

Prayer List



Of Our Number

- ♦ Janice Carnley—Shoal Creek
- ♦ Jennifer Derrick—strep, scans 8/30
- ♦ Wilfred Derrick—aneurysm
- ♦ Florene Howze—health problems
- ♦ Kynlie Lawson—improving
- ♦ Jim Ward—hip surgery needed

Others in Need

- ♦ Janet Andrews—chemotherapy
- ♦ Deb Aplin—health problems
- ♦ Sandra Cook—chemotherapy
- ♦ Elise Davis—shoulder surgery
- ♦ Ray Godwin—home now
- ♦ Gunner Griffith—implants successful; more therapy
- ♦ Brenda Mateer—cancer
- ♦ Paul Mayo—chemotherapy
- ♦ Thad McCall—health problems
- ♦ Mary Milsted—lung cancer
- ♦ Wayne Richardson—Covid-19
- ♦ Cody Skinner—motorcycle wreck

Continued in next column...

- ♦ Patty Ryan—Aug. 9 Vanderbilt
- ♦ Theresa Turner—Covid-19
- ♦ Randall Ward—tests
- ♦ Ronnie Wells—health problems
- ♦ Overseas brethren struggling

Events



Lord willing...

August 27

Faith and Fellowship

October 3rd-6th

Leonard St. Gospel Meeting

To Our Visitors



We are happy and honored that you are here! Please fill out a visitor's card and give us a chance to get to know you. If you have any questions about anything said or done in Bible class or worship, please ask. We seek to give a Bible answer for everything we do (Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 3:15; 4:11).

Privileged to Serve

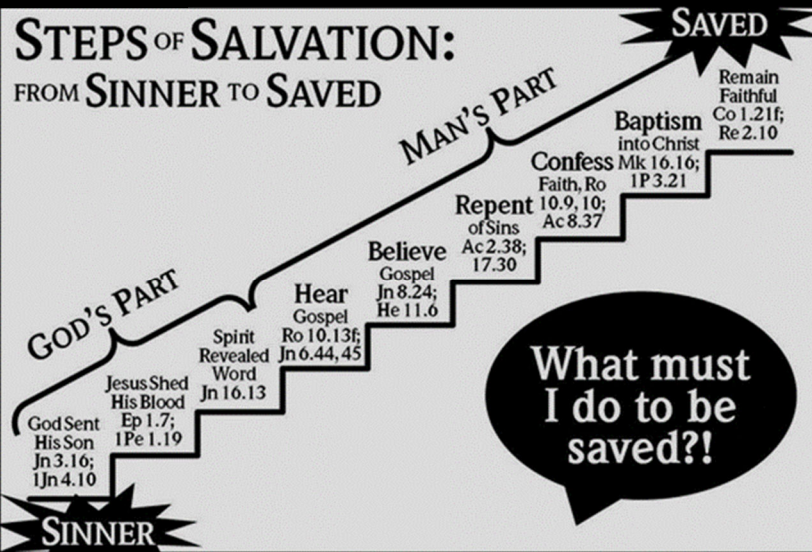


Announcements—Mark Howze
Song Leading—Sunday—David Howze; Wednesday—Caleb Howze
Serving the Lord's Supper
 Head: Leo Derrick; Helpers: Justin Derrick, Caleb Howze, Johnny Moss
Lord's Supper PM
 Head: Mark Howze
 Helper: Caleb Howze
Scripture Reading—Logan Holt

Faithful Worship — **1) Praying** to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke 11:1-2; John 16:23; Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6); **2) Singing** without mechanical instruments (Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17; Heb. 2:12); **3) Preaching** God's Word (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 20:7); **4) Giving** weekly as prospered, cheerfully (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7); **5) The Lord's Supper** on the first day of every week (Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34; 16:2; Heb. 10:23-31).

STEPS OF SALVATION: FROM SINNER TO SAVED

"...ye were the servants of sin..."
(Romans 6:17).



What must I do to be saved?!

"...but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17b-18).

THE BAKER BULLETIN

The weekly bulletin of

The church of Christ in Baker, FL

August 22, 2021

Meeting Times

Sundays:

10AM Bible Class
 11AM Worship
 6PM Worship

Wednesdays:

7PM Bible Class

Other Information

5761 Hwy. 4
 P.O. Box 285
 Baker, FL 32531 USA
 850-669-9117

Website:

churchofChristatBaker.com

Radio Program:

104.7FM Sundays 8:30AM
 WAAZ1047.com livestream

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An Honest and Good Heart

Jason Patrick Hilburn

Today there are a lot of people in "the Bible belt" of the USA and many other places in the world who would be described by most as good people—good religious-minded people who believe in Jesus, but are they all saved? Are they truly honest about what God's Word requires for man's salvation, or have many chosen to believe what seems convenient and comfortable? In religious discussions, whether online or in person, it is common to see many known as "good religious people" being dishonest, denying what the Scriptures plainly say. Perhaps they simply need to learn how to rightly divide the Word (2 Tim. 2:15), or perhaps they love tradition more than Truth (Mk. 7:9). In the parable of the sower, Jesus said there are four kinds of soils, or hearts (Mt. 13:1-23; Lk. 8:4-15). The type of soil is determined by the person's attitude toward the Word of God. If we really want to be the good soil, being honest about what God's Word says is more important than being generally known as "good religious people."

Honesty Comes First

Jesus said, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15; emp. JPH). Why did Jesus mention honesty first? Perhaps it is because many put on a show of faith, religious piety, and good works, but the real test is when they learn that God has plainly said something that contradicts their beliefs or lifestyle. This is often when their honesty is tested and their soil type is revealed.

