

WHY ARE YOU WAITING?

Are you a procrastinator? I must confess to being a chronic procrastinator. We procrastinate for a lot of different reasons. We put things off because the task is unpleasant, we doubt our ability to complete it, or we just don't know where to start.

The Bible warns us of the danger of procrastination in reference to our relationship with God. When Ananias met with Paul, he cautioned him against procrastination by asking, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The Holy Spirit tells us that "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6.2). We tend to rush into sin. We have "feet that are swift in running to evil" (Prov. 6.18; Isa. 59.7). There is no hesitation when temptation is set before us. But when it comes to doing what God wants us to do to be saved, we put it off.

Is it because you are afraid of giving up the life that you now enjoy? Do you believe that being a Christian means an end to fun (Mark 4.18,19)? If so, you need to remember that the pleasures of this world are temporary, but the true joy of a life in Christ is eternal (1 John 2.15-17). Is it because we feel we are incapable of living the life that God expects us to live? Have you ever thought that since you cannot be perfect, there is no point of trying to live the life of a Christian? If so, you need to know that there is only One who ever lived perfectly (2 Cor. 5.21). The rest of us do the best we can. But when mistakes are made, we lean on the mercy of God for forgiveness (1 John 1.7-10).

Why does the Bible place such an urgency on your salvation? The gift of salvation is a limited offer. It will not be available forever. If you die before accepting God's salvation or if the Lord comes before you reconcile with God, the opportunity to be saved will have passed. There will be nothing left but "a certain fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. 10.27).

Perhaps you are currently separated from God. It could be that you have not yet obeyed the gospel. Maybe you are a Christian, but you have turned away from God. Instead of putting it off, make the decision today, while it is still called today. Obey the gospel and have your sins washed away. Or if you are an unfaithful Christian, turn away from your sin and turn back to God...before it is eternally too late.

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

April 3, 2022

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 7:30 PM

WHO ARE THE SPIRITUAL?

Occasionally, someone will claim, "I am spiritual, but I'm not religious." The meaning behind such a statement is that one has spiritual awareness but is not bound to the restraints imposed by religion. One has a connection with God but does not follow a strictness of religious doctrines. If we are honest with the Bible, it becomes clear one cannot be spiritual without being religious. It is impossible to have a relationship with God without adhering to His will. What does the Bible say about being spiritual?

In Romans 8, I find that I am saved based on two conditions. First, salvation belongs "to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8.1). Second, salvation belongs to those "who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (Rom. 8.1). I am spiritual when I walk according to the Spirit. But what does that mean? To walk according to the Spirit is to allow the Spirit to direct my thoughts (Rom. 8.5,6). To walk according to the Spirit is to allow the Spirit to direct my actions (Rom. 8.13,14). A comprehensive study of the New Testament will reveal that the Spirit is the means by which the word of God is revealed. Thus to live by the Spirit is to direct your mind and actions by the word of God (John 14.12-15).

I am not spiritual because I oppose the doctrines of religion. I am spiritual because my religion conforms to the commandments and teachings of the Bible.

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THE LOVE OF A SPIRITUAL MOTHER

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7

INTRODUCTION:

1. As the church, we are a spiritual family. (1 Tim. 3.15; Eph. 3.15)
2. As a spiritual family, we have God as our Father, but we also have a spiritual mother.

I. THE IDENTITY OF OUR SPIRITUAL MOTHER

- A. There is a comparison between the Old Law of Moses and the New Law of Christ. (Gal. 4.21-23)
 1. **GALATIANS 4.21:** *“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?”*
 2. **GALATIANS 4.22:** *“For it is written that Abraham had two sons.”* The two sons were Isaac and Ishmael.
 3. **GALATIANS 4.23:** One was born of a slave. The other was born free.
- B. What is the point that is being made?
 1. **GALATIANS 4.24:** *“which things are symbolic.”*
 2. **GALATIANS 4.25:** *“Hagar... corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.”*
 3. **GALATIANS 4.26:** *“but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”* The church. (Rom. 9.6,7)

II. THE FEELINGS OF A MOTHER

- A. Three words that describe how Paul felt for the brethren.
 1. Greed: Paul did not come with a “cloak for covetousness.” (1 Thes. 2.4,5; 1 Tim. 6.5; 1 Cor. 5.11)
 2. Glory: Paul did not come to receive the accolades of his brethren. (1 Thess. 2.6; John 12.42,43; 1 John 2.16)
 3. Gentle: Paul came to show gentleness. (1 Thess. 2.7)
- B. A mother cares.
 1. **1 THESSALONIANS 2.7:** *“as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.”* Cherish – “to care; impart warmth”
 2. We care for those who hurt. (Mark 4.38; Luke 10.34)
 3. We care for the weak. (1 Cor. 8.9)
 4. We care for those who are alone. (1 Tim. 5.16)
- C. A mother shares
 1. **1 THESSALONIANS 2.8:** *“we were well pleased to impart... our own lives”* Impart – “share, give”
 2. We give our physical resources. (1 John 3.17)
 3. We give forgiveness. (Luke 6.38)
 4. We give kindness. (Rom. 12.20)

CONCLUSION: Do you know someone who is in need?

THE BIBLE: THE VERY WORD OF GOD

The Bible itself claims to be the word of God. Paul told Timothy that *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God”* (2 Tim. 3.16). To the Thessalonians, Paul wrote that when *“you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God”* (1 Thess. 2.13). Yet there are some who reject the Bible as being from God. The claim is that the Bible is a product of men. It has been altered over the years. There have been backroom deals by politicians who decide what is and is not part of the Bible. It is filled with contradictions and mistakes. And therefore cannot be from God.

How do we know that the Bible is the very word of God? The Bible did not float down from heaven and land in our hands. Each and every book from Genesis to Revelation was written by men. Alexander Pope wrote in an essay that was published in 1711, *“To err is human.”* It has been proven repeatedly that humans make mistakes. I cannot write an article or preach a sermon without there being mistakes. If the Bible originated with man, then it must, of necessity, have mistakes.

The single reason why we can know that the Bible is the very word of God is because there are no mistakes. Though the words of the Bible were written by man, the Bible did not originate with man. Instead, these men were miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised His apostles that the Holy Spirit *“will guide you into all truth”* (John 16.13). On the day of Pentecost, the apostles spoke *“as the Spirit gave them utterance”* (Acts 2.4). Peter explains that *“holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”* (2 Pet. 1.21).

If the Bible had mistakes, then it would stand to reason that it originated from man and not God. Yet this is a book that was written by forty men over a period of two thousand years, and there is not one mistake or contradiction among these writers. This can only mean that it originated from God.

Is it possible that the original Bible which was inspired of God became corrupt? Is it possible that over the years, the Bible was changed or parts of it rewritten? Skeptics claim that it is impossible for any writing including the Bible to be passed down from generation to generation, translated into different languages, and still be exactly the same as it was in the original. We would respond to such criticism with the words of Jesus: *“With men, this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Matt. 19.26).

The Bible is the word of God. Through divine providence, it has been preserved. Quoting the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, Peter wrote, *“But the word of the Lord endures forever”* (1 Pet. 1.25). CLP