

I Can't Get a Yes from the Holy Ghost

Sometime ago during a Gospel meeting held by brother William Cline at Eagle Lake, Florida, a married couple presented themselves at the close of the Lord's Day evening services. After they expressed regrets for arriving late, they began to distribute cards. The cards bore the "two most important scriptures in the Bible," according to the two late visitors.

The two Scriptures on the cards were John 3:16 and 1 John 4:1-3. These two people were devotees of the Pentecostal movement. They may have intended to visit the Assembly of God Church which meets around the corner from the Eagle Lake congregation, but had stopped too soon.

They said the Spirit led them to us. I began a discussion with the couple, and before long brother Cline joined in. The couple misunderstood 1 John 4:1-3, and that misunderstanding became the center of our discussion. They claimed to have the Holy Ghost in a very special way, and asserted that He spoke to them revealing the true meaning of the Word of God.

They attempted to use 1 John 4:1-3 to teach that one had to (1) confess verbally that Jesus has come in the flesh and (2) that such confession must be made in prayer to the Holy Ghost so that (3) the Holy Ghost could be tried. If one followed these three steps, then the Holy Ghost would reveal the meaning of any portion of the Word or provide an answer to any query.

The couple also said they could not sin at all because of having the Holy Ghost. Brother Cline and I used Scripture to show them they did not have the Holy Spirit in the same way the apostles had the Spirit, and that the Spirit does not speak directly to men today. We also used 1 John 1:8-10 to refute the idea of perfectionism (living sinless).

We tried to set up a time for further discussion, but the couple refused. Most distressing was the way they blocked logic from their minds. When asked to answer an argument from Scripture, they bowed their heads and mumbled a prayer that began, "Blessed Holy Spirit we confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." At that point their words became incoherent. After finishing they would raise their heads and say something like, "The verse doesn't mean what it says." I tried to convince them that illumination of the Word by the Spirit is unnecessary by showing that I, who disavowed such power, could understand a verse exactly. I said Jude verse one teaches Jude was the Lord's servant. They said they would have to ask the Holy Ghost before they could tell me whether Jude 1 teaches that Jude was the Lord's servant. This response stunned me.

The man accused brother Cline of using a devil's trick because he pointed out the force of the Greek in the present tense construction of 1 John 3:9. Apparently they did not know that the Spirit originally used Koine Greek to write the passage. The man also mangled 1 John 1:8 by claiming that he had sinned in the past, and it was on his record, but now he was unable to sin. He said this was the true meaning of the passage.

When asked for their name and address, the couple said that they had to ask the Holy Ghost for permission, and began their ritual. A short while later, the man lifted his head and said, "I can't get a yes from the Holy Ghost." His wife nodded the same. To this day I don't know where they came from, nor where they have gone.

Recently, a leader of the Boston Discipling Movement made claims of special divine guidance. He claims to be led by the Spirit of God in the decisions he makes, and in the rules he gives. He also claims the Spirit helps him to lead a perfect, sinless life. This type of thinking calls for more dramatic pronouncements, so "Hold onto your hat! You ain't seen nothin' yet!"

Jeremiah said:

Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart (Jer. 14:14).

Daniel Denham
Newport News

BELVEDERE BEACON

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)

Volume 10 Number 4 January 25, 2009

A PUBLICATION OF THE BELVEDERE CHURCH OF CHRIST

535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841-2574

(Greater Augusta, GA area)

A Warning from Jehoshaphat

Jehoshaphat began his 25-year reign as king in Judah about 100 years after the death of his great-great-grandfather, king David of Israel, around 914 b.c. (1 Kin. 2:12; 11:43; 14:31; 15:8; 22:41). He did not walk in the sins of his grandfather, Abijam, and his great grandfather, Rehoboam (14:31-15:3), but did that which was "right in the eyes of the Lord," like his father, Asa (22:43). Inspiration declares many good things about Jehoshaphat and his rule:

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the *Lord* God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. Therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah (2 Chr. 17:3-6).

Moreover, he sent Levites forth with his princes to be sure that God's Word was taught in the land:

And they taught in Judah, and *had* the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people (cf. 17:7-9).

God blessed and strengthened Judah during this time (cf. 17:10-19). In fact:

the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat (17:10).

Nevertheless, the fourth king of Judah made a serious mistake. "Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance; and by marriage he allied himself with Ahab" (18:1—NKJV). There was really no excuse for giving his son, Jehoram, in marriage to the daughter of Ahab, who was infamous for his great wickedness:

And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that *were* before him.... And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him (1 Kin. 16:30, 33).

Continued on page 3

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.

Morning Worship 11.00 am.

Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

www.belvederechurchofchrist.org E-mail church@belvederechurchofchrist.org

BUZZWORDS

Most have heard of the expression “buzzwords.” Sometimes these are even used by members of the Lord’s Church. The latest of these in the Lord’s church seem to be: “I have no desire to become involved in brotherhood politics.” To deny that there are at times “politics” in the church is to be naïve. However, when the expression is used today, the brother or sister saying them is usually involved in politics in the church up to his or her neck.

