

The Old Paths

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“If These Men Understand, Why Can’t We?”

Jarrod Jacobs

let Christ’s name last forever” (Spurgeon Memorial Library, Vol. I, p. 168).

This article will be a little different than most articles that have been written in this bulletin. This is because I am going to cite the words of four well-known men. The purpose of this is to make a point that the religious world seems to have overlooked. Using these quotes does not mean that these men were inspired of God. What it means is that we *can* understand the Bible alike, and that we will all speak the same thing (I Cor. 1:10) when we simply accept and follow what the Bible says (I Pet. 4:11). Please consider the following:

Baptism Saves Us:

John Calvin (Presbyterian):

“For he commands all who believe to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Therefore, those who have imagined that baptism is nothing more than a mark or sign by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers wear the insignia of their sovereign as a mark of their profession, have not considered that which was the principal thing in baptism; which is, that we ought to receive it with this promise, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” — Mark 16:16” (“Institute,” Book IV, chapter 13).

The Lord’s Supper:

John Wesley (Methodist): “I also advise the elders to administer

the Supper of the Lord on every Lord’s Day” (“Letters to America,” 1784).

Wearing Religious Names Other Than “Christian”:

Martin Luther: “I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for any one. St. Paul (I Cor. 1:13) would not have any should call themselves of Paul or of Peter, but of Christ. How, then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, my dear friends to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; and let us call ourselves only Christians after Him from whom our doctrine comes” (Life of Luther, Stork, p. 289).

John Wesley (Methodist):

“Would to God that all party names and un-Scriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgot; that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples at the feet of the common Master to hear His Word, imbibe His spirit and to transcribe His life in our own.” He also wished that “the very name (Methodist) might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion” (Universal Knowledge, Vol. IX, p. 540).

C.H. Spurgeon (Baptist): “I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but

There are other quotes we could cite as well, but these are enough to show us that these men had a clear understanding of such passages as Mark 16:16; Acts 11:26; Matthew 26:26-29; Acts 2:42, 20:7; I Peter 3:21; I Peter 4:16 and other similar passages. It also shows us that *we* can have the same knowledge and understanding if we will but study God’s word and apply it (II Tim. 2:15).

The question remains that if these men (who were either the founders, or extremely prominent in the various denominations that exist today) could understand God’s word concerning these issues, why can’t people today understand God’s word, too? The truth is that they (and we) can understand God’s word alike (Eph. 3:4, 5:17). Perhaps the problem was best summed up when Christ said, “You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.” (Matt. 13:14-15; also Acts 26:27-28; Isa. 6:9).

It has been rightly said, “It doesn’t matter what you know, but how you feel about it!” How do *you* feel about God’s word? It will judge us one day (Jn. 12:48). Are you ready for the Judgment day? Are you willing to take God at His word, follow His will and simply be a Christian (Jn. 14:15, 15:14; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 11:26; II Jn. 9)? The men we cited above understood God’s word, and we can too!

How Precious Is Our Life?

Aric Russell

As I sit here holding my newborn baby, there are many thoughts and emotions that run through my mind. First of all, of course, there is the joy and excitement that comes from this occasion. Being able to look into his little eyes and see the purity of his heart. Being able to look at him and know that he is truly a blessing from God, a creature that was made in His own image. (Gen. 1:26). I also, however, can't help but have some thoughts of fear. I am scared knowing the way the world is turning, and the way the people of this earth are turning their backs on God. I can't help but think back to the struggles I had to face as I grew up. However, I believe the challenges children face today are just a little harder than the ones I faced. Knowing that government has taken a strong liberal turn, knowing that technology has made it so much easier to access evil and to put wicked temptations before us, and knowing that people in general have taken a liberal, and denominational view on serving and worshiping God. But, the thing I think about the most is the value of this little guy's soul.

The Bible talks about the value of the soul and explains the importance of being ready when Christ comes back to call His saints home. Matthew 16:26 says, "What profit is it, if a man gains the whole world and loses his soul?" You see, we have a soul in us that was made in the image of God, and is worth more than all the treasure that this world has to offer. Our soul is our greatest possession. We

can see the importance of our soul if we look back to what the psalmist said. In Psalm 25:20, he writes, "Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you." In Psalm 140:4, he writes, "Guard me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men, who have planned to trip up my feet." We can learn from the book of Psalms that the soul is valuable and precious to God. That is why we need to, like the Psalmist, pray to God for guidance and pray for Him to lead us in righteousness.

Now that we realize the soul is important and valuable to God, let me suggest why it is that you need to chose to obey God today. James 4:13-14 says, "Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit. Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." You see, we have no guarantee that we will see the sunrise in the morning. We have no guarantee that we will make it through this day. Certainly, we have lived long enough to know that this life is unpredictable. Tragedy can strike at any time. We can be here one minute and then be gone in the blink of an eye. Because we know

that our life is short, and we realize the uncertainty of it, I pray you heed the gospel call (Mk. 16:16).

Editor's Note:

We welcome our brother Aric, and his family here to Caneyville as he begins our preacher-training program. We're excited to have him and his family with us, and excited to see the good that will come from the efforts of bro. Russell as he learns to be a preacher.

Our preacher-training program is just one of several ways we strive to spread the gospel locally and abroad. Please make sure and welcome Aric and his family, and please remember them in your prayers as Aric labors in the gospel.

Reflections

R.L. Whiteside (1869-1951)

It is not well to try to move faster than God moves. Some mistakes have been made along the line by good men and women. Abraham and Sarah tried to hurry up the fulfillment of God's promise that a son should be born to Abraham. They tried to move faster than God, and got into trouble.

(Reflections, R.L. Whiteside, p. 226)

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