

United Pentecostal Church International

Position Papers & Other Articles

Note: Most of the what you are about to read are excerpts from the UPCI position papers and also some additional materials from tracts. To easily navigate through this large summary on the UPCI's views of doctrine a subject index has been provided. Simply click on any subject to quickly skip there. While reading the excerpts, if you wish to return to the subject index simple find the term 'index' at the beginning or end of each subject and click it.

Subject Index:

Introduction

Computers & the Internet

Homosexuality

Technology

Modesty

The Apostle's Doctrine

- **The Bible**
- **God**
- **Father**
- **Son**
- **Holy Ghost**
- **Sin**
- **Salvation**
- **Water Baptism**
- **Mode of Baptism**
- **Formula for Baptism**
- **Baptism of the Holy Ghost**
- **Tongues**
- **Holiness**
- **Divine Healing**
- **Second Coming of Christ**
- **Resurrection**
- **Judgment**

Pentecost: What's That?

60 Questions on the Godhead

What Is Sin?

Except Ye Repent

Why We Baptize In Jesus' Name
The Gift of the Holy Ghost
Why Did God Choose Tongues?
After Death: What?
Divine Healing
The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress
The Way We Worship

Index

Introduction

The United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI) has been among the fastest growing denominations in [North America](#) since it was formed in 1945 by the merger of the Pentecostal Church, Incorporated, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ. From 617 churches listed in 1946, the UPCI in North America (United States and Canada) today lists 4,358 churches (which includes 4099 autonomous and 258 daughter works), 9,085 ministers, and reports a [Sunday School](#) attendance of 646,304. Moreover, it is also located in 175 other nations with 22,881 licensed ministers, 28,351 churches and meeting places, 652 missionaries, and a [foreign constituency](#) of over 3 million, making a total worldwide constituency of more than 4,036,945.

A Brief History of the UPCI

The UPCI emerged out of the Pentecostal movement that began in Topeka, Kansas in 1901. It traces its organizational roots to October 1916, when a large group of ministers withdrew from the Assemblies of God over the doctrinal issues of the oneness of God and water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

The basic governmental structure of the UPCI is congregational with local churches being autonomous: the congregation elects its pastor and its leaders, owns its property, decides its budget, establishes its membership, and conducts all necessary business.

The central organization embraces a modified presbyterian system in that ministers meet in sectional, district, and general conferences to elect officials and to conduct business of the organization.

The UPCI headquarters building, located in Hazelwood, Missouri, houses offices for its general officials, the [Pentecostal Publishing House](#), and a [Christian bookstore](#). Among its endorsed institutions are [eight Bible colleges](#), a [children's home](#), a [residency for troubled young men](#), [ministries to those addicted to alcohol and other drugs](#), a [chaplaincy for prisoners](#), and it endorses [chaplains to the military](#).

Doctrinal views

The [doctrinal views](#) of the UPCI reflect most of the beliefs of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement, with the exception of the "second work of grace," the historic doctrine of the Trinity, and the traditional Trinitarian formula in water baptism. It embraces the Pentecostal view that speaking in tongues is the initial sign of receiving the Holy Spirit.

The UPCI holds a fundamental view of the Bible: "The Bible is the only God-given authority which man possesses; therefore all doctrine, faith, hope, and all instructions for the church must be based upon and harmonize with the Bible" (Manual of the United Pentecostal Church, 19). The Bible is the Word of God, and therefore inerrant and infallible. The UPCI rejects all extrabiblical revelations and writings, and views church creeds and articles of faith only as the thinking of men.

The UPCI holds that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by works. Faith in Jesus is the means by which a person is justified. At the same time, a sinner must believe the gospel; he is commanded to repent of his sinful life, to be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ, and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 4:12; 8:12-17; 10:43-48; 19:1-6). Thus the various aspects of faith and obedience work together in God's grace to reconcile us to God.

Oneness of God

In distinction to the doctrine of the Trinity, the UPCI holds to a oneness view of God. It views the Trinitarian concept of God, that of God eternally existing as three distinctive persons, as inadequate and a departure from the consistent and emphatic biblical revelation of God being one.

The UPCI teaches that the one God who revealed Himself in the Old Testament as Jehovah revealed himself in His Son, Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus Christ was and is God. In other words, Jesus is the one true God manifested in flesh, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (John 1:1-14; I Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9).

While fully God, Jesus was also fully man, possessing a full and true humanity. He was both God and man. Moreover, the Holy Spirit is God with us and in us. Thus God is manifested as Father in creation and as the Father of the Son, in the Son for our redemption, and as the Holy Spirit in our regeneration.

Importance of the Family Unit

The UPCI stresses and supports the family unit as God's primary institution and teaches that the church is God's redemptive fellowship for all believers.

Index

Index

Computers & the Internet

One of the new technologies that has been introduced to society in recent years is known as the Internet. This innovation literally brings the entire spectrum of information available in the world into any computer screen. While much of this information is wholesome and useful, a great amount is lewd, pornographic or dangerous. In addition, the Internet provides a forum for direct interpersonal relationships via “chat rooms” and “e-mail.” Many people have been unwittingly snared into corruption by participating in these forums.

The UPCI recognizes that the widespread use of the Internet among our people in the workplace and in the home may not be reversed. At the same time, the very real dangers presented must not be ignored. We, therefore, submit the following guidelines to monitor the access and use of the Internet:

1. *Placement of the computer.* Any computer used for Internet access should be located in an area of the home that is used by the entire family. This discourages the wrong use by the operator because he or she knows that others will have knowledge of all sites visited on the Internet and what files or pictures are downloaded.
2. *Blocking software.* A number of programs may now be purchased which prevent vulgar or sexually explicit material from appearing on the computer screen. We urge our people to protect themselves and their families by placing one or more of these programs on each computer used for Internet access.
3. *Shared passwords.* Unauthorized or unsupervised use of a computer by a minor or a person who is not a family member may be easily stopped by passwords. It is also possible for two people to compose the password with each knowing only a part, thus insuring that two are required to access or unlock a program or Internet site.
4. *Log of visited sites.* Nearly all Internet browsers include a function that records all sites a user accesses. This log may be reviewed at any time. We recommend that all users be apprised of this feature and a regular evaluation of sites visited be made.
5. *Time-Consuming.* The interactive nature of the Internet lures many users into spending inordinate

amounts of time exploring it. Not only does it waste time, it is addictive as well. We urge our people to exercise great caution and restraint in their use of this medium.

The word that best enables us to regulate the use of the Internet is accountability. Anyone who makes use of this technology ought to recognize the insidious nature of the Internet, and that it especially affects users who access the sites secretly or without the knowledge of others. There are few other areas where the biblical principle of accountability means more than Internet usage. We believe that every effort to establish and maintain accountability is vital to our people who are involved in the Internet.

Excerpts: UPCI Position Papers

Index

Index

Homosexuality

Inasmuch as some segments of liberal Christianity have expressed a willingness to accept the so-called “gay rights” movement as a legitimate lifestyle, and

Whereas the inerrant, inspired Word of God emphatically declares, in Romans chapter I, homosexuality to be vile, unclean, unnatural, unseemly, and an abomination in the sight of God, and

Whereas the United Pentecostal Church International is a fundamental Bible-believing organism entrusted with a divine destiny to provide spiritual direction to a wayward world,

Let us therefore resolve that the United Pentecostal Church International go on public record as absolutely opposed to homosexuality and condemn it as a moral decadence and sin, and do hereby encourage prayer for the deliverance of those enslaved by that satanic snare.

Excerpt: UPCI Position Papers

Index

Index

Technology

Holiness as a spiritual experience and a way of life is not an option for a Christian but a biblical injunction. We are to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Corinthians 7:1). We are urged, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” and “be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:1-2).

Jesus said that we are in the world but not of the world (John 17:14-16); therefore, we are not to love the world, neither the things in the world, for the world appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life (I John 2:15-16). A Christian is “to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27), for we are to so live that we may be “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15). As a people who have been delivered from darkness, we are to walk as children of light and “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

Since the “whole world lieth in wickedness” (I John 5:19) and we are no longer to live “according to the course of this world” (Ephesians 2:2), and since worldliness is often communicated throughout society by the media, the United Pentecostal Church has expressed its concern that Christians may be

influenced by the media to compromise biblical holiness. It has officially dealt with technology in three ways:

(1) allowed its use without voicing caution or disapproval (telephone, automobile, microwave, central heating, printing press, photography, computer, etc.); (2) accepted its use with warning and restrictions (radio, video); and (3) rejected its use as being unsuitable for Christians or for their homes (movie theater, television).

