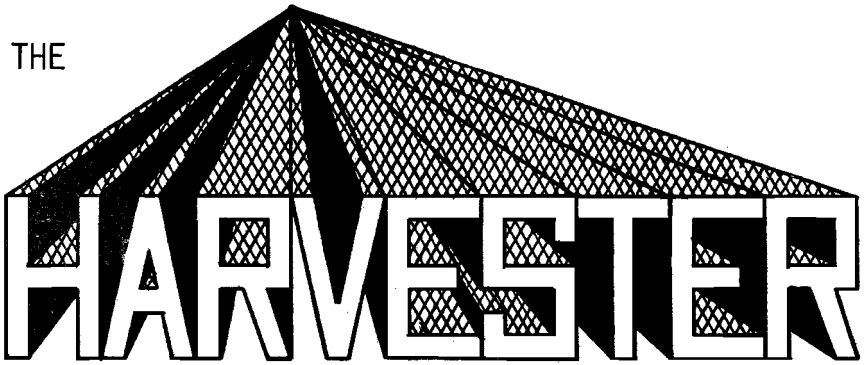


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"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

April 1988

No. 028

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

From the day we come out of the womb, we begin a life of "learning". We learn how to smile. We also learn how to cry. We learn how to crawl on the floor and later, how to walk and talk. We even learn how to eat by ourselves and how to get dressed.

Then around the age of six we find ourselves in elementary school. Do we finally stop the learning process? Of course not, but rather we further it. We must learn how to read and write. Next we attend high school and acquire the skills necessary for Mathematics, English, History, and Science. Even after four years of "higher education" and a job in the career world, we still find plenty to learn.

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Now consider our spiritual life in the same way -- a life of learning. From the moment we are baptized and raised to *"walk in newness of life"*, we are like a new-born babe. We have to learn the *"first principles of the oracles of God"* and continue from there. Have we begun that process of "spiritual learning"? Have we learned anything since becoming a Christian? Are we still learning or are we at the point that we think we know-it-all already?

Certainly we must learn God's commandments. But, have we? Some have taken a lot of time to study the Bible and to memorize scriptures. We say we KNOW the truth. Yet, have we really LEARNED God's law? David was one man who could actually say he "learned" God's precepts because he experienced them. The trials and afflictions that David suffered taught him some valuable "lessons in life". Notice what he had to say in Psalms: *"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."*(119:71) What better way to learn the commandments than to obey them! When a teacher wants his students to learn something, he will usually assign homework in that area. The students then gain practice in the skill that will be learned by doing their homework. Although the homework may be hard and despised, the desired effect is accomplished. Likewise, if we are commanded to *"overcome evil with good"*(Rom. 12:21), will we not learn that lesson when we show kindness to those who persecute us and who hate us? It may mean hardships like David encountered, but the lesson will surely be learned.

A Christian must also learn to do well every day. *"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."*(Isa. 1:16-17)

Again, these traits can only be acquired by actually doing them! Just as a child learns his alphabets through continuous practice, a babe in Christ will "learn to do well" by helping everyone he meets. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."(Gal. 6:10)

As disciples of Christ, we definitely must learn of Jesus Himself. The Great Teacher instructs us on how this can be done. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."(Matt. 11:29) A simple reading of the Gospel will not make us "learn" of Jesus. Taking His yoke, forsaking all, denying self, and taking up His cross -- that is the true sign of one who has learned and "knows" Christ. In writing to the Ephesians, Paul could tell by the actions and lives of some that they had not really "learned" Christ. "But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."(Eph. 4:20-24) The proof of one who claims to have "learned Christ" is not by his words, but rather by his actions! "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."(Jas. 1:22)

Finally, we must learn not to complain about our lives. This may be the hardest lesson of all for most of us to learn. "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."(Phil. 4:11) No matter what we think, we have more blessings than we could ever count.

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, and all correspondence to:

Ray McManus
 5367 Scanlan Way Dr W
 Satsuma, AL 36572-2417
 Ph. (205) 675-5258

We have absolutely no right or reason to complain about anything! If we do, we are guilty of complaining against God. "... For that the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord."(Exo. 16:8) It is God, the Almighty Creator who has bestowed on us "every good gift and every perfect gift" that we now enjoy. Are we really dissatisfied with what He gave us?

