

WHEN GOD SPEAKS

HEBREWS 1:1

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is impossible to know God without revelation. (1 Cor. 2.16)
2. Without knowing His will, we cannot be pleasing to Him.
3. It is humbling to know that God has made Himself known to us that we may do all that He has commanded.

I. HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF TO MAN?

- A. We need to listen when God speaks.
 1. Instead of listening to God, many argue. (Rom. 9.19-21)
 2. Job quickly learned that he was inadequate to challenging His Creator. (Job 38.1-5; 41.10,11; 42.1-3)
- B. God reveals Himself through His Son. (Heb. 1.1,2)
 1. When we want to know the Father, we need to know Jesus, for He bears the image of God. (John 14.6-8)
 2. God reveals Himself through the Holy Spirit given to the apostles by Christ. (1 Cor. 2.10-12; John 14.25,26)

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD

- A. It is a message we must seek out. (2 Tim. 2.15)
- B. It is a message we can understand.
 1. In what language was the Bible written? It was written in common language. Koinos = "common" (cf. Jude 3)
 2. **EPHESIANS 3.4:** *"by which when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ"*
 3. How did Peter ensure that his audience could know and understand the will of God? (2 Pet. 1.13-15; 3.1,2)
 4. Is faith possible without understanding? (John 20.30,31)
- C. It is a message that has been preserved.
 1. God has promised that His word would be available for all to know His will. (Isa. 55.10,11; 1 Pet. 1.23-25)
 2. The Old Testament preserved! (Matt. 13.14)
 3. The New Testament preserved! (2 Pet. 3.16)

CONCLUSION: It is time to hear the word of God!

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"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

November 26, 2023

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

"CHRIST DID NOT SEND ME TO BAPTIZE"

You may find this surprising as a Christian, but when you evangelize, your goal is not to baptize people. It is not your mission to bring people to water and immerse them. Even the apostle Paul said that *"Christ did not send me to baptize"* (1 Cor. 1.17). Paul's primary goal was not to baptize people.

Baptism is a necessary part of our salvation. One cannot be saved unless he *"believes and is baptized"* (Mark 16.16). Peter wrote that *"baptism...now saves you"* (1 Pet. 3.21). However, there are several circumstances where baptism does not save. For example, it does not save if the one being baptized is an innocent infant. An infant does not need to be saved, because he is not lost. Baptism does not save if one is baptized on behalf of another. Each one is responsible for his own decisions. Therefore, it is not our purpose to run out and baptize as many people as we can.

What is our purpose? What was Paul's purpose? Paul said, *"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel"* (1 Cor. 1.17). His purpose was to tell the world about Jesus, so that they *"may receive forgiveness of sins"* (Acts 26.17,18). The lost cannot be saved without being baptized. Our responsibility is to take the good news of Jesus to the world. Doing so will naturally result in their obeying the gospel by being baptized. Being baptized for salvation is the result, not the purpose. CLP

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“GIVING THANKS FOR ALL THINGS”

EPHESIANS 5:20

INTRODUCTION:

1. Gratitude is not an easy virtue, but it is something that should be part of the characteristics of a Christian. (Eph. 5:20)
2. The book of Psalms is filled with expressions of thankfulness, even when the writer was greatly troubled. (Ps. 100.4,5)
3. In a society that is characterized by entitlements, Christians ought to see the importance of gratitude.

I. THE PROBLEM OF INGRATITUDE

- A. The problem of sin and ungodliness results from ingratitude.
 1. The wickedness of the Gentiles can be traced back to their lack of gratitude toward God. (Rom. 1.18-23)
 2. **2 TIMOTHY 3.2,3:** “...*unthankful, unholy, unloving...*”
- B. Why is ingratitude such a problem? Because those who are ungrateful have forgotten about God! (Rom. 1.28)
 1. Why did Adam eat the forbidden fruit? (Gen. 3.4-6)
 2. The children of Israel had been blessed, but they forgot about God. (Deut. 4.5-8, 32-35; 6.10-12; 8.7-17)
 3. Too many take credit for what God has done for them. (Dan. 4.30; Job 2.10; Isa. 1.2,3)
- C. Are we thankful for the gift of salvation? (Rom. 6.23)

II. THE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE

- A. Gratitude humbles us realizing our dependence on God.
 1. God provides our daily provisions. (Matt. 6.11, 31-34)
 2. God provides a system of grace. (Eph. 2.8,9; Titus 3.4-7)
 3. The prodigal son soon realized just how much he needed the care and provisions of his father. (Luke 15.14-17)
- B. Gratitude makes serving God easy. (1 John 3.16)
 1. Are we grateful or entitled? (1 John 4.19)
 2. Being appreciative for all that God has done makes serving Him a joy. (Gen. 29.20; 1 John 5.3)
 3. The sinful woman love the Lord because she was thankful for being forgiven. (Luke 7.47)
- C. Remember the one leper who was thankful for being cleansed of his leprosy. (Luke 17.11-19)

CONCLUSION: Faithful Christians understand that they are blessed!

THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE

The world is searching for answers. However in a world that is filled with darkness and confusion, answers are not easy to find. The true disciples of Christ are to shine as a beacon of light so that all around many see. Jesus taught His disciples that they were “*the light of the world.*” And as such, they were commanded to let their light “*so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*” (Matt. 5.14-16).

Sadly, the light has been greatly diminished because of the religious division among those who claim to be the true children of God. Virtually every denomination and religious institution claims, as does this Calvinistic based site, to be “*the most biblically faithful systematization of the Bible's teachings*” [www.reformed.org]. While every different and contradictory religion claims to be the one true faith, it has created confusion and desperation among people of the world. Many have become so disenfranchised that they have even rejected the Sonship of Christ.

Jesus referred to the damaging effects of division when He prayed to the Father concerning unity. **JOHN 17.21:** “*I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*” How the world will come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and was sent by the Father is by observing the unity of faithful believers.

We cannot control the division and disharmony within the denominational world, but we have a responsibility to ensure that there is unity among the Lord's church (1 Cor. 1.10). Jesus taught that the peacemakers shall be called the sons of God. (Matt. 5.9). While the world is looking for the one true church, they walk into the building where the faithful meet. What do they see? Do they see peacemakers, or do they see people who are divided and filled with animosity toward one another. When there is division among God's people, is it any wonder why the world cannot easily identify the true sons of God? Yet Jesus said that the peacemakers were called the sons of God.

As Christians, we are unified in the same doctrine (2 John 9), with the same goals (Phil. 3.14), and with the same mindset (Gal. 3.2). We cannot be unified without also showing love for one another (1 Pet. 3.8; Phil. 2.1,2). Our success in the world is dependent upon our success within the church. CLP