

Truth For Teens

Volume 5 June/July 2006 Issue 3

“- - - ONE NATION UNDER GOD - - -”*

The Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776; we observe its importance as a national holiday. At the time of the signing, the United States consisted of 13 colonies under the rule of England's King George III. There was growing unrest in the colonies concerning the taxes that had to be paid to England. In 1774 the 13 colonies sent delegates to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to form the First Continental Congress. With their diplomacy, America became “one nation under God,” and we have the freedom of religion, to worship without fear or harm.

Many countries today do not have this freedom of religion. Their citizens are not allowed the right to hear God's inspired Word. Missionaries are not allowed to teach from the Bible; Christians worship in an underground setting.

Just as the sacrifice of men secured America as an independent nation, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection to sit on the right hand of God fulfilled God's promise to Abraham that His people would have a “nation under God.” God promised Abraham a country, Canaan, which would be populated through Abraham's seed, Isaac. It was through this seed that all people were promised a hope of heaven. Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah and at His death the hope of salvation was opened to all – Jews and Gentiles alike.

On the Day of Pentecost, c. AD 36, Jesus' chosen apostles established His church in Jerusalem. Jesus' followers heard the new covenant promised by God and of a kingdom, taught by Jesus as He traveled on earth, and accepted the plan of salvation told by Peter on that day. Jesus promised Peter the “keys” to His kingdom, and prophecies were fulfilled at that time. The “keys” was the Gospel preached in its fullness, Acts 2. There was unrest among the Jews as the Gospel was preached, threatening their laws and traditions. Stephen was stoned to death because he preached of Jesus, the Messiah, Acts 7.

That covenant is still in effect. As the church grew in number, history gives an account of men using their influence to set up their own traditions, moving away from the apostles' inspired doctrine. Today, through religious leaders and translations of man, the commands of God are being defiled as men place their opinions into the teaching and preaching of God's Word and in practices of worship. The Scriptures say plainly in Revelation 22:18-19, *...If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.* [NKJV]

Christ Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* Men's interpretation cannot change the authority for worship to God. Paul exhorts Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:1-2, *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits, and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.*

America's elected Congress is debating on how to resolve the issue of illegal immigrants becoming a part of the nation's population. Today, the church is being invaded with the intrusion of unscriptural doctrine and practices. A nation's laws can be changed by Congress; but, God's law cannot be changed, see Revelation 22:18-19. Persons desiring to become American citizens should respect the laws that make it possible. People who respect God's Word, become Christians and partake of God's grace, must forego the temptation of false doctrine and teachers. God will enforce His commandments on judgment day, Romans 13:2, *Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.* As an independent nation, America established a constitution for their authority; God's authority establishes the doctrine of His church.

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**A PUBLICATION
FOR
TODAY'S TEENS IN TOMORROW'S WORLD**

“TRUTH FOR TEENS” – OUR MISSION

Truth For Teens is a publication with a circulation of over 500 to youth throughout the United States. This is possible because a group of men and women feel a need to provide healthy, helpful information to our youth as they deal with daily situations.

This publication is supported and funded by contributions of individuals and congregations of area churches of Christ. By their support we are able to continue the publication and mailing without charge to our youth. This missionary program is non-profit and tax deductible. All contributions are used appropriately for the printing and mailing of the issues. Financial help from those who would like to join in this outreach program to our youth will allow us to continue publication. Most important are the prayers of Christians for the success of this endeavor.

An account has been set up in the name of Truth for Teens Publication. Checks can be made to that account and mailed to P. O. Box 581, Manor, Texas 78653. This is a non-profit publication.

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“Teen Talk” Articles and Reviews

Truth For Teens is an avenue open to anyone desiring to write articles or reviews for the Teen features. If you would like to publish a message to your peers, inspirational, spiritual or covering everyday issues, you can send it through our web site, www.truthforteens.org, or mail to P.O. Box 581, Manor, Texas 78653, or email to tftpub@austin.rr.com. Space is limited to one column length [approximately 600 words in 11 point type]. It must include your name, address, school classification and place of worship.

Editor's note: We reserve the right to exclude items we deem unacceptable, using God's Word as our guide.

- - - CHECK IT OUT - - -
www.thegospelofchrist.com
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Add To Your Favorites

Our Truth For Teens website has been placed on the www.thegospelofchrist.com home page as a part of its Young Talent section.