During Bible times, there were many who literally plugged their ears because they were not honest enough to accept the Truth (Acts 7:57; cf. Mt. 13:15; Jn. 8:43; 2 Th. 2:10, 11; 2 Tim. 2:25; 1 Jn. 4:6). They were content to remain in their own little bubble of falsehoods and did not want anyone bursting their religious bubble! Men like Jesus and Stephen were bubble bursters, and they were put to death by dishonest religious people. Jesus said, *“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God”* (Jn. 8:47). Are there any dishonest religious people like that today, or was that simply a first century A.D. phenomenon? Today there are still many who claim to follow God but are antagonistic toward things God has stated very plainly. They claim they are *“of God,”* but their dishonest reaction to His Words say otherwise.

Friend, if God plainly says something that contradicts your beliefs or lifestyle, are you honest enough to admit you are wrong? Will you deny your faults like King Saul, or confess them like King David? (1 Sam. 15:15, 20, 21; 2 Sam. 12:13). If God plainly says something that contradicts your preacher, are you honest enough to say your preacher is wrong? (Acts 17:11; Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Thess. 5:21). If God plainly says something that contradicts your parents, are you honest enough to say your parents were wrong? (Mt. 10:34-39). It seems that many “good” people are not honest enough to do these things, perhaps because deep down they love themselves, their preachers, or their families more than God.

In psychology there is something called cognitive dissonance, which is a tendency to reject any information that contradicts what one currently believes. Being honest and objective can be challenging at times, but love is the key to overcoming this challenge! (Mt. 22:36-40). If we love God more than we love ourselves or anyone else, we will not allow anything to separate us from Him, including dishonesty (Jn. 14:15; 15:14; 1 Jn. 2:3-6; 5:3). We will accept whatever God says, because we realize being honest with His Word and actually following it is the only way to Heaven (Heb. 5:9). If we love our neighbors, we will not remain in error, knowing that the example we are setting is leading others to Hell instead of Heaven (Mt. 5:13-16). If we love ourselves and care about our own souls as we should, we will be willing to change and do what is best for our souls eternally (Mt. 22:39).

Many “Good Religious People” Are Lost

It was true in Bible times, and it is still true today. The rich young ruler could confidently affirm the many commandments he had obeyed, and he apparently believed in Jesus, but Jesus gave him a command he did not want to obey (Mt. 19:21). The ruler went away sorrowful, because his possessions were going to remain between him and the Lord, and he would thus remain “imperfect” in the Lord’s sight (19:21). The disciples were amazed and said, *“Who then can be saved?”* (19:25). This man appeared to be an upstanding religious person, but many who appear to be saved in the eyes of the world are actually lost, and even one commandment rejected is enough to keep them from Heaven (Gal. 6:1; Jam. 2:10). There are many religious people today who have many things right about their lives (as the ruler did), but their lives do not completely align with God’s Word, and they refuse to change. Will Jesus show partiality and usher them into Heaven, knowing that the

rich young ruler was rejected? (Mt. 19:23, 24; Acts 10:34, 35; Rom. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 1:17).

The Ethiopian and Cornelius were “good religious people” who were lost until they obeyed the Gospel in baptism (Acts 8, 10, 11). Saul of Tarsus was considered a “good religious person” to many, but he was as lost as he could be until he was baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). Saul needed to be honest enough to admit that he had been wrong. Saul proved he was honest, because he repented and obeyed the command given by Ananias. Interestingly, many who are called “good religious people” today dishonestly reject the same command Saul obeyed! *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord”* (Acts 22:16). God said that baptism was to wash away Saul’s sins, but many “good religious people” today are not honest enough to agree! Peter taught untold numbers of religious people that repentance and baptism is *“for the forgiveness of sins,”* but many “good religious people” today are not honest enough to agree! (Acts 2:38, 40). Their position stands in contrast to the honest hearts recorded in Acts, in which even people who had been “baptized” once in error were honest enough to be baptized again after gaining a proper understanding of water baptism (Acts 19:1-5), and in which the mighty preacher Apollos was honest enough to admit he had been wrong about water baptism (Acts 18). Friends, the truth is exactly as Jesus said: few will go to Heaven, because only those who actually do the will of the Father will make it (Mt. 7:13, 14, 21-27). That requires honesty!

Testing Our Honesty

If God says that something other than belief is required for salvation, are we honest enough to agree? (repent – Acts 17:30; confess faith in Christ before men – Mt. 10:32; be immersed in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins – Acts 2:38; worship God in spirit and in truth – John 4:24; do not forsake the assembling – Heb. 10:23-31; be faithful unto death – Rev. 2:10, etc.). If God says *“water...baptism does also now save us”* (1 Pet. 3:21), are we honest enough to agree? If God says there is only one saved body, which is Christ’s church, are we honest enough to agree? (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4; 5:23). If God says there is only one faith, are we honest enough to agree? (Eph. 4:5; Jude 3). If God says fornication is the only valid reason for divorce, are we honest enough to agree? (Mt. 19:9). Members of the Lord’s church, if God says the church must withdraw fellowship from brothers and sisters who refuse to repent, are we honest enough to agree? (Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 7:9-12; 2 Th. 3:6, 14, 15). More questions could be asked, but do we pass or fail such tests of honesty? (2 Cor. 13:5).

Conclusion

Just because someone is a “good” person in many ways, that does not mean that he is honest when it comes to God’s Word. If we reject what God has plainly said, we are not people of faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6). Let us always be open-minded and objectively honest with God’s Word, allowing Him to mold us into what He wants us to be (Rom. 12:1, 2).