

It Is Written

*A weekly publication of the
Junction Highway church of Christ in Kerrville, TX.
Vol. 8 April 26, 2026 No. 17*

NEEDED: The Discipline to Do the Unpleasant!

By William C. Sexton

Some years ago I heard a sermon by a young preacher who made some pertinent points relative to a passage from I Kings 20:42, which says, "Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have let slip out of <your> hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.'"

The statement was made concerning the following situation: King Ahab had spared the life of a man, King Benhadad of Samaria, who had defied God's teachings to the extent that God's justice demanded his execution. Ahab, when asked by the king to spare his life and promise to return the cities he had seized, consented and made a covenant with him (I Kings 20:34). This was contrary to God's message by the prophet. God wanted Benhadad executed, not spared.

It reminds us of the downfall of another king, Saul, who refused to execute the Lord's commandment in a similar case (I Samuel 15:1-13). This was some years before, and Ahab should have been knowledgeable of it and the sad results.

Relevant Points for Us

The main point of the sermon was that we, too, have some unpleasant matters to attend to, and we may choose foolishly and destructively the more pleasant path for the present. Some examples might be in regard to the following:

Divorce

God has laid down rules about marriage and divorce (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:9; I Corinthians 7:10-11). Many people feel that it's too harsh to ask a couple who are living in an adulterous relationship, possibly having children, to separate. However, if they were doing some other evil, they'd see no inconsistency or harshness in saying that they'd have to stop doing what they were doing in order to have God's grace forgive them! Out of sympathy, we may be duped into trying to remain on the sidelines and be uncommitted, which is acceptable to the Lord.

Do we have the discipline and conviction to sustain us in such an endeavor? Let us pray for strength to act disapprovingly if and when we are faced with such! Granted, such is not easy, and it tears the heartstrings of the child of God.

Becoming a Christian

Some people may be very likable and religious, but have not really obeyed the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:7-10), as is revealed in the New Testament (Believe - John 8:24; Repent - Luke 13:3; Confess - Romans 10:9-10; Be baptized in order to have remission of sins (Acts 22:16) and to be united with Christ (Romans 6:3-4)). Some feel that we are harsh even self-righteous and judgmental to say that they are lost. However, being faithful to God, Christians have to perform unpleasant tasks, not because they are arrogant or unloving, but rather because they do love and respect God and people. God is the author of salvation and salvation is in Christ (II Timothy 2:10).

As Christians, loving the souls of people, we must have conviction and trust in God to the extent that we'll follow His directions. If we really love people as we should, we'll want them to be saved

eternally. Knowing that salvation cannot be found in any other (Acts 4:12), we'll not allow our timidity or compassion to stand in the way to the extent that we'll fail to act. Real love manifests itself in action (John 14:23-24).

To fail to act is equivalent to taking their soul as our own responsibility (Ezekiel 3:17-21). We'll be lost as well as they. Paul was free from the blood of all men only when he shunned not to preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27). That same principle holds true for us!

Partial Faith Is Satan's Victory

By Carey Scott

"A major survey by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life finds that most Americans have a non-dogmatic approach to faith. A majority of those who are affiliated with a religion, for instance, do not believe their religion is the only way to salvation. And almost the same number believes that there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of their religion."
[<http://www.pewforum.org/>]

This is sad that faith is not the leading component in so many lives. While the majority of the members profess a belief in God, more than half of them do not accept their faith as being the one true faith that leads to eternal life. What good is faith if one cannot be sure it is going to accomplish for them the reward of eternal life?

Sadly, also is the fact that many so-called Christians think that there are different ways to reach God. Such belief brazenly calls Jesus Christ a liar. For Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me" There is no other way for a cognizant accountable person to get to Heaven, yet this forum's poll suggests that half of you believe there is another way. Since the Bible is the only source in the world that explains how to get to heaven, show us the verse that teaches salvation apart from Jesus Christ.

Why the lack of faith on the part of many of the members of these churches? I suggest that the preachers are trying to be politically correct. The church leaders who are not wishing to offend people and chase away those who have weakened faith have changed religion to a matter of convenience rather than a strict guideline to reach heaven. The church leaders are not willing to hold people accountable to their faith.

Joshua said that it was time to make a choice (Joshua 24:15). Elijah told the people in I Kings 18:21, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? 'If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' But the people did not answer him a word."

Look to the Bible and see what GOD has to say on any matter. Learn His ways and do them. Fear God and give Him honor and glory. If you need assistance, let us teach you how you can do the will of the Father in heaven. To obey God is to believe on Him, (Acts 16:31), repent of your sins (Acts 8:22), confess His name (Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Mark 16:15-16). This sequence of actions will put you INTO Christ where you will receive spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3) As a new Christian, you will need to continue to learn (2 Peter 3:18) to do God's will and be faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10).