



**WHICH SON DID HIS FATHER'S WILL?**

During His confrontation with the chief priests and elders, Jesus asked them whether John's baptism was from heaven or from men, and they refused to answer. Then He spoke to them the parable of the two sons: "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, "Son, go, work today in my vineyard." He answered and said, "I will not," but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, "I go, sir," but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him'"(Matt. 21:28-32).

Even though the chief priests and elders refused to answer the question Jesus had asked them about the source of John's authority, and even though they claimed not to know whether John's mission were human or Divine, Jesus made an application of the principle involved, in such a way as to indict them for their self-righteous hypocrisy.

The Israelite people in the first century could be compared with a man's two sons. One son made great claims about honoring his father. He spoke great swelling words about his willingness to work in the father's vineyard. But upon examination, the fruit of any such labor was not to be found. His honor to his father was in words only. The other son was openly rebellious. He did not intend to honor his father or work in his vineyard -- but later, he repented of that attitude and went to work. Jesus' question to the priests and elders was "Which son did his father's will -- the one who said he would work but didn't, or the one who had not intended to do such work, but changed his mind and did the work his father asked? His question implied that one of the two sons did indeed obey the father. The priests and elders correctly identified the obedient son as being the one who repented and did the work.

Then Jesus made application of the parable: When John came preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, a Divinely commissioned message, and pointed to Jesus as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), it was, for the most part, those who had earlier rebelled against God's will who were led to repent -- the harlots, tax collectors and other "hardened" sinners. On the other hand, those who talked long and loud about their devotion to God and claimed to be faithful workers ended up rejecting God's chosen messenger and his message. As Luke writes, "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him" (Luke 7:30).

*Tim Smith  
Dothan, AL*

*Ken Chumbley*

**NEWS AND NOTES**

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett and mother, Kathy Treadway's mother, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, and Rachel Fitzpatrick's aunt (Eula Baker) who has cancer, Maomi Aaron' sister who has having health problems, the Moulton family in England and Tim Smith.

Glenn Aaron will be able to return to work with restricted duties tomorrow.

Sister Grimsley was still sick and unable to be out Sunday.

Rachel Fitzpatrick was in Tennessee last Sunday with her mother visiting Rachel's aunt, Eula Baker.

Please see the latest e-mail from the Moulton family on the notice board and keep them in your prayers. There will be an soup and finger food pot-luck after the evening service on May 25. Plan to stay and eat together.

**MAY CHURCHES AID EACH OTHER IN  
EDIFICATION AND EVANGELISM?**

At the close of the Colossian letter, Paul said: "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read, the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16). Here is a command for these two churches to cooperate with each other in a matter of teaching, edification, or evangelism. The one church was to "CAUSE" the word of God to be read in another church, and that church was to aid the other by returning the favor. The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch to aid the church there in edification and evangelism (Acts 11:20 - 26). A great many conversions resulted from this cooperative work. The Jerusalem church later sent four of its preachers and teachers to aid the church at Antioch in edification and evangelism (Acts 15:22-35). They also sent a part of the written word of God to the Antioch church, just as the church at Colosse had been commanded to do in sending one of the books of the New Testament unto another church (Col. 4:16). O yes, money was also sometimes sent by cooperating churches to aid another church in edification and evangelism (2 Cor. 11:8). Here money was sent by cooperating churches to bring "SERVICE" to the church at Corinth. While the passage does not say whether the money was sent to Paul directly, or to the church for him, the fact that that matter is left indefinite shows that it would not make any difference in either case. God left it indefinite so that we might know that we might do it either way, else he would have plainly told us to whom the money must be sent. Funds were sent for the "Relief unto the brethren" in Judea, but they sent it to the elders for the brethren (Acts 11:29-30) and not directly to the brethren. It may have been thus in Paul's case.

*Gus Nichols  
Deceased*