All of us have put a lot of effort into learning those items which have gotten us this far in life. And as for our spiritual life? Are we as far along as we should be? Or can we LEARN a little bit more? If we want to get to heaven, first we have to learn those things that will get us there: learn God's word, learn to do well, learn of Christ, and learn to be content. It might take a lot of hard work and practice but the reward will certainly be worth it!

RAY McMANUS

FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ABOUT YOUNG MEN

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. (Psa. 119:9)

The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the gray head. (Prov. 20:29)

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. (Eccl. 11:9)

It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. (Lam. 3:27)

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (1 Tim. 4:12)

Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded. In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you. (Tit. 2:6-8)

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. (1 John 2:14)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS (A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

In referring to the Lord's Day the Psalmist wrote, *"This is the day the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."* (Psa. 118:24) For one to take the Lord's Day and use it for himself is to steal that which belongs to Christ. Some have made the Lord's Day their day, their family day, their travel day, their sleep day, their "forsake the Lord" day.

Some have made the Lord's Day part of the weekend -- a period of time that begins on Friday and ends on late Sunday night. The Christian who wants to partake of the Lord's Supper at night is a walking, visible confession that he is aiding Satan in his effort to steal away the Lord's Day and use it for selfish purposes.

Many so-called Christians are misusing their time. If Jesus were to come to our houses to visit us, some probably wouldn't turn down the television long enough to hear what He has to say. Some people slip into the assembly of the church, they slump down, sleep, and slip out. People like this need to wake up and they need to realize what the once - a - week Christian misses.

First of all they miss association. They miss association with the Lord. How in the world are we going to convince the Lord that we want to be with Him in heaven for eternity when we don't want to be with Him more than an hour a week? They miss association with brethren. The early Christians were so close that Luke wrote that they were of one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32).

For some unknown reason, some brethren feel no need to be around other Christians. I know Christians have their faults but they are still the best people in the world.

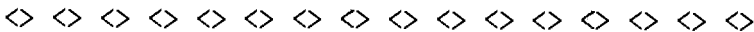
Secondly, the once-a-week Christian misses "edification". To edify is to build up. Edification and multiplication go together in the Bible. Romans 14:29 says, "*Let us follow after things whereby we may edify one another.*" 1 Corinthians 14:12 says, "*Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.*" How can we edify one another and help the church to

multiply when we are absent most of the time? One thing is for sure, we can't build a strong church out of weak Christians.

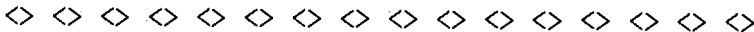
Thirdly, the once-a-week Christian misses "information". Vital spiritual information can be gained by attending all the worship services of the church. We all claim to be disciples, but did you know that a disciple is a learner? We need information so that we can carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19 ; Mark 16:15), so we can make known the manifold wisdom of God to a lost and dying world (Eph. 3:10), and so we can bring our children *"up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* (Eph. 6:4). We need information because God will not tolerate ignorance!

Finally, the once-a-week Christian misses an opportunity to *"redeem the time"*. Ephesians 5:15 says, *"Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time for the days are evil"*. What better way could we use our time than to assemble with the saints to worship as often as possible? Are you "redeeming" your time as a wise man? My friend, the assembly of saints is waiting for you. If you don't go now you may become weak and slip back out into the sea of sin and drown in hell!

MARTY LIVINGSTON
2500-A Gunnells Lane
Oxford, AL 36203



Be careful how you live; you may be the only Bible some people will ever read.



GOSPEL MEETINGS

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Place & Time</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Mar. 31- Apr. 3 (Th-Su) | Brushy Creek Church Lucedale, MS 7:00 each evening | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| April 3-8 | West Broad Street Wedowee, AL | Sonny Riggins (Sylacauga, AL) |
| April 4-8 | Freefield Church State Line, MS | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| April 22-24 | Poplar Grove Church near Burkesville, KY | Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL) |
| Apr. 25- May 1 | Carter Street Church Ashland, KY | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| May 2-13 (M-F) | Mt. Zion Church Crab Orchard, KY [Series on Revelation] | Harry Cobb (Atlanta, GA) |

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WEDNESDAY 7:30 pm

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Articles for this paper are solicited. If you can help spread the Truth, it would be most appreciated -- Editor.