their sins blotted out by Christ’s blood. (Hebrews 10:12-14) One would logically think that a good relationship with God leading to heaven as our home would be very appealing to everyone you talk to about the gospel.

But the sad reality is, not everyone wants what God offers us for our obedience to Him. Not everyone desires to do God’s will for their lives, and therefore it can be very challenging and frustrating to talk about spiritual things to carnal people. But that is what you and I must do in order to try to save all who will listen to the message of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).

These articles are designed to help us identify and maybe make some sense of the reasons *why* it is that someone, we have reasoned with about the scriptures and knows what they need to do to be saved, simply turns down the greatest need of their life. It may help us to not be discouraged when we understand it better.

Reason #1: Some Just Don’t See The Need To Obey.

There are those we may try to teach the gospel to who already have everything they need. They have all their material needs met. They have a big house to live in, fancy cars to drive, lots of money in the bank, and even money saved for retirement in a nice 401K nest egg.... They seemingly have it all! The world’s goods seem to satisfy them completely, so they will say to themselves, “*What can Jesus offer me that I don’t already have now?*”

They cannot see the real worth of having the forgiveness of sins or a future home awaiting them when they are enjoying life and everything seems okay.

It reminds of the parable Jesus spoke of in Luke 12:15-21 about a man that did not think of anymore needs than that of the physical. He had a very productive harvest, what we might call a bumper crop that year, and was just beside himself on what to do with all his prosperity. He thought he might just tear down his barns and build bigger barns to hold it all. His attitude about prosperity caused him to say to himself, “*Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.*” (Luke 12:19)

His mistake was leaving God completely out of his way of life. He never seemed to think of sharing with his neighbors or helping the poor, but only about his wants and needs. His future plans (like a lot of people today) was

only about supplying his physical needs, not his spiritual needs! We all need to be reminded that we will stand before God on the Judgment Day (2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12-15).

The conclusion of the parable teaches us to prepare for more than just our own immediate needs, when God said to him, *'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'* *"So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

We have to get people to see beyond just the material possessions (that make them self-sufficient) to see the spiritual needs that they truly have. What about after retirement? What about after this life? Are they prepared eternally or not?

Reason #2: Some Don't Think They Know Enough.

There are some who because of a lack of knowledge of the Scriptures, do not feel that they are ready to obey the gospel. It is usually young people who feel this way, but it can be older folks as well. It could be that they have never been exposed to gospel preaching and teaching in the life, and are thus uneasy about what is expected of them after their conversion.

I have seen people, in talking with them about the gospel, who actually thought they had to know EVERYTHING before they even become a Christian. In their mind, they had to unlock every hard saying in Scripture or leave no stone unturned in every book of the Bible before you could baptize them!

But how much do we actually have to know before we can be saved? I do believe there are some vital teachings that have to be understood, such as:

(1) **What sin is and why we need a Savior.** (2) **Understand God's way of salvation** (Hearing God's word Rom. 10:1, Believing in Jesus John 3:18, Confess Jesus as God's Son Rom. 10:10, & be baptized for remission of sins Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21). (3) **Count the cost and be willing to pay it** (Luke 14:26-33).

In short, we would explain to a potential candidate of obedience to Christ, that they need to first obey what is necessary to become a Christian and then commit themselves to a lifetime of study.

As we examine carefully the examples of conversions in the Book of Acts, we see those who did obey the gospel after one hearing. In Acts 2:38-41, we find the results: *"And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation!'"* *So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls."*

Someone has said, "That one sermon converted about three thousand persons in one day, yet today it seems it takes three thousand sermons to convert one person." But the truth is, it should not take months or years to convert men and women to Christ. Notice further, that when Phillip went to Samaria preaching that the results were relatively immediate in Acts 8:5-13.

One sermon by Phillip persuaded the Ethiopian treasurer to obey in Acts 8:26-40. One sermon persuaded the household of Cornelius in Acts 10:24-48. One sermon also persuaded Lydia (Acts 16:14-15) and the jailor of Philippi (Acts 16:30-34). So, it is indeed possible to convert the *good and noble heart*.

Reason #3: Some Don't Think They Can Be Forgiven.

There are those who have been particularly hardened in their life of sin and may have done some things in the past that they consider *"unforgivable."*

As we may know from the scriptures, all sin is equally in its power to condemn us (1 Samuel 15:23; James 2:10)—but not all sins have the same temporal consequences and affect the lives of others more grievously. As an example: To lie to someone doesn't have the same affect on someone's life as to murder them. Some look at some of their deeds as being too great or too many for God to completely pardon them, so they don't seek forgiveness.

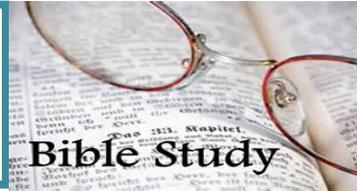
But that is the whole point of Christ going to the cross and shedding His blood for our benefit—our need for God's love, mercy, grace, and FORGIVENESS from even the awful things we may have done! (Romans 5:6-11) That is the point of God's grace, that nobody deserves it!

The apostle Paul, who was formerly Saul the persecutor, looked at his former life as forgiven in 1 Timothy 1:12-15, *"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."*

If Christ can save even the *chief of sinners*, He can save you and I today by the blood of the cross of Calvary. There are no sins that are too big for God to handle, as long as we are willing to repent of and forsake them completely and come to Him in obedience to the gospel. (Romans 1:16-17)

**A Women's Bible Class
Starts back this January 2019.**

Will meet monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the Month at 7:00 PM.
Ask Chris or Kathryn Callahan for where to meet.



News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Pam Zeanah,

Remember the family of Nicky Curtis (Dianne Johnson's brother) who passed away Friday. Funeral arrangements at Magnolia Funeral Home Sunday (today) Visitation: 12:30 to 2:30 with services to follow.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:

Preaching:

Brian Meade

Sermon #1:

"Is the Lord Among Us, or Not?"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Fred Johnson

The Book of John (Mike Willis)

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Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:

Paul Busby

Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:

Brian Meade

Psalms 48:9-14

Song Leader:

Dan Cottrell (Fill in Needed)

Lord's Table:

Paul Johnson

Assisting:

Dan Cottrell & Russell Briggs

Song Service:

Men of the congregation lead Singing

Invitation:

Jerry Kennemur

Closing Prayer:

Fred Johnson

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 30th:

Auditorium Bible Class:

Paul Busby

1 & 2 Chronicles (Mike Willis)

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Invitation:

Russell Briggs

Song Leader:

Brian Meade

Closing Prayer:

Adam Harris