This site unlocks an accumulation of sermons on New Testament books and is made available without cost to those who request the material. Their purpose is to bring the gospel to as many as will partake of the spiritual food accessible through this venue.

I Asked God ---

I asked God to take away my habit. God said, No. It is not for me to take away, but for you to give up.

1 Thessalonians 5:22, *Abstain from every form of evil.*

I asked God to give me patience. God said, No. Patience is a byproduct of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is learned.

James 1:2-3, *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

I asked God to give me happiness. God said, No. I give you blessings; Happiness is up to you.

Philippians 3:1, *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.*

I asked God to spare me pain. God said, No. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

Philippians 1:29, *For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.*

I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, No. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.

1 Peter 2:1-2, *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*

I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life. God said, No. I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things.

Romans 6:4, *Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

I asked God to help me love others, as much as He loves me. God said, Ahhhh ... finally you have the idea!

John 13:34, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*

IS A COLLISION BY A DRUNK DRIVER AN "ACCIDENT"?

Can death, injury or property damage from a collision by a drunk driver be called an "accident"? The definition of "accident" by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law, 1996, is as follows: **1 a** : an unforeseen and unplanned event or circumstance **b** : lack of intention or necessity : *** **2 a** : an unfortunate event resulting especially from carelessness or ignorance **b** : an unexpected and medically important bodily event especially when injurious **c** : an unexpected happening causing loss or injury which is not due to any fault or misconduct on the part of the person injured but for which legal relief may be sought.

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine, Proverbs 23:29-30. Drinking of alcohol is a choice a person makes. Collisions by drunken drivers can be prevented if that person makes the right choice.

An accident is a circumstance unforeseen and unplanned, a lack of intention resulting from carelessness or ignorance. When a drunken person causes a collision, it is an event or circumstance that could have been avoided had that person not been careless in his behavior. Drinking alcohol affects a person's ability to react normally, mentally and physically. Numerous studies have educated us on the effects – it slows thought processes and actions, causes recklessness and unclear vision. It is so harmful that often a person will pass out or lose consciousness.

It not only can cause death of self, but also death of innocent people – adults, children, families. To justify drinking alcohol, even as a social event, places a person in a reckless condition; personalities of people who drink become loud, embarrassing and obstinate. Behind the wheel of an automobile, they are impaired in their perception. Ask yourself this question: Could you live with yourself if you killed or maimed someone because you had consumed alcohol?

The prophet Isaiah wrote, *Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may follow intoxicating drink; who continue until night, till wine inflames them!* Isaiah 5:11.

There is only one way to be assured you will never be the cause of a collision resulting in death or injury – never take that first drink. It is a sinful practice, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and Galatians 5:19-21, *inspired* words spoken by the apostle Paul. 1 Corinthians 6:20 states further, *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.* To put a substance of harm – alcohol, drugs – into that which houses the Holy Spirit would be inappropriate.

Think about it!! Don't drink, and especially, don't drink and drive!!

HENSEL YOUTH CAMP, JULY 23-28 – "PROPERTY OF GOD" –

This is a reminder for those attending summer Bible camp at Hensel Memorial Camp on July 23 through 28. Some have vacationed; others have worked or participated in study or summer camps. Now it's time to gather to study God's Word with a theme of "Property of God." Friendships will be renewed and new friends made through fun activities – games, crafts, etc.

Information and applications for the camp were included in an earlier issue of the Truth For Teens; however, if you need another application, let us know and we will send another. For those not familiar with our camp, this is our seventh year to oversee the activities for boys and girls who have completed their third grade through high school. Our theme for 2006 is "Property of God" and will cover all aspects of things belonging to God – our body, His church, His world, etc. Check-in begins at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 23, and dismissal at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28. The itinerary covers classes, games, crafts, swimming, activities and good food, both spiritual and physical.

Tuition is \$110.00 for the first child. Each child thereafter will receive an additional \$10.00 discount (i.e. 1st = \$110, 2nd = \$100, 3rd = \$90, and so on).

Camp Hensel is located in the hill country near Austin and provides a sense of quiet and calm, a definite contrast to days in the cities.

Contact information is Central church of Christ, PO Box 2343, Pflugerville, Texas 78691, phone (512) 670-3803. Our fax number is (512) 371-7923, or you can e-mail us at katooley@minister.com. An alternate phone number for information is (512) 454-7223. Application forms can be found at www.centralchurchofchrist.cc.