The United Pentecostal Church recognizes that technology is not evil in itself, but it feels that it must reject any use of technology that favorably displays a lifestyle of worldliness and ungodliness. Moreover, since technology continues to accelerate in our times, the United Pentecostal Church and Christians must evaluate each new use of technology, especially media technology, in the light of biblical holiness.

The United Pentecostal Church accepts only the Bible and the Holy Spirit as its guides to determine the correct standards of conduct in this world, and it recognizes the responsibility to apply biblical principles in a changing world. Neither the Bible nor the United Pentecostal Church teaches that salvation can be earned by good works, but both contend that holiness in behavior results from a transforming experience of the Holy Ghost, and is therefore incumbent upon each Christian.

The church has an obligation to establish standards of conduct when necessary, but it refuses to make rules for every aspect of daily living. Each Christian is responsible to God to maintain holiness in his life, for God alone is his judge, but the church is also responsible to teach biblical standards of holiness.

As new media appear in the marketplace, the Christian must not accept their usage without evaluation of their impact on his spiritual walk with God. We are to “walk circumspectly [looking around us], not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15-16).

Excerpt from UPCI Position Papers

Index

Index

Modesty

Holiness involves both the inner man and the outer man (I Corinthians 6:19-20; I Thessalonians 5:23). We must perfect holiness by cleansing ourselves of filthiness both of the flesh and of the spirit (II Corinthians 7:1). For example, lustful thoughts are as sinful as an act of adultery (Matthew 5:27-28), and hatred is just as sinful as murder (I John 3:15). Holiness, then, includes attitudes, thoughts, and spiritual stewardship on the one hand and actions, appearance, and physical stewardship on the other. One without the other is insufficient. Inward holiness will produce outward holiness, but the outward appearance of holiness is worthless without inward holiness. For example, a modest spirit will produce modest dress, but modest dress is of little value if it conceals a lustful heart.

Holiness or sanctification is not a means of earning salvation but a result of salvation. As such, it comes by grace through faith. Holiness cannot be manufactured by words of the flesh but must come as we submit to the leadership and control of the Holy Spirit. We are holy in a twofold sense. On the one hand, we receive an immediate sanctification (separation from sin) through the death of Christ when we are baptized in Jesus’ name and filled with the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10). God counts us holy by imputing Christ’s righteousness to us. On the other hand, we must follow after and

seek holiness (Hebrews 12:14). We must strive after holiness and receive the progressive work of sanctification. We are already sanctified, but we are also called to be saints (sanctified, holy ones) (I Corinthians 1:2).

Early Baptists were at first grouped with the Puritans, but they began to organize separately in England in the 17th century. They, too, adhered to holiness teaching. Some Baptist groups still remain quite conservative on holiness issues. For example, the Baptist Bible Fellowship opposes dancing, drinking, smoking, gambling, and the movies.²⁷ In 1984 the Southern Baptist Convention admonished all members not to use tobacco or alcohol.

Many independent Baptists teach against worldly amusements, immodest dress, and women wearing pants, and women cutting their hair. Sword of the Lord Publishers prints a number of books and booklets that deal with these issues, including John R. Rice's *Amusements for Christians* and Elizabeth Rice Hanford's *Your Clothes Say it for You*. Liberty Baptist College, founded by Jerry Falwell, has a dress and conduct code for its student body of over 4000: "Men are not allowed to grow beards or mustaches, or to wear hair that touches their shirt collars or covers the tops of their ears. . . . Women are expected to dress modestly. Students are not allowed to dance or attend movies."

Many times what we wear helps to mold their expectations as well as our own. When a woman wears an immodest dress, she begins to think of herself as seductive and acts accordingly. Other people perceive her as provocative and treat her as such, which reinforces her behavior. In short, appearance both reflects and to a large degree determines what we are in the eyes of self and others.

We must ask what practices of the time concerned God enough for Him to inspire this passage. What clothing did Paul have in mind when he warned against immodesty of dress? In a day when women wore robes to the ankle, what type of immodest dress existed? If Paul found immodest clothing in an age characterized by greater modesty of dress than our own, certainly he would consider many styles of clothing today to be immodest. As Chapter 8 will note, many women of the time tucked in their tunics above the knee for convenience in certain activities, and the early church fathers considered this immodest. God was concerned about modesty of dress in a day when even exposing the upper leg was considered immodest. In Isaiah 47:2-3 God considered baring the leg and uncovering the thigh to be shameful exposure of nakedness. This gives us a good idea as to what God would regard as the minimum standard of modesty, regardless of culture.

The basic reason for modesty of dress is to subdue the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The exposed body tends to arouse improper thoughts in both wearer and onlooker. To implement the purpose behind modest dress, the body should basically be covered, except for those parts which we must use openly for normal living. This suggests that clothes should cover the torso and upper limbs. Reasonable guidelines, then, would be women's dresses over the knee and sleeves to the elbow. In addition, we should avoid low necklines, sleeveless dresses or shirts, very tight clothes, very thin clothes, and slacks on women because they immodestly reveal the feminine contours of upper leg, thigh, and hip. Likewise, swimming in mixed company is immodest. Since the primary effect of makeup is to highlight sex appeal, we reject makeup as immodest.

To some degree modesty is culturally relative. We must certainly dress in a manner that would be considered modest for the occasion and in the judgment of our culture. For example, 19th century society considered it improper for a woman to expose any of her leg in public. Applying principles of Christian liberty, a Christian woman of that day should not have worn a knee-length dress, for this would have brought reproach upon her and the Lord. However, there must be a minimum of modesty that is absolute. Otherwise, if society condoned total nudity, Christians could walk around nude. If so,

we could delete I Timothy 2:9 from the Bible as irrelevant.

Finally, the heart must be modest and motives pure. Conduct, gestures, gait, body language, and speech must be modest. If a woman wants to, she can display her body immodestly and act seductively even in the most modest of dresses. We must never use dress to promote immodest conduct, and no degree of external modesty can cover-up an immodest, lustful spirit.

A sign posted in an Orthodox Jewish district of Jerusalem provides an interesting definition of modesty for women's dress:" Passage permitted 'only' to women dressed modestly! Long dress, lower than knee length (no slacks).Long sleeves, beyond elbow length. Closed Neckline"(National Geographic, July 1985, p. 30).

Taken from the UPCI Positional Papers

Index

Index

The Apostle's Doctrine

"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12)

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20).

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (I Timothy 1:3).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16).

Foreword

This booklet is being printed and distributed with a sincere prayer that it may strengthen and establish the believer and that it may enlighten the thousands of perplexed and bewildered souls who are earnestly seeking, amid the maze of men's traditions to find the true doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With sincerity we pray that God will grant the reader grace to accept the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

We certainly do not want to miss heaven. Let us therefore heed the prophet's words: "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16).

The Bible

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, giving a true history of the creation of heaven, earth, and humanity and

containing a correct prophecy of the ages to come regarding heaven, earth, and the destiny of humanity. Moreover, there is no salvation outside of what is taught in its pages.

God

There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). He is the creator of heaven and earth, and of all living beings. He has revealed Himself to humanity as the Father (Creator), in the son (Savior), and as the Holy Ghost (indwelling Spirit).

Father

God is a Spirit (John 4:24). He is the Eternal One, the Creator of all things, and the Father of all humanity by creation.

He is the First and the Last, and beside Him there is no God (Isaiah 44:6).

There was no God formed before Him; neither shall be there any after Him (Isaiah 43:10).

Son

Jesus is the Son of God according to the flesh (Romans 1:3) and the very God Himself according to the Spirit (Matthew 1:23). Jesus is the Christ (Matthew 16:16); the creator of all things (Colossians 1:16-17); God with us (Matthew 1:23); God made flesh (John 1:1-14); God manifested in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16); He which was, which is, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8); the mighty God, everlasting Father, and Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6).

Jesus Himself testified of His identity as God when He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:7-11) and "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).

It took shedding of blood for the remission of the sins of the world (Hebrews 9:22), but God the Father was a Spirit and had no blood to shed. Thus He prepared a body of flesh and blood (Hebrews 10:5) and came to earth as a man in order to save us, for in Isaiah 43:11 He said, "Beside me there is no Saviour." When He came in flesh the angels sang, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost is not a third person in the Godhead, but rather the Spirit of God (the Creator), the Spirit of the resurrected Christ. The Holy Ghost comes to dwell in the hearts and lives of everyone who believes and obeys the gospel, as the comforter, Sustainer, and keeper (John 14:16-26; Romans 8:9-11).

Sin

Sin is the transgression of the law, or commandments of God (I John 3:4). The guilt of sin has fallen upon all humanity from Adam until now (Romans 3:23). The wages of sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:14) to all those who refuse to accept salvation as set forth in the Word of God.

Salvation

Salvation consists of deliverance from all sin and unrighteousness through the blood of Jesus Christ. The New Testament experience of salvation consists of repentance from sin, water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, after which the Christian is to live a godly life (Acts 2:36-41).

