

Bedford Bulletin

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November 24, 2019

BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE
FAITH
1 Corinthians 3:9-11

The Saddest Words Ever Spoken

“I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe”, “That’s not what that means”

I’d like to begin this article reminding you of what so many say to me whenever I get into a conversation about Jesus, the church and faith. “You’d love my church”, “You need to talk to my pastor”, “I love the worship at my church because it makes me feel so good”, “I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe” and my favorite “That’s not what that means”. The latter three concerning belief always come right after any Bible quote such as *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:19), “I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe”, “That’s not what that means”. *“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”* (1 Pet. 3:21), “I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe”, “That’s not what that means”. *“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned”* (Mark 16:16 ESV), “I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe”, “That’s not what that means”. *“And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name”* (Acts 22:16 ESV), “I can’t believe...”, “You can’t believe”, “That’s not what that means”.

Fact is, I do believe all the afore mentioned scriptures, and they do mean what they say, and the only thing I don’t understand is why can’t you believe? I am being a little facetious because I do know why so many refuse to believe the words of God and we’ll consider two reasons in this issue, both having to do with the heart.

TODAY WE CHOOSE TO REJOICE

Revelation 21:27

“But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

The first reason so many can’t believe and obey God is because

they blindly trust in the guidance of another, other than God. Jesus made this truth clear saying, *“...if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch”* (Matt. 15:14). It all has to do with what

Knowing & Doing God's Will

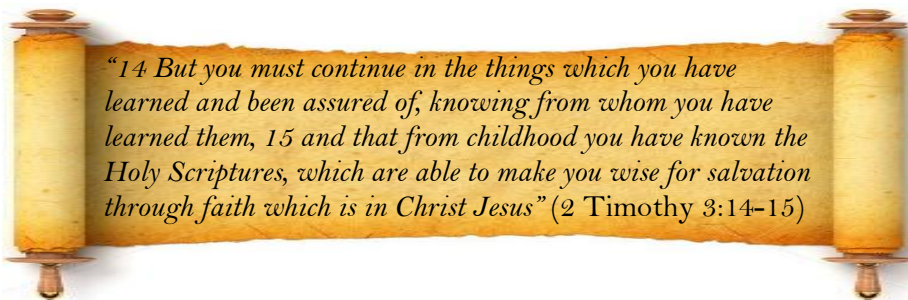
Proverbs 11:14

is “engraved on the tablet of their heart” (Jer. 17:1) and who did the engraving. Judah’s sin was that they believed men, they followed the way of man; “Thus says the LORD: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD.” (Jer. 17:5). Isaiah wrote concerning those who walk in darkness and gives the reason for the darkness: “O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord. 6 For You have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with eastern ways;” (Isa. 2:5-6). Notice with me the words, “because they are filled with eastern ways”. That is ways that are not from God. At the end of the chapter Isaiah concludes with some great advice “Sever yourselves from such a man, whose breath is in his nostrils; For of what account is he?” (v.22). My friends you’ll never be able to follow God if you put all your trust in another to guide you in spiritual things. Only by believing, trusting and obeying the authoritative word of God will one be found faithful. Remember the source of faith, that “...faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). So then, remember God’s promise to His people, “I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.” (Isa. 42:16). “Let God be true and every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4).

The second reason people refuse to believe the word of God is because they trust in themselves and not in the wisdom of God which comes from above. Solomon wrote of this saying, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding” (Prov. 3:5). Again, “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.” (Prov. 28:26). Jeremiah says, “Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom...” (Jer. 9:23) and again, “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23). I cannot begin to tell you of the number of people who have said to me, “I know in my heart...”, concerning salvation, the church, even how they “feel” God thinks. Isaiah 29:14 states this truth concerning God; “Therefore I will again confound these people with wonder upon wonder. The wisdom of the wise will perish, and the intelligence of the intelligent will be hidden.” When we trust our “feelings”, over the plain and powerful word of the Lord cause spiritual harm to ourselves and everyone we love, everyone we’re connected to. Jesus said, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matt. 15:18:19).

What is wrong with trusting in our own selves, our own hearts? When we do that, we’re effectively removing God from His throne, and sitting in His place. To this Isaiah said, “For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, ‘No one sees me’; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one else besides me.’” (Isa. 47:10). Isaiah said, “Surely you have things turned around! Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay; For shall the thing made say of him who made it, “He did not make me”? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?” (Isa. 29:16). What we all must do to avoid this is to accept true wisdom. James referred to this wisdom

as “...the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17). Solomon wrote, “Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding” (Prov. 4:7). Who is wise? Where does wisdom come from? God, and above. Consider the words of Paul as he closed his letter to the saints at Rome. “²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began ²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith— 27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.” (Rom. 16:25-27). God is alone able to establish you—you cannot do this without Him. He does this through the one and only source—the gospel and preaching of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16) then your obedience to the faith.



In the last November 17th issue, we made reference to one of the saddest stories in the Bible. Recorded in 1 Kings 13:15-24, after being invited to eat and drink by an “old prophet” the young prophet said, “I have been told by the word of the Lord, ‘You

shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.’” That old prophet said, “I too am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’” (He was lying to him.)” (vs.17-18). The young prophet “a lion met him on the road and killed him” Why did he die? Wasn’t he certainly sincere? Yes, but, (1) he listened to a man and (2) he believed in his heart what that man said putting himself above God. Ask yourself, do I love the truth of God’s word, or I love “another”? Again, are you obeying the true and living God, or the old prophet?

As always, in Love

Dave Scarpino

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel -----John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel -----John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ -----Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death -----Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22