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, How many women can a man marry? "Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?" "Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the preacher said, 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

"One Nation Under God" Continued from Page 1

There is unrest in the nation because foreigners enter America illegally. Christians should be at unrest because of those presenting themselves as sound in the doctrine but in truth are teaching false doctrine. "Posers" Christians should be concerned with migrant intrusion in Christ's church.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits," words of Christ recorded in Matthew 7:15-16. *The phrase "under God" added June 14, 1954.

“IT IS WRITTEN” – PRACTICES OF WORSHIP - -

As more groups identify themselves as New Testament churches, we present this article with scriptures concerning worship practices established by the apostles who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Many have questions concerning worship in the churches of Christ. With these scriptures, it is hoped that this article will provide “ready” answers. There are other principles that identify the New Testament church – the name, Christ as the head, qualifications of elders and deacons – that are scriptural identification points. In this article we submit scriptural examples of practices of the true New Testament church.

Do you have an answer ready when friends or peers ask questions of the church or worship practices? We are told that we must **always have a ready answer** when it pertains to the teaching of the Bible, *But sanctify [honor] the Lord God in your hearts, always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear [respect],* 1 Peter 3:15.

The first step is to refresh our knowledge of the first few chapters of Acts when the church was established. *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers,* Acts 2:42, followed by verse 44, *now all who believed were together, and had all things in common.* The New Testament church is the one established by our Lord Jesus Christ, founded on His death and resurrection, giving us the hope of salvation through the mercy of God.

Some don’t understand the principles that are observed in the New Testament church and should be given a scriptural answer concerning the reasons for practicing those principles. Many denominations have added practices at their worship assemblies that are not authorized by the Scriptures. The most often questioned involves **choirs, clapping of the hands and groups with musical instruments or bands.**

“It is written” in the scriptures that when we sing, we are *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,* Ephesians 5:19. Paul tells the congregation in Colosse, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord,* Colossians 3:16; see 1 Corinthians 14:15.

Paul exhorts the brethren in Corinth to *[l]et all things be done decently and in order,* 1 Corinthians 14:40. The practice of clapping hands to the rhythm of the music or lifting hands and swaying to the rhythm of the music as we sing praises to God detracts from the somber, serious practice of worship to God. Applause and body movement is used in admiration of performers and entertainers of unscriptural practices. This method of praise is not authorized in the Scriptures. In Colossians 3:17, we are told that whatever we do in word (which includes singing) or deed (which includes playing, clapping, and singing), must be done in the name of (by the authority of) the Lord, *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,...*

In defense, some will say that musical instruments were used during Old Testament times, and they are correct. But it was not a commandment or example given by God. In fact, David was the primary founder of the use of musical instruments during many occasions. A topical search shows that there are no references to musical instruments during worship in the New Testament. Let’s be reminded again that today we are living under a new covenant, and worship as mandated in Christ’s kingdom, the church.

Oftentimes musical instruments tend to usurp the spiritual intention, and words of praise by worshipers are lost to the worldly addition. Every individual, not a group, is to sing, making melody in their hearts, words of praise to God. Can a physical music maker produce such words? Ordinances of the Old Testament have been blotted out, Jesus taking it out of the way by His death on the cross, Colossians 2:14. *Do not be wise in your own opinion,* Romans 12:16.

Christians assemble to worship God and to remember Christ’s death and resurrection. We must not expect entertainment on God’s time.

Another practice is becoming more common in today’s religious services – **immodest dress, both boys and girls**, wearing shorts and other revealing apparel. The Scriptures exhort in many places to “be modest,” “don’t distract,” mandating respect in our worship to God, *In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation [discretions],* 1 Timothy 2:9. 1 Peter 3:3 reads, *Do not let your adornment be merely outward – arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel – rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.* In the world today, we find as many types of cologne, hair styles, and immodest dress by men and boys as with women. Schools are choosing to put in place dress codes to circumvent the lasciviousness [provoking or exciting lust] in what students wear publicly. Deuteronomy 22:5 reads, *“A woman shall not wear any thing that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God.* If we try to instill Old Testament practices for the New Testament church, then we will have to honor this command from God! Another Old Testament reading in Zephaniah 1:8 says, *“And it shall be, in the day of the Lord’s sacrifice, that I will punish the princes and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed with foreign [strange, outlandish] apparel.*