Water Baptism

Water baptism is an essential part of New Testament salvation and not merely a symbolic ritual. It is part of entering into the kingdom of God (God's church, the bride of Christ), and therefore, it is not merely a part of local church membership. (See John 3:5; Galatians 3:27).

Mode of Baptism

Water baptism is to be administered only by immersion. Paul said, "We are buried with him [Jesus Christ] by

baptism (Romans 6:4; see Colossians 2:12), Jesus came up "out of the water" (Mark 1:10), and Philip and the eunuch went down "into the water" and came up "out of the water" (Acts 8:38-39).

Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection are applied to our lives when we experience New Testament salvation: "Repent [death to sin], and be baptized [burial] every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [resurrection]." (See Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-7; 8:2).

Sprinkling, pouring, or infant baptism of any kind cannot be substantiated by the Word of God, but are only human traditions.

Formula for Baptism

The name in which baptism is administered is vitally important, and this name is Jesus.

Jesus' last command to His disciples was, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). We should notice that He said name (singular) not names. As previously explained, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not names of separate persons, but titles of positions held by God. An angelic announcement revealed God's saving name in the New Testament: "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

The apostles understood that Jesus was the name to use at baptism, and from the day that the church of God was established (the Day of Pentecost) until the end of their ministry, they baptized all nations (Jews--Acts 8:16; Gentiles--Acts 19:5) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact, Jesus is the only name given for our salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Baptism of the Holy Ghost

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the birth of the Spirit (John 3:5). This spiritual baptism is necessary to put someone into the kingdom of God (God's church, the bride of Christ) and is evidenced by speaking in other tongues (other languages) as the Spirit of God give utterance.

It was prophesied by Joel (Joel 2:28-29) and Isaiah (Isaiah 28:11), foretold by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11), purchased by the blood of Jesus, and promised by Him to His disciples (John 14:26; 15:16). The Holy Ghost was first poured out on the Day of Pentecost upon the Jews (Acts 2:1-4), then upon the Samaritans (Acts 8:17), and later upon the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-46; 19:6). "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

Tongues

1. Speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance is the manifestation God has given as the definite, indisputable, supernatural witness or sign of the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6).

It was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah as the rest and the refreshing (Isaiah 28:11-12), foretold by Jesus as a sign that would follow believers of the gospel (Mark 16:17), and experienced by Jews and Gentiles alike.

2. The gift of "divers kinds of tongues," mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 12:1-12 and concerning which he gave regulations in I Corinthians 14:1-40, is given by both for self-edification (I Corinthians 14:4) and for the edification of the church (I Corinthians 14:27-28).

In church meetings the gift of tongues is used to give a public message, and it is to be interpreted. Since this gift can be misused in public, it needs proper regulation (I Corinthians 14:23-28). Not all believers exercise the gift of tongues, which is different in function from tongues given by God as the initial witness of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Paul said, "Forbid not to speak with tongues" (I Corinthians 14:39) and "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (I Corinthians 14:8). Who dares to teach or preach to the contrary?

Speaking in tongues means speaking miraculously in a language unknown to the speaker, as the Spirit gives

utterance. Tongues can be classified in two ways, according to function: (1) speaking in other tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and (2) the gift of tongues as mentioned in I Corinthians.

Holiness

After we are saved from sin, we are commanded, "Go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).

We are commanded to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Titus 2:12) and warned that without holiness no one shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

We must present ourselves as holy unto God (Romans 12:1), cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (II Corinthians 7:1), and separate ourselves from all worldliness (James 4:4).

If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (I Peter 4:18).

No one can live a holy life by his own power, but only through the Holy Spirit. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

Divine Healing

God has made Himself known through the ages by miraculous healings and has made special provisions in the age of grace to heal all who will come to Him in faith and obedience. Divine healing was purchased for us by the blood of Jesus Christ, especially by His stripes (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:16-17; I Peter 2:24).

Jesus went everywhere healing those who were sick (Matthew 4:23-24), and He commanded His disciples to do the same (Matthew 10:8). He said concerning those who believe the gospel, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18). Mighty healings and miracles followed the disciples wherever the gospel was preached.

There is no sickness or disease too hard for God. Any of us, our children, or our friends can be healed by the power of God.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:14-16).

Second Coming of Christ

Jesus Christ is coming back to earth in bodily form, just as He went away (Acts 1:11). He will catch away a holy people (His bride, His church) who have accepted redemption through His blood, by birth of water and of the Spirit, and who are found faithful when He comes.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

"One shall be taken and the other left" (Luke 17:36). Will we be ready?

The signs of His coming are everywhere. The days of peril are here indeed, with forms of godliness void of the power of God; society and politics corrupted; and people's hearts filled with pride, blasphemies, unholiness, love of evil, and love of pleasures (II Timothy 3:1-13). These things, together with multitudes running to and fro, the increase of knowledge (Daniel 12:4), the persecution of the Jews and their return to Palestine (Luke 21:24), and scores of other things are starting signs that Jesus' coming is drawing near.

Wars, rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, storms, floods, distress of nations, perplexity, and people's hearts failing them for fear are sounding the solemn alarm that Jesus' coming is at hand (Matthew 24:6; Luke 21:25-28).

"Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12).

Resurrection

There will be a resurrection of all the dead, both just and unjust.

"Marvel not this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . . and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them" (Revelation 20:12-13)> (See also Daniel 12:2; I Corinthians 15:13-23.)

Judgment

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). For this reason there will be a resurrection for everyone. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10).

The eternal destiny of every soul shall be determined by a just God who knows the secrets of everyone's heart. "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Then shall he also say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:32-34, 41, 46).

* * *

The law-the Word of God
The judge-the righteous God
To be judged-our souls
What will the sentence be?

* * *

Life's opportunities past!
Reaping day at last!
Two verdicts pend:
Life or death!

The following references show plainly that speaking in tongues as the evidence of the Holy Ghost has been given by God to earnest, God-fearing people down through the years.

Scaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 3, page 2369, "Tongues, Gift of": "A phenomenon of the Apostolic age, technically known as the 'glossolalia.' In later time analogies have been found for it in the 'speaking in tongues' of the Camisards, Prophets of the Cevennes, Early Quakers and Methodists, 'Lasare' in Sweden (1841-1843), converts in the Irish revival of 1859, and particularly in the Catholic Apostolic (Irvingite) Church."

Scaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 2, page 1119, "Irving, Edward": "In 1830 the news was spread abroad of the strange speaking with tongues which occurred in widely separated parts of Scotland. In 1831 prophecy and tongues appeared in Irving's church and Irving fell in with the movement, heartily convinced of its spiritual basis and divine authority."

Scaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 1, page 422, "Catholic Apostolic Church": "Pious Presbyterian men and women believed that their organs of speech were used by the Holy Spirit for the utterance of His thoughts and attentions."

Encyclopaedia Britannica, New Werner Edition, vol. 4, page 749, "Camisards": "Speaking in tongues, accompanied by all kinds of miracles, was common among the Camisards and Cevennes of Southern France in

the 18th century. Children, under the influence of supernatural power, spoke and prophesied in languages unknown to them."

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings, vol. 7, page 424: "In 1831 the gift of tongues and prophecy appeared, it was believed in answer to fervent prayer, among the members of Irving's congregation."

Butler, Christian Denominations of the World, "Edward Irving (1792-1834)": "He proclaimed his conviction that the gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as tongues, healing, etc., were withheld only because of the want of faith, and ere long there were several persons in his church who claimed the gift of tongues."

Abingdon Bible Commentary, page 1190: "Scottish peasants spoke in tongues."

Webster's New International Dictionary, 2nd edition, page 1056, "Gift of Tongues": "A phenomenon experienced by some of the Christian of New Testament times, the nature of which seems to have been a kind of ecstatic utterance usually unintelligible to the hearers and even to the speakers, therefore requiring interpretation; glossolalia. Similar phenomena have in modern times been experienced by some of the early Friends, Jansenists, Methodists, etc."

*Taken from the Word Aflame Press Tract "The Apostles' Doctrine" #6103

Index

Index

Pentecost: What's That?

The day of Pentecost was observed in Jerusalem fifty days after the celebration of the Passover, which commemorated Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. It is significant that this day was chosen by the Lord to begin the fulfillment of Joel 2:28: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh...."

The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples in an overwhelming manner. Their complete commitment to Christ and His commission evoked a mighty baptism of God's power. This was evidenced initially by their speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4). The Spirit was resident in their lives from that moment. The Spirit-filled early church witnessed many outstanding miraculous happenings (Acts 3:1-7; 4:31). They were able to lead victorious lives as a result of their Pentecostal experience.