Let me explain. Most of the time when a brother or sister uses the statement, or a similar one, they are implying that they do not wish to take sides in a particular situation but, in reality have made a stand with the wrong side – the sides opposed to the truth of God – but they want to make out that they are “neutral.” Often times this is because they do not want to take a stand against the college, university or school of preaching they attended that has become involved in that which they ought not. At other times it is because members of their fleshly family or their close friends are standing in opposition to the word of God. Sometimes, the refusal to take a stand stems from financial motives – they might lose their jobs or financial support if they expose the error. At other times, it might be because they feel that a “good work” would be harmed financially if the one who heads up that work or is supported in that work is exposed. Such says that a “work” that is being done is more important than respecting the teaching of God’s Word. Rather than take a stand for the truth, they respond: “I have no desire to become involved in brotherhood politics.”

Often times this involves a false teacher that some are unwilling to mark and avoid (Romans 16:17) and no longer fellowship (II John 9-11). Rather than take a stand for the truth, they will give the school or their friends a “pass” rather than do as the Lord has commanded. These same individuals would not teach the same error, indeed often they believe it to be error and have previously taught against it but they have chosen, without biblical warrant, to determine that the error concerned is not now something that should disrupt fellowship. Further, you would probably find that they would teach the truth in everything that they say and write and they will oppose other error strongly, as they should, in accordance with biblical teaching, but because of “brotherhood politics” they chose to apply the “passover” to certain individuals, schools, programs etc.

One of the outgrowths of such “brotherhood politics” comes, because of they applied the “passover” to one, they begin to look at other error in the same way and thus desire to do the same in another situation. Where will such lead? It will mean they will widen the fellowship to include more who are not in fellowship with God.

Brethren, these things ought not so to be. False teaching is false teaching and a false teacher is a false teacher. Thus, the Biblical injunctions of marking and avoiding (Romans 16:17) and withdrawal of fellowship (II John 9:11) should be applied, equally, to those who persist in false teaching and will not repent.

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick’s aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron’ sister who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, Lanny Niver together with his daughter, Justine Hall’s husband, Joe and Tim Smith.

Lanny Niver is back from Atlanta, he is on some new medicine as they evaluate what further steps to take.

Joe Hall, husband of Justine, continues to do well at home.

Helen Culpepper had some skin cancers on her back removed this past week.

Glenn Aaron had a surgical procedure this past week and is doing well.

A Warning from Jehoshaphat Continued from page 1.

Ahab was “stirred up” to “work wickedness in the sight of the Lord” by his wicked wife, Jezebel (21:25; cf. 16:31). In like manner, their daughter, Athaliah, would influence her husband and Jehoshaphat’s son, Jehoram, to do “evil in the eyes of the Lord” (2 Chr. 21:6). After Jehoram succeeded Jehoshaphat to the throne of Judah, he: “killed all his brothers with the sword, and also *others* of the princes of Israel” (21:4—NKJV).

Later, after Jehoram’s death, Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead, and after he died, Athaliah, his mother, “arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah,” with the exception of Joash who escaped. Then, she reigned over Judah for six years (cf. 22:1, 10-12). Evidently, Jehoshaphat had no idea that the joining of his son to the house of Ahab in marriage would result in the bloodshed of his own sons and grandsons, and the promotion of idolatry and fornication in Judah (cf. 21:5-13). Sadly, Jehoshaphat’s son and daughter-in-law and grandson, worked to undo all the good that he had done. In fact, the prophet of God, Elijah, declared to Jehoram, that he had made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father’s house, *which were* better than thyself” (cf. 21:3). No doubt, Jehoshaphat would have cringed at the thought of the marriage of his son into this wicked family, had he been able to foresee the future.

Why today will God’s people do so foolishly? We have example after example in the Scriptures to warn us against the danger of compromise and joining affinity with the wicked. Jehoshaphat did right in many ways, but was very loose in his fellowship practices. For example, after he went into battle with Ahab against Syria, Jehu the prophet said to him: “Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore *is* wrath upon thee from before the Lord” (19:2). Likewise today, God commands us: “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph. 5:11).

It is noteworthy that Jehoshaphat joined affinity with one who practiced that which he condemned. Likewise, today, we have brethren who extend fellowship to those who practice that which they condemn in their teaching. This ought not so to be!

Brethren, remember, as in the family of Jeshoshaphat, our precious children and grandchildren may later pay a heavy price for the compromises we make today. Moreover, let us be warned by Jehoshaphat’s example, that the good we have done in the past does not excuse us for compromising with error, and that these very compromises may later undo much of the good that we have done for Christ.

*Danny Douglas
Mount Pleasant, TN*