In line with the choice of dress among the youth today is the practice of **mixed swimming**. The purpose of swim wear of boys and girls seems to be to expose as much flesh as possible and still hold together. Connect this with the intake of the youth of today's television and movie scripts and songs, and we see why "it is written" in 2 Peter 2:11, *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts [desires] which war against the soul.* Other writings are Proverbs 6:25, *Do not lust after her beauty in your heart; nor let her allure you with her eyelids;* [If the apostles lived now, perhaps they would have continued to say "and her nakedness. ed."]; Matthew 5:28, *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart;* 2 Timothy 2:22, *Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* and Romans 1:27, *Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.* Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:6, *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.*

Observance of the Lord's Supper is directed to God as a memorial of the price Jesus paid on the cross and of His resurrection. Our sharing or participation in the Lord's Supper represents the blood and body of Jesus, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* 1 Corinthians 10:16. Jesus broke bread and drank of the fruit of the vine with the apostles on the night He was betrayed. This order was initiated in worship by the New Testament church that was established on the day of Pentecost, Matthew 26:29.

Observance of the Lord's Supper is a pronouncement that Jesus lived and walked and talked among mankind. It proclaims His death for the sin of the world; it proclaims the mission of Christ; He had to die in order that man may be saved. The life of all flesh is in the blood, Leviticus 17:11, and commemoration of Christ's blood represents new life for a person through His death and resurrection. The blood of a perfect lamb on a post of a home saved the Israelites from God's wrath during His Passover destroying sin. Reverence should be given so our minds will be on the significance of the memorial. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

The apostles took their places of authority on the day of Pentecost and began their judgment of the "twelve tribes of Israel," Acts 2:1-41. Jesus spoke to the apostles in Luke 22:29-30, *And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.,* an event brought to fulfillment on the day of Pentecost.

We respect the requirements set out in our worship: wear the right name, worship as directed by singing, praying, teaching, and observing the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Christians must live a clean moral life, respecting and obeying the moral laws of God, 2 Peter 1:5-11.

The way we observe the memorial is set out in First Corinthians 11:27, *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.* In Acts 20:7, Paul writes, *Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.* A specific day is usually set aside for memorials – Jesus set aside the first day of the week.

Bazaars, car washes, etc. The Lord's church was never financed by fund raising, money-making ideas so popular in denominational churches today. Early Christians supported the church by their freewill offerings, *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bring your gift to Jerusalem,* 1 Corinthians 16:1-3. Car washes, rummage sales, spaghetti suppers or concerts were unheard of, not to mention bingo (or other forms of gambling) used to raise money today. These substitutes are not according to God's pattern.

An individual can have as many garage sales, etc. as they want and can by free will give the funds to the congregation as a free will offering. The scriptures sanction a giving of free will from the heart. Such events are not to be church sponsored. Jesus *"drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers,"* Matthew 21:12.

An attitude of giving is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Women participating in worship activities is becoming more common today. The argument of some is that women can fill some positions as well as men, and women are sometimes more talented in some areas. However, there is no

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Substitutions Are Costly

continued from page 5 authority given in God's Word giving women permission to be an active participant in worship services of the Lord's church. Again, "it is written" in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 that women are not to usurp authority of man, *I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation [discretion] not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly*

clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. [Emphasis added] This would cover leading public prayer, preaching, announcements, leading singing or assisting in the memorial service of the Lord's Supper wherever men are present.

If this is not plain enough, this exhortation was given in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, *Let your women keep silent in the churches: for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. *** for it is shameful for women to speak in church.*

Where will you be if not in services on **Sunday and Wednesday evenings** – at home watching television, playing games on the computer; at the movies, or just "staying home"? Is this a good thing? In Philippians 4:8 Paul speaks to brethren, *...whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things.* If we are forsaking the assembly of worship "just because we don't think it's commanded," Jesus says, *No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [riches],* Matthew 6:24.

The time of worship on the Lord's Day and frequency of worship on other days is a matter of option. The decision of elders is the authority and binds upon each Christian under their oversight. Christians are to be obedient to those who have the rule over them, Hebrews 13:17, *Obey those who rule [lead] over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account..* To forsake the mid-week service, or any other service called by the elders (as in gospel meetings, studies, etc.), violates these verses. Elders are to have oversight of a congregation as directed by inspired words to the apostles, *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine,* 1 Timothy 5:17.