Two baptisms were disclosed on the day of Pentecost. There was a baptism in the Holy Spirit, and in the Apostle Peter's message that followed, water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was commanded (Acts 2:38). This outward, physical baptism mysteriously merges with that of the Spirit, and is the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5. This is what Jesus referred to as being "born again" in John 3:3-7. And how wonderful to be born into the family of God-changed, transformed, and made a "new creature in Christ Jesus".

No, Pentecost is not a denomination. It is a new birth experience. It is primitive Christianity made relevant to today's world. The people referred to as Pentecostal simply believe, teach, and receive all that transpired on that birthday of the church...Pentecost, 33 A.D. There is a church near you that embraces these basic Christian truths and experiences. You owe it to yourself to attend-and see what Pentecost can really mean to you!

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "Pentecost: What's That?" - #1567721335

Index

Index

60 Questions on the Godhead

Read the answers to sixty questions concerning the Godhead as found in the Bible.

1. Is the word *trinity* in the Bible? No.
2. Does the Bible say that there are three persons in the Godhead? No.

3. Does the Bible speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Yes.
4. Do these titles as used in Matthew 28:19 mean that there are three separate and distinct persons in the Godhead? No, they refer to three offices, roles, or relationship to humanity.
5. Does the Bible use the word three in reference to God? Only one verse in the entire Bible does so-I John 5:7. It speaks of the Father, the Word (instead of Son), and the Holy Ghost, and it concludes by saying, "These three are one."
6. Does the Bible use the word one in reference to God? Yes, many times. For example, see Zechariah 14:9; Malachi 2:10; Matthew 23:9; Mark 12:29, 32; John 8:41; 10:30; Romans 3:30; I Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 3:20; I Timothy 2:5; James 2:19.
7. Can the mystery of the Godhead be understood? Yes. Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9; I Timothy 3:16.
8. Has the Christian only one Heavenly Father? Yes. Matthew 23:9.
9. Then why did Jesus say to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9)? Because Jesus is the express image of God's person. Hebrews 1:3. The Greek word for *person* in this verse literally means "substance."
10. Does the Bible say that there are two persons in the Godhead? No.
11. Does the Bible say that all the Godhead is revealed in one person? Yes, in Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:19; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3.
12. Is the mystery of the Deity hidden from some people? Yes. Luke 10:21-22.
13. Who is the Father? The Father is the one God, particularly as revealed in parental relationship to humanity. Deuteronomy 32:6; Malachi 2:10.
14. Where was God the Father while Jesus was on earth? The Father was in Christ. John 14:10; II Corinthians 5:19. He was also in heaven, for God is omnipresent.
15. Did the prophet Isaiah say that Jesus would be the Father? Yes. Isaiah 9:6; 63:16.
16. When God said, "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26), was He speaking to another person in the Godhead? No. Isaiah 44:24; Malachi 2:10.
17. How many of God's qualities were in Christ? All. Colossians 2:9.
18. How may we see the God who sent Jesus into the world? By seeing Jesus. John 12:44-45; 14:9.
19. Does the Bible say that Jesus is the Almighty? Yes. Revelation 1:8
20. Whom do some designate as the first person in the trinity? God the Father.
21. Whom do some designate as the last person in the trinity? The Holy Ghost. But Jesus said that He was the first and last. Revelation 1:17-18
22. How many persons did John see sitting on the throne in heaven? One. Revelation 4:2.
23. If Jesus is the first and the last, why did God say in Isaiah 44:6 that He was the first and the last? Because Jesus is the God of the Old Testament incarnate.
24. Did Jesus tell Satan that God alone should be worshipped? Yes. Matthew 4:10
25. Does the devil believe in more than one God? No. James 2:19.
26. Does the Bible say that God, who is the Word, was made flesh? Yes John 1:1, 14.
27. For what purpose was God manifested in the flesh? To save sinners. Hebrews 2:9, 14.

28. Was Jesus God manifested in the flesh? Yes. I Timothy 3:16.
29. Could Jesus have been on earth and in heaven at the same time? Yes. John 3:13.
30. Does the Bible say that there is but one Lord? Yes. Isaiah 45:18; Ephesians 4:5.
31. Does the Bible say that Christ is the Lord? Yes. Luke 2:11.
32. Does the Bible say that the Lord is God? Yes. I Kings 18:39; Zechariah 14:5; Acts 2:39; Revelation 19:1.
33. How could the church belong to Jesus (Matthew 16:18) and yet be the church of God (I Corinthians 10:32)? Because Jesus is God in the flesh.
34. Will God give His glory to another? No. Isaiah 42:8.
35. Was there a God formed before Jehovah, or will there be one formed after? No. Isaiah 43:10.
36. What is one thing that God does not know? Another God. Isaiah 44:8.
37. What is one thing that God cannot do? Lie. Titus 1:2.
38. How many Gods should we know? Only one. Hosea 13:4.
39. How many names has the Lord? One. Zechariah 14:9.
40. Is it good to think upon the name of the Lord? Yes. Malachi 3:16.
41. Does the Bible say that God alone treads upon the waves of the sea? Yes. Job 9:8.
42. Why, then, was Jesus able to walk upon the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 14:25)? Because He is God the Creator. Colossians 1:16.
43. Is God the only one who can forgive sin? Yes. Isaiah 43:25; Mark 2:7.
44. Why, then, could Jesus forgive sin in Mark 2:5-11? Because He is God the Savior.
45. Is Jesus the true God? Yes. I John 5:20.
46. If God and the Holy Ghost are two separate persons, which was the Father of Christ? Matthew 1:20 says that the Holy Ghost was the Father, while Romans 15:6, II Corinthians 11:31, and Ephesians 1:3 say that God was the Father. There is no contradiction when we realize that God the Father and the Holy Ghost are one and the same Spirit. Matthew 10:20; Ephesians 4:4; I Corinthians 3:16.
47. When Paul asked the Lord who He was, what was the answer? "I am Jesus." Acts 9:5.
48. When Stephen was dying, did he call God Jesus? Yes. Acts 7:59.
49. Did Thomas ever call Jesus God? Yes. John 20:28.
50. How could Jesus be the Savior, when God the Father said in Isaiah 43:11, "Beside me there is no Savior?" Because "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." II Corinthians 5:19.
51. Does the Bible say that Jesus was God with us? Yes. Matthew 1:23.
52. Did Jesus ever say, "I and my Father are one?" Yes. John 10:30.
53. Can it be proved scripturally that Jesus and the Father are one in the same sense that husband and wife are one? No. The Godhead was never compared to the relationship of a husband and wife. Jesus identified Himself with the Father in a way that husband and wife cannot be identified with each other. John 14:9-11.
54. Does the Bible say that there is only one wise God? Yes. Jude 25.
55. Does the Bible call the Holy Ghost a second or third person in the Godhead? No. The Holy Ghost is the one

Spirit of God, the one God Himself at work in our lives. John 4:24; I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 12:13.

56. Can Trinitarians show that three divine persons were present when Jesus was baptized by John? Absolutely not. The one, omnipresent God used three simultaneous manifestations. Only one divine person was present--Jesus Christ the Lord.

57. Then what were the other two of whom Trinitarians speak? One was a voice from heaven; the other was the Spirit of God in the form of a dove. Matthew 3:16-17.

58. What did the voice say at Jesus' baptism? "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark 1:11. As the Son of God, Jesus was the one God incarnate.

59. Does the Bible say that God shed His blood and that God laid down His life for us? Yes. Acts 20:28; I John 3:16. God was able to do this because He had taken upon Himself a human body.

60. The Bible says that God is coming back with all his saints (Zechariah 14:5) and also that Jesus is coming back with all his saints (I Thessalonians 3:13). Are two coming back? No. Only one is coming back--our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Titus 2:13.

**Taken from the Word Aflame Tract "60 Questions on the Godhead with Bible answers" #6125"*

Index

Index

What Is Sin?

Introduction

This question is of vital importance because of the fearful judgment against those who commit sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," thunders the Old Testament (Ezekiel 18:20). In like tones, the New Testament declares: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The one who lives in sin throughout his earthly life and faces God without having obtained divine forgiveness will be sentenced to eternal perdition.

Sin sprang full-grown among men. Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God. The first boy born on this earth grew to manhood and murdered the second--his own brother! And sin has existed in every generation since.

In our time, however, there is one difference: many no longer know what sin actually is. Things evil are sometimes designated as good; things good, as evil. Isaiah condemned such a practice, declaring, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20).

Since this confusion exists, and since a person will not seek forgiveness for sin until he knows what sin is, a clear-cut definition, both negative and positive, is urgently needed.