If the New Testament doesn't authorize an exercise of worship, we, by faith, cannot take part in its practice, Romans 14:23, *But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.* Further, *If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever,* 1 Peter 4:11.

There are ample answers in the Scriptures as to why Christians observe these principles. It is God's will that we follow these precepts, nothing more and nothing less. Even some in the brotherhood have chosen to hold lightly God's will. We should not question God's way. We choose whether we will serve Him by His way. We must not go to the Old Testament to learn how we are to worship under the New Testament. The Old Testament was taken out of the way at the cross of Christ, *For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law,* Hebrews 7:12. Some Old Testament principles were continued under the covenant of the New Testament; however, there is no scripture in the New Testament authorizing instruments of music in worship of the New Testament church. Church history records that the earliest example of its use was sanctioned by Pope Vitalian in A.D. 670.

SUBSTITUTIONS ARE COSTLY!

It is fundamental to the faith to obey the commandments of Christ, *Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him,* 1 John 3:24. We must not allow traditions of men to make the commands of God of no effect! Jesus charged the Pharisees with "vain worship" for doing this, Mark 7:5-13.

Most restaurants post on their menus, "No substitutes allowed," or if they do substitute, there is an additional cost for making the change. Rest assured that there is an additional cost to those of the New Testament church if certain practices in worship are substituted for those instituted by the Lord through His Word and the inspired teachings of His apostles.

Christians of the New Testament church must not be drawn to man-made practices so popular today. See Galatians 1:6-8, *I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert [distort] the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.* Paul continues in verse 10, *For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.*

It's Great To Be A Christian!

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Paul wrote these inspired words as he suffered in prison. Even in prison he could rejoice and encourage other Christians to do the same. There is great joy in Christ. Christians should be the happiest people on earth. Truly, we can say it is great to be a Christian.

It is great to be a Christian because we know the blood of Christ has cleansed us from our sins (Revelation 1:5). The pure, innocent blood of the Son of God satisfied the justice of God and made possible man's reconciliation to God (Hebrews 9:15; 10:1-22; Romans 5:5-11). The Lord applied His powerful and precious blood to our souls when we were baptized into His death (Romans 6:3-5; Acts 2:38; 22:16).

It is great to be a Christian because we know we have been added to the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the church of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Romans 16:16). Jesus Christ added us to the church when we were baptized (Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27). It is wonderful to be in Christ because all spiritual blessings are found in Him (Ephesians 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:10).

It is great to be a Christian because we know we are going to a much better place than this earth. The Lord promised to prepare a place for us in His Father's house (John 14:1-3). In heaven, the Christian's reward will more than make up for any suffering on earth (Matthew 5:12; Romans 8:18). In heaven, there will be no more death, crying, pain or sorrow (Revelation 21:4). There we shall live with God forever (Revelation 21:10-22:5).

It is great to be a Christian because we can talk to God in prayer with the confidence he will hear us (1 Peter 3:12). We can approach God's throne of grace in prayer with boldness in order to find mercy to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16). James said "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much": (James 5:16). It is a great privilege to be able to speak to the Almighty God, Creator of the universe.

It is great to be a Christian because we are content with the things God has given us (1 Timothy 6:6-8). People in the world are lost. They will never find peace and contentment apart from Jesus Christ. Christians know where they came from (Genesis 1:27). We know why we are here (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14). We also know where we are going (1 Timothy 4:6-8). Because of this, we have peace which helps us to endure the troubles of life and still have joy.

It is great to be a Christian because we have been adopted into a loving and supportive family (Galatians 4:1-7). The only begotten Son of God in that family is Jesus Christ (John 3:16). He is our brother (Hebrews 2:11).

He gives us strength (Philippians 4:13). God is our loving, heavenly Father who provides for all our needs (Matthew 6:9). We have our fellow Christians as brothers and sisters in Christ to strengthen and encourage us (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25; 1 John 3:11-24).

Truly, it is great to be a Christian! Truth for the World, Volume XII, No. 1, March 2003.

Questions: (1). The sundial would go back 10 degrees, 2 Kings 20:1-11; (2.) Acts 2:16-21; Joel 2:28-32; (3). The Lord, Genesis 7:16

Word & Letter Play: Glove

Double Puzzle Answers: inspired, written, bread, Luke, Jesus, alone; And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Luke 4:4

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