Sin Is Not Necessarily Crime

Some equate sin with crime, feeling that to commit sin one must be a murderer, robber, rapist, or the like. Once, an evangelist passing out revival circulars was told that he should go to the local jail and try to convert a woman who had recently murdered her father. Certainly this woman needed forgiveness, but no more so than other sinners who had not committed a crime.

A crime is a sin, but not every sin is a crime. Crimes are committed against people; sin is committed against God. As an example, David wronged Bathsheba, and committed the crime of murder against Uriah her husband, but he affirmed, "Against thee [God], thee only, have I sinned" (Psalm 51:4).

Sin Is Not Unbelief Alone

Near the end of His ministry, Jesus told His disciples that the Holy host would "reprove the world of sin . . . because they believe not on me" (John 16:8-9). Misinterpreting His meaning, some have concluded that sin is nothing more than unbelief. But Jesus meant that unbelief would form the basis of sin. People sin because they

do not believe on Jesus Christ. Unbelief is sin, but it leads to further sin.

"Sin Is the Transgression of the Law"

This definition is given in I John 3:4. By law, the apostle meant the Word of God, which originally was the Old Testament but which now includes the New Testament as well. Sin, then, is the transgression (breaking) of a commandment found in the Bible.

Sins of Commission. Someone is guilty of such a sin when he does something that the Word of God forbids.

Sins of Omission. He who fails to do what he knows God has commanded is guilty of a sin of omission. "To him that guilty to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

"All Unrighteousness Is Sin"

I John 5:17 declares this truth. A person is unrighteous when he does what is wrong. According to this verse, then, when someone does wrong, he commits sin.

We should note that all unrighteousness is sin. Men are prone to classify sin as little or great, black or gray, mortal or venial. But to God, all sin is offensive and objectionable. As an example of the difference between man's and God's judgment of sin, man classifies the sin of lying as one of the lesser evils, but God places "all liars" in the same category as the abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, and idolaters (Revelation 21:8). Moreover, He pronounces the same judgment upon all of these sinners? eternal perdition in the lake of fire and brimstone.

What then is sin? Simply put, sin is doing what God forbids or failing to do what He commands.

Taken from the Word Aflame Press Tract - "What Is Sin?" - #1567220711

Index

Index

Except Ye Repent

Introduction

The three words of this title come from Luke 13:5, which reads, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish". Plainly, then, the tragic alternative to repentance is eternal perdition.

In view of this fact, it is extremely important that everyone knows what repentance is and how it is accomplished.

Repentance Is More Than Reformation

To reform is to "improve one's character or conduct; to become better; to behave better; to give up misconduct; to make better by removing faults or defects." One who genuinely reforms will, from that moment on, live a better life. And certainly this is to be desired.

However, reformation falls short in at least one vital particular - it does nothing about the past. It leaves upon the pages of God's record all the sins that a person has committed. Consequently, it leaves the sinner still under the sentence of death.

Suppose that a criminal who has been guilty of many and various offenses against the law decides to reform. From that moment on, he determines to be a law-abiding citizen. This would be commendable, but it would not absolve him from the guilt of his past crimes. If he is apprehended, or if he surrenders himself, he will still be called upon to pay for his past crimes, unless he is given a pardon.

The same is true of the sinner in relation to his past sins.

What Is Repentance?

Repentance is, first of all, a turning away from all sin. And, so far as this first aspect is concerned, it closely

resembles reformation.

But repentance further involves turning to God, in believing prayer, for forgiveness and cleansing from all sin. Such prayer is not necessarily vocal, but it usually is. The repentant person confesses to God that he is a sinner and asks for forgiveness. If he obeys the gospel, he can rest assured that God will forgive, for His Word promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9).

The Basis of Repentance

How is genuine repentance brought about? Paul explained, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Before a person can repent, he must feel sorrow for his sins. And this must be godly sorrow. For someone to be sorry merely because they have brought trouble upon him, is not enough. He must be sorry because he has broken the commandments of God, spurned His gospel, and thereby grieved Him days without number.

Such godly sorrow is the only motivating force for real repentance.

Repentance and the Holy Ghost Baptism

A person cannot receive the Holy Ghost before repentance. Jesus said that the "world" could not receive this experience (John 14:17). He meant that those who were unwilling to give up the carnal things of the world, through repentance, could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Peter made this plain in Acts 2:38 - "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost". It was no accident that he mentioned repentance first. In God's divine order, repentance must precede water baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost.

The requirements for receiving the Holy Spirit are repentance and faith. In many cases, those who tarry for this spiritual experience without receiving it simply have not repented. If and when this is true, it is useless for such a one to praise God with the expectation of receiving the Holy Ghost. He should first repent and claim God's promise of forgiveness. As his burdens lift because of confession of sin and as he feels God's love and mercy, he will naturally begin to worship God. And God will pour out His Spirit upon this repentant, believing, worshiping soul!

Time for Repentance is Limited

The time to repent is strictly limited by the extent of earthly life. There can be no repentance after death. Since in the normal course of events no one knows how long he will live, it is perilous indeed to procrastinate. The Bible declares, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

The time of repentance is further limited by the duration of a person's capability of being impressed by conviction. A continued refusal to repent when called by God's Spirit brings hardness of heart. Paul spoke of people who were "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19). Such people no longer feel God's Spirit leading them to serve them. They have lost all desire for repentance.

The apostle also asked this question: "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Romans 2:4). Think of the goodness of God to you, and surely your heart will be inclined toward repentance.

The Lord is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "Except Ye Repent" - #156722069X.

Index

Index

Why We Baptize In Jesus' Name

Introduction

The subject of water baptism has long been called a great issue and no doubt has been made such by many church leaders of the past and present. In our study of it, let us first consider its importance, or the necessity of being baptized.

The Importance of Water Baptism

Christian water baptism is an ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ. If it is not important in the plan of God, why did Jesus command it in Matthew 28:19? And why did Peter follow up by saying, "Be baptized every one of you," and by commanding the Gentiles to be baptized (Acts 2:38; 10:48)? We must remember two points about the importance of water baptism. First, whatever Christ definitely established and ordained cannot be unimportant, whether we understand its significance or not. Second, Christ and the apostles showed the importance of this ordinance by observing it. Jesus walked many miles to be baptized, though He was without sin, saying, "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (See Matthew 3:13-16.)

It is true that water itself does not contain any saving virtue, but God has chosen to include it in His plan of salvation. Peter explained, "Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21). According to Luke 7:30, "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized."

The Mode of Baptism

According to the Scriptures, the proper mode of baptism is immersion. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16). "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:38). "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Romans 6:4). A corpse is not buried by placing it on top of the ground and sprinkling a little soil on it, but by covering it completely.

According to the World Book Encyclopedia, "At first all baptism was by complete immersion" (vol. 1, p.651). And the Catholic Encyclopedia states, "In the early centuries, all were baptized by immersion in streams, pools, and baptisteries" (vol. 2, p.263). Immersion was not convenient after the Catholic church instituted infant baptism; thus the mode was changed to sprinkling. (See Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 3, pp.365-66.)

Repentance identifies us with the death of Christ, and baptism identifies us with His burial. Coming forth from the watery grave of baptism and receiving new life in the Holy Spirit identifies us with His resurrection.

The Formula for Baptism

Jesus commanded His disciples to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). He did not command them to use these words as a formula, but He commanded them to baptize in "the name." The word name is used here in the singular, and it is the focal point of the baptismal command. The titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost describe God's relationships to humanity and are not the supreme, saving name described here, which is Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Jesus is the name in which the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed. The angel of the Lord instructed Joseph, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name," and, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,...the Father will send in my name" (John 5:43; 14:26). Thus by baptizing in the name of Jesus, we honor the Godhead. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

Luke 24:45-47 records that just before His ascension, Jesus opened the disciples' understanding. It was necessary that their understanding be opened, and many today need this same operation in order to understand the Scriptures. Then Jesus said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." The disciples had their understanding opened so that they could grasp the vast importance of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Verse 47 describes the commission that Jesus then gave: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations [Jews and Gentiles], beginning at Jerusalem."

Peter was one of that number to whom Jesus had spoken and whose understanding had been opened. After

having listened to these instructions, a few days later he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to preach on the Day of Pentecost. The hearts of the hearers were pierced and, feeling condemned, they cried out to Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter did not hesitate but boldly answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Some say that Peter told them to be baptized in Jesus' name because they were Jews and this baptism was to make them acknowledge Jesus Christ. But let us go with Peter to the house of Cornelius several years later. Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, yet there again Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). (Most translations actually say, "In the name of Jesus Christ.") If Peter was wrong on the Day of Pentecost, he surely had ample time to be corrected before he went to the house of Cornelius.

Was Peter wrong on the Day of Pentecost? When the hearers were pricked in their hearts, they spoke to Peter and to the rest of the apostles (Acts 2:37). This included Matthew, who wrote Matthew 28:19. Moreover, when Peter preached, he stood up with the eleven Acts 2:14). Matthew was there, yet we find no words of correction from him. He surely would have spoken up if Peter had disobeyed the Lord. But all the apostles understood and carried out the Lord's commission. As Jesus said in prayer, "I have manifested thy name unto the men [the apostles] which thou gavest me out of the world...and they have kept thy word" (John 17:6).

The Samaritans, who were not Jews, were also baptized in the name of Jesus. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them...."But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.... They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:5, 12, 16).

Let us see how Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, baptized. He went to Ephesus many years after the Day of Pentecost and found some disciples of John the Baptist there. "He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:2-5). Although these disciples had already been baptized, the name of Jesus was so important as to cause them to be rebaptized in His name.

We do not believe that Paul changed the formula or mode of baptism when he baptized Lydia and her household (Acts 16:14-15) or the Philippian jailer. The latter came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And he took them the same hour of the night [shortly after midnight], and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway" (Acts 16:30-33). How can we doubt that Paul baptized these people using the same mode and formula that he used elsewhere, that is, immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Paul was not with the apostles when Jesus gave his final instructions to them in Matthew 28:19 and Luke 24:47, yet Paul baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. How did he know what to do? He said that his gospel was not a tradition of men but a revelation from God. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). Paul was chosen to bear Jesus' name to the Gentiles, and he wrote many divinely inspired epistles to the church. To this apostle, God revealed the mystery of the church, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5). Paul claimed to have divine authority: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Corinthians 14:37). And Paul wrote, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). Water baptism is done in both word and deed. We cannot afford to overlook this command to the church.

The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). The apostles not only preached baptism in Jesus' name, but they practiced it. Nowhere can we find that they baptized using the words "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Instead, we find them baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In baptizing in Jesus' name,

they fulfilled the command of the Lord in Matthew 28:19.

Paul said, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Let this be a solemn warning to us.

Some say that they will accept the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 but not those of Peter in Acts 2:38. But Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Peter was one of the apostles, and to him had been given the keys of the kingdom, so we have no right to discredit his words.

In Mark 7:8 Jesus said, "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men." History tells us that it was not until many years after the apostles that the mode and formula of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ were changed. (See Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 1, p.241.) Which means more to you, the command of the Lord or the tradition of men?

Taken from the Word Aflame Tract "Why We Baptize in Jesus' Name" #6109
Index

Index

The Gift of the Holy Ghost

Introduction

The gift of the Holy Spirit has become the topic of much discussion in our day. Men and women of all persuasions and from all walks of life have become interested enough to search for greater understanding of this phenomenal spiritual experience. Capturing headlines, dominating the content of many religious periodicals, and generally creating excitement, this canon of apostolic faith deserves a sincere appraisal.

The Facts

The Holy Spirit is God. "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24). "There is . . . one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4). To become a subject in the kingdom of God, Jesus said a person must be "born again," or "born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:3-5). The birth of the Spirit and the baptism of the Spirit are synonymous terms. The Apostle Peter understood this truth as he spoke to the multitude in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). This experience was received by the Jews on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), the Samaritans (Acts 8:15-17), and the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48), plainly indicating that it was meant for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, or station in life. The new birth, consisting of water and Spirit, was never set forth as being optional or unessential. "Ye must be born again" are the words of Jesus in John 3:7. Until a person is born of the Spirit, he cannot be called a "son" of God.

The Privilege

But why concentrate only on the absoluteness of the command? It is a blessed privilege to experience a release of spirit, finding freedom of soul and expression in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is no other experience similar to it. "Incomparable" is the only adequate description of this filling. The transition is to an entirely new realm and way of life. A complete transformation takes place. The soul has an empty place "in the shape of God" that nothing else will fit or satisfy. The baptism of the Spirit completely satisfies every longing of the soul. In this experience is fulfillment.

The Evidence

There are two major evidences of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The initial, outward evidence is speaking with tongues, which means speaking miraculously in languages the speaker does not know.

Speaking with other tongues has been connected with Spirit baptism since the beginning of the church age. On the birthday of the New Testament church, the Day of Pentecost after Christ's ascension, approximately 120 disciples of Christ were inundated by the Spirit of God and "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). The household of an Italian centurion received the same spiritual experience, which the Jewish Christian onlookers readily identified, "for they heard them speak with tongues" (Acts 10:44-48). In Acts 19:1-6, a group of John the Baptist's disciples heard about the Holy Ghost from the Apostle Paul;

they too were filled with the Spirit, "and they spake with tongues."

We cannot adequately express with our own words the ecstasy experienced in the baptism of the Spirit. Only through unaccustomed words of heavenly coherence can we utter what our souls would express.

There are perhaps several other reasons why God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of this spiritual baptism. It is an objective, external evidence that recipients and onlookers can both identify with certainty (Acts 10:46). It is a uniform evidence—all the disciples on Pentecost, all the household of Cornelius, and all the believers in Ephesus spoke in tongues. "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit" are the words of Jesus in His description of this spiritual new birth (John 3:8). Speaking in tongues also indicates the complete control of the Spirit over our human wills. The tongue is the most unruly member of the body (James 3:8), and its being tamed by God is evidence of His complete control.

Further evidence of the Spirit's abiding presence in our lives is the fruit of the Spirit, which Paul mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

The Promise

Was the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the apostles or early disciples only? Is it today available to only a select few who are "superspiritual"? The obvious answer to these questions is no.

The Apostle Peter made it very plain in his message on the Day of Pentecost that the gift of the Holy Ghost is for everyone: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). (See Luke 11:13.) Our faith, obedience, and submission to the Lord Jesus and His gospel qualify us for this most joyous of all experiences. (See Acts 5:32; 11:15-17.) As Isaiah 12:3 states, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Seek Him today, for "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah 55:1). This means you!

JRE

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "The Gift of the Holy Ghost" - #156722072X

Index

Index

Why Did God Choose Tongues?

Introduction

He was a deacon in a fashionable church, but he did not believe in the Pentecostal doctrine relative to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet he had been exposed to that belief through members of his immediate family. One night, at the close of an Evangelistic service in an Apostolic church, he went forward to pray and was overwhelmingly filled with the Spirit of God. He spoke in other tongues fluently and was so inundated in the Spirit that even hours later he could not speak English. Definitely, this was a biblical experience accompanied not only by speaking in another tongue, but also by the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost.

Millions have experienced this same baptism in the Spirit. Wherever this message is proclaimed, the question is asked, "Why did God choose speaking in tongues as the initial, physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost?" There may be many answers to this question, and perhaps we do not know them all. Several key points are apparent, however.

The Sovereignty of God

First, we must recognize that God is not accountable to us for what He chooses to do. Isaiah asked, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" (Isaiah 40:13-14). We have no license to question God's ways or to dispute His actions. His purposes are supreme, His promises sure, His performances sane and sensible. The following passages of

Scripture, when studied prayerfully with a hungry heart and an open mind, show that there is a definite connection between speaking in tongues and the baptism of the Holy Ghost: Isaiah 28:11-12; Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6; Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6.

Why did God choose blood as the basis for atonement? Why did God choose water as the element in baptism? Why did God choose gold as the overlaying metal for the ark of the covenant? Why did God choose stone as the material upon which to record the Ten Commandments? Why did God choose Jerusalem as the site for the Temple? Why did God choose dust out of which to form mankind? There is divine purpose behind these choices, although we may not understand all the reasons. We certainly cannot deny or disavow God's sovereign right to do as He pleases and to choose what He wishes.

An Immediate, External Evidence

One vital reason why God chose other tongues as the initial sign of receiving the Holy Ghost is that speaking in tongues is an immediate, external evidence. There are many other evidences of the operation of the Spirit of God in a person's life, but it is a matter of time before they are manifest. For example, the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 follows in the wake of the spiritual infilling.

Peter and the six Jewish Christians who went with him to Caesarea knew that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost, not because of longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, or temperance, but because they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (Acts 10:46). Peter specifically pointed to speaking in tongues as the irrefutable evidence (Acts 10:46-47).

Speaking in tongues is an outward, external evidence, instantly observable and heard. By contrast, peace, joy, righteousness, and spiritual fruit are inward, internal results of the infilling that become evident with the passing of time.

A Uniform Evidence

Another reason why God chose other tongues as the initial sign of receiving the Spirit is that speaking in tongues is a uniform evidence. It applies to everyone, regardless of race, culture, or language.

Some people quote I Corinthians 12:30 in an attempt to prove that not all speak in tongues when they are filled with the Spirit: "Do all speak with tongues?" However, this verse refers to the *gift* of tongues, that is, speaking a public message in tongues to be interpreted for the congregation, which is a spiritual gift that a person may exercise subsequent to the infilling of the Spirit. Though both tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and tongues as a later spiritual gift are the same in essence, they are different in administration and operation. For example, the regulations regarding the gift of tongues in I Corinthians 14:27-28 did not apply to the conversion accounts in Acts, where many people spoke in tongues simultaneously, without interpretation, as the sign of being filled with the Spirit.

Some people may question this distinction between the initial use of tongues at the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the later use of tongues as a spiritual gift in a Christian's life. But the same distinction is apparent with regard to faith. To be saved, everyone must have faith (John 3:16; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8). Yet I Corinthians 12:9 reveals that there is a special, supernatural gift of faith that can operate in a Spirit-filled person's life over and beyond the faith necessary for salvation. Saving faith and the spiritual gift of faith are the same in essence but different in administration and operation.

In speaking about the birth of the Spirit, Jesus emphasized the uniformity of the experience: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Moreover, Jesus placed emphasis upon the accompanying sound, not on sight or feeling. The *sound* of the wind blowing is evidence of its presence.

Some people conclude that Jesus referred only to "the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" on the Day of Pentecost. But this sound of wind is never mentioned again in the later accounts of receiving the Holy Ghost, while speaking in tongues is. Speaking in tongues by itself caused the Jewish Christians to recognize that the experience of the Gentiles at Caesarea was identical to theirs on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17). Hence, the important, conclusive evidence of the Spirit's manifestation at Pentecost was speaking in other tongues. The sound of wind was *impersonal*, but the speaking was *personal*. Speaking in tongues was the first evidence of each individual infilling.

At Caesarea all who heard the Word were filled, and all who heard the Word spoke in tongues. If some of them had not spoken in tongues, would the Jewish Christians have accepted their experiences? Clearly not. All twelve men mentioned in Acts 19:6 had a uniform experience. If ten of the twelve had spoken in tongues and the other two had not, would Paul have believed that the two had received the Holy Ghost just as the ten? Certainly not. Paul would not have accepted their experience if they have failed to exhibit the uniform evidence.

A Symbol of Complete Control

Speaking in tongues symbolizes God's complete control of the believer. Perhaps this is one of the strongest reasons why God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This symbolism becomes apparent when we study James 3, which provides more information on the tongue than any other chapter in the New Testament.

First, the tongue is capable of defiling the whole body. If so, is it incredible to claim that the tongue is also capable of symbolizing the sanctification of the whole body?

Second, though the tongue is a smaller member, it has never been tamed by humanity. It is the most unruly member of the body. If so, is it not necessary for the tongue to be tamed before the whole body can be consecrated to God? James illustrates the importance of the tongue by comparing it to the bit in a horse's mouth, which gives the rider complete control over the horse, and to the helm of a large ship, which gives the pilot full command of the vessel. In other words, whoever controls the tongue of a person controls him. And a person cannot tame his tongue by himself; only God can tame it for him.

According to Matthew 12:29, before someone can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, he must first bind the strong man. The strong man of our house is the tongue. We can tame every member of the body but this one. When God tames a person's tongue, that person comes under God's full control. He is in the hands of the Almighty. He has been conquered by Christ, endued with a spiritual force from on high, and empowered for God's service.

Humanity's Greatest Expression

The tongue provides the greatest expressions of the human spirit. We humans are spiritual and emotional beings, and as such we must give expression to our emotions. The ability and power to coordinate thought and tongue into intelligent speech is one of our highest prerogatives, elevating us above the beasts of the field. This ability makes us superior to the rest of God's creation on earth, and it is the most distinguishing feature of our being.

The tongue becomes the vehicle of expression for the spirit. All of the emotions--such as love, hate, anger, sorrow, joy, happiness, relief, serenity--are communicated through the tongue. The tongue is the gate way to the heart, feelings, attitudes, and spirit.

Conclusion

In light of these truths, it is not difficult to see why God has chosen speaking in tongues to express the greatest, most wonderful experience that we mortal humans can receive. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost, His Spirit and our spirit become one. He uses our tongue and voice to express this union. It is a wonder of wonders, chosen not by humans, but by God, the sovereign ruler of the universe.

Why fight against Him? Believe His Word, accept what He says, and you too can be baptized with the Holy Ghost, for God will give the Holy Spirit to all who repent and ask in faith (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:38-39).

**Taken from the Word Aflame Tract "WHY DID GOD CHOSE TONGUES" #6108*

Index

Index

After Death: What?

Introduction

Can anyone think of a more relevant question? All of us pass through the narrow passageway leading from this life to the next-the passageway we call death. We shall all experience the transition into a new realm, another existence beyond this life and world we know today.

Let us for a moment consider the personal experience we shall have with death. One day our hands will be folded across our lifeless breast and our eyes will be closed as our body takes its last ride to the cemetery. The purple curtains will be drawn. "The black camel of death," said one, "will kneel for each of us at our door, and we shall have no choice but to mount and ride off into the desert of darkness." Death is no respecter of persons.

Beyond Life...What?

We may only speculate on certain aspects of the future, not knowing much that it holds, but we do know the One who holds the future in His hands. And it is He who has revealed much of the future to us.

He who knows the end from the beginning, the future as well as the past, reveals in His Word that at death the body returns to the earth, while the soul goes to a temporary destination to await final judgment. Each of us determines in this life what our destiny will be; it will depend upon our response to the redemptive plan that God designed for the sinner's deliverance from eternal doom.

We may ascend to a place of peace in the presence of God, as Paul declared in II Corinthians 5:8. It is possible for us to dwell eternally in a place of happiness, bliss, and contentment, knowing that our redemption has been completed, that we have finished our course in faith, and that we are being rewarded. Or we may descend into a place of suffering, there to be detained until the final judgment and then to be sentenced to the everlasting punishment of the lake of fire. (See Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:22-26; Revelation 20:11-15.)

Both places are, in a sense, temporary, for we shall wait until our souls are reunited with our bodies in the resurrection. Jesus described the resurrection in John 5:28-29, and Paul spoke in detail of the first resurrection in I Thessalonians 4:16-17.

The resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the ungodly are separated by one thousand years of peace on earth (Revelation 20:2-7). The just of the present age will be those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb-baptized in His name and filled with His Spirit; the ungodly will be those who have refused to surrender to the terms of the gospel.

Final Reward to the Righteous

For those who are saved, there will be the city not made with hands-the New Jerusalem. This city is described in Revelation 21 as the eternal home of the redeemed.

Missing in this city will be the evil things that are found in every large earthly city. Gone will be all crime and violence. God's people will walk the golden streets without fear of molestation.

Revelation 21:18 describes the wall of this city as jasper and the city itself as pure gold. There will be no need for the sun or moon there, for the Lamb will be the light of the city (Revelation 21:23).

And, wonder of wonders, the redeemed will enjoy the blessings of this city eternally. The poet exulted:

When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.

The Fate of the Wicked

In contradistinction, for unbelievers there is "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8). The only emotions there will be agony and regret, and from that place there will be no escape.

The Present Determines the Future

Eternity-never-ending ages! A person's state there is totally dependent upon the present-what he does during time. His eternal destiny will be decided by whether or not he trusts in the redeeming blood of Christ and avails himself of its merits through faith and obedience.

Let us consider today the nearness of our souls to the rendezvous with death. David solemnly declared, "There is but a step between me and death" (I Samuel 20:3). Death is a certain step, and yet it is an uncertain step as to time, place, and manner. It is, further, a solitary step so far as other human beings are concerned. Only Christ can go with us through that dark valley.

Are you ready for that moment and for the eternity to follow?

The Bible proclaims how to prepare for eternity and enjoy eternal life with Christ: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

JRE

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "After Death...What?" - #15672220738

Index

Index

Divine Healing

Introduction

God is the Great Physician. His knowledge of the human mind and body is complete. He can do more for the sick and the diseased than can all earthly doctors and surgeons combined. He created us; is it not reasonable, then, to believe that He can heal us when we are sick?

The Provision of Healing

Christ's suffering and death purchased healing for us-physically, mentally, and spiritually. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows...With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4-5). This promise definitely includes physical healing, for the Gospel of Matthew says this passage was fulfilled by Christ's healing of people who were sick: "He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaiah the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17). (See also 1 Peter 2:24).

The healing ministry of Christ did not end with His earthly life; it is part of His work in the church today. He promised, "These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils . . . they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Listed among the gifts of the Spirit for the present-day church are "the gifts of healing" (I Corinthians 12:9).

James 5:14-15 presents God's plan for divine healing: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Laying on of hands and anointing with oil usually accompany prayer for healing, in accordance with God's Word and to focus faith.

Faith in the Lord is the key to receiving healing. The Gospels record that Jesus healed people according to their faith. (See Matthew 9:29;13:58; Mark 2:5; 5:34, 36; 9:23-24;10:52.) By the power of God the Apostle Paul was able to raise up a lame man at Lystra because he perceived that the man had faith to be healed (Acts 14:8-10).

Prayer for healing, like all prayer, must be offered by faith in the name of Jesus, with proper motives, from a repentant heart, and in submission to the will of God (Acts 3:16; James 4:3; I John 3:21-22; 5:14-15). God does not always answer in the manner and time that we expect, but we must always keep our trust in Him, even when we do not understand circumstances. Moreover, whatever healing or release from handicaps and weaknesses that Christians do not receive in this life, they will obtain in the resurrection, for their mortal bodies will be glorified and given immortality, and death itself shall be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26, 49-57).

Healing in Bible Times

God gave the first recorded promise of divine healing soon after He brought the Israelites out of Egypt. He told

them, "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). Psalm 103:3 describes God as One "who healeth all thy diseases".

The Old Testament records a number of miracles of healing and even raising of the dead. For example, God used the prophet Elijah to restore a dead child to life (1 Kings 17:22). Through the prophet Elisha He raised a child to life and brought cleansing to Naaman the leper (2 Kings 4:32-35; 5:1-14). God healed King Hezekiah in response to his prayer and added fifteen years to his life (2 Kings 20:5).

The New Testament records many healings in the earthly ministry of Jesus, and He performed many that are not individually recorded. "Jesus went about all Galilee...healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23). He gave sight to the blind, unstopped deaf ears, cleansed lepers, made the lame to walk, and raised the dead (Matthew 11:4-5).

After Christ's ascension, He continued His ministry of healing through His apostles and other disciples. Working through Peter and John, He healed a lame man who had never walked (Acts 3:6-8). Many miracles occurred in Stephen's ministry, and many people were healed during Philip's revival in Samaria (Acts 6:8; 8:7). Through God's power, Peter raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). And God worked special miracles of healing in the ministry of Paul (Acts 19:11-12). Comparatively few healings of that time were recorded, for Acts 5:16 states, "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one."

God Heals Today

God still heals today. Many contemporary instances are documented in two books published by Word Aflame Press: *Miracles in our Day* and *God Answers Prayer*. *These examples demonstrate that God's promise of healing is still being fulfilled.*

The good that medical doctors and medicines do is to be appreciated, for God is the ultimate source of all healing. It is He who has given doctors skill and intelligence, and it is He who created the substances from which medicines are extracted or manufactured.

Doctors and medicines, however, can only assist the human body in renewing the natural healing power invested in it by the Creator. Even when a person receives medical assistance, he can still look to God for divine healing. God can heal with medical help, but He also can and often does heal miraculously without any human assistance.

Many people in our churches can testify to being miraculously healed by God. And what God has done for others, He will do for you. Whatever your sickness or disease, He can make you whole. Look to Him today for your healing.

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "Divine Healing" - #1567220835

Index

Index

The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress

Introduction

In ancient times, as throughout many countries today, a person's social rank could be determined by his dress. Similarly, dress is a significant measurement of Christian conduct and practice. Christians can often be identified as such by their outward appearance.

Our people predicate their practices and beliefs upon the Bible. In baptism, we practice immersion in the name of Jesus as the apostles did. We teach and preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a definite experience evidenced by speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

Since we adhere as carefully and closely to the Scriptures as possible in matters pertaining to salvation, we also measure the standards of Christian practicalities such as clothing, by the same rule.

New Testament Teaching for Women

The New Testament makes several specific statements pertaining to women's dress in the epistles of Paul and Peter.

"I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2:8-10).

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands" (1 Peter 3:1-5).

Paul admonished women to dress according to certain standards and listed them in this order: modesty, inexpensive and nonornamental attire, and clothing that becomes godliness. To be modest means to be decent and respectful. The apostolic Christian woman seeks to emulate all the fine virtues of Christian womanhood, so she carefully and prayerfully selects her attire in order not to unduly expose her body to the stares of the public. She is not so old-fashioned as to look like a monstrosity, but she is deliberately methodical in choosing clothing that will dignify her womanhood without provoking the stares of the opposite sex.

She has dedicated herself to the cause of Christianity. This manner of dedication avoids expensive, extravagant clothing and superfluous, ornamental jewelry, permitting only the functional use of a wristwatch and a wedding band to designate her wedlock. The great needs of Christian evangelism and charitable assistance to the poor demand that she deny herself the exorbitant tastes of expensive fads so that she might practice the Christian art of concern for others. In this manner, she professes a godliness that stems from a heartfelt desire for virtuous, holy living.

Her hair style is again predicated upon the Word of God, which teaches her to let her hair grow uncut: "Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Against this picture of scriptural womanhood, we have the worldly female of today who tries by every conceivable means, it seems, to flirt with the hazards of indecency. Costumes and apparel that are inclined toward nudity are sought after intensely. The results are demonstrated in a wanton display of seminude parades on our public streets. Many authorities agree that this concentration on exposure of the body has contributed greatly to the serious problems of immorality that threaten the basic foundations of our homes and families. It has also been a cause in inviting serious sexual atrocities.

The worldly woman also makes a hobby of fashion crazes and style shows. She sets up a contest with her neighbors as to who owns the most expensive jewelry, who wears the latest clothes, and who has traveled the farthest to buy the latest creation. It makes for an interesting discussion over a cocktail, but it does not alleviate the serious problems and needs of a reeling world, which Christians are called upon to address with a Christ-like zeal to help desperate souls, both by their means and their consecration.

Distinction Between Male and Female

Moreover, the Scriptures teach a great difference between femininity and masculinity as to dress. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 22:5).

The desire to emulate men in dress has seriously affected the fine and noble characteristics of womanhood. Often it takes a second glance to determine the sex of a woman today, due to the distorted and strange garb she wears and the close proximity of her attire to that of a man. The Scriptures call this practice an abomination unto God, or something God hates.

Perhaps some will say this standard has changed due to the inception of the age of grace introduced by Jesus Christ. But this verse deals with moral law and with the nature of God, which never change, not with a ceremonial ritual fulfilled by Christ. Moreover, when the Apostle Peter wished to instruct Christian women about proper conduct, he used Sarah, the wife of Abraham, as his example (I Peter 3:5). Thus, we are not out of order in this instance to use a verse of Scripture from the law. We rightfully go back over the years and learn a spiritual lesson that sharply rebukes the customs and practices of our day.

Scriptural Guidelines Summarized

Holy women of old concentrated on adorning their spiritual life by developing the character of the heart. This is the major concentration and beautification of the Christian woman. Thus, the Apostle Peter used the great dedication of women of another age to impress the women of the first century with the need for the ornament or adornment of a meek and quiet spirit.

By the same token, we are within reasonable and scriptural rights to insist that Christian women today heed the influential, sensible, and divinely inspired advice of the apostles.

Here are the biblical guidelines concerning Christian example in dress for women.

1. Modesty
2. Moderation in cost.
3. Inclination toward godliness (decency).
4. Avoidance of outward adornment.
5. Shamefacedness and sobriety.
6. Distinction between male and female.

Guidelines for Men

The New Testament does not provide instructions expressly for men's clothing. Apparently immodest dress was not as much of a problem for men in those days, even though it often is today. However, in many instances it may well be said, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander."

The trend to indecent exposure is even having an impression on the male sex today. Comfort seems to be the overall objective instead of a cautious, considerate thought for decorum and dignity. But comfort can be achieved without some of the ridiculous, outlandish costumes now being displayed on our busy avenues.

We can honestly proclaim that the basic principles of godly appearance that apply to Christian women should also apply to men; namely, modesty, moderation, decency, elimination of ornamentation and costly finery, and distinction between male and female in hair and dress.

NAU

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress" - #1567220908

Index

Index

The Way We Worship

Introduction

If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled service before, you will discover that Biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. Join in with us as we praise God together in spirit and in truth.

Biblical Expressions of Worship

- We pray together aloud because in the Bible we read, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24).
- We lift our hands in praise because in the Bible we read, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless

the Lord" (Psalm 134:2).

- We sing with all our hearts because in the Bible we read, "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise" (Psalm 98:4).
- We play musical instruments because in the Bible we read, "And all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments" (2 Samuel 6:5).
- We clap and shout unto God because in the Bible we read, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph" (Psalm 47:1).
- We dance before the LORD because in the Bible we read, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs" (Psalm 150:4).
- We testify publicly because in the Bible we read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" (Psalm 22:22).
- We anoint with oil for divine healing because in the Bible we read, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).
- We allow the operation of the spiritual gifts because in the Bible we read, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Taken from the Word Aflame Press tract "The Way We Worship" - #6602

Index