

# The Reflector

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY

CHURCH OF CHRIST

MEETING AT

1460 NORTH MAIN

VIDOR, TEXAS

Volume 39

May 2003

Number 5

## OUR GOD WILL GUIDE US!

The writer Solomon makes the following statements in Proverbs 3:5-6.

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

*In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*

These verses teach us the important lesson of trusting in God and showing that trust by allowing Him to guide us throughout our lives. If we allow Him to guide us, he will lead us in a way that will result in our receiving eternal life in Heaven! On the other hand, if we lean to our own understanding, and fail to acknowledge Him as Lord of our lives, then we will end up in the fires of Hell!

Psalms 73:24 sums it all up this way: *"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."*

## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

The name of the Old Testament king who had 88 children was Rehoboam. He had 28 sons and 60 daughters. (2 Chronicles 11:21)

The name of the Christian who performed miracles in Samaria while preaching the gospel was Philip. Simon the sorcerer was one of his converts. The people thought Simon himself was the *"great power of God."*

## QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

What Old Testament prophet spoke of the *"roundness of the earth"* and where is the verse under consideration?

What 3 women stood at the cross of Jesus as He died, and what New Testament writer was standing there with them?

### *"When He Saw Their Faith..."*

In Mark 2:1-12 we read a story about a group of men who have a friend who is paralyzed. They are hoping that Jesus will heal him. The crowd around Jesus is so large however that they cannot get his attention. These men take their friend up on the roof of the house where Jesus is at, take the roof apart, and then lower their friend into the presence of Jesus. The statement then is made *"When Jesus saw their faith..."* This story teaches us the fact that real faith is more than just spoken words. Real faith is when a person acts upon what they believe. The Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 did more than just say *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* He acted upon that faith by being baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins. Therefore we should understand that a *"faith that saves is a faith that obeys Jesus Christ and His words."* James 2:14-26 teaches us that *"faith without works is dead, being alone."* And so real faith is something that can be seen and not just heard. Is this the kind of faith that you have?

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Food For Thought: *"We don't change God's message; His message must change us!"*

## WHY SO MUCH CONTROVERSY ABOUT BAPTISM?

In spite of all the clear teaching about baptism in the Bible, it remains a very controversial subject, especially in regards to the question whether or not baptism is necessary for salvation. Have you ever wondered why baptism is so controversial? It is because people equate the idea of baptism being necessary for salvation with having to work to earn your salvation. This is a misunderstanding of Bible teaching in regards to the subject of the role of works and salvation.

There are different types of works described in the Bible. The "works that are ordained by God for men to do" are the kind of works that are indeed necessary for salvation. If we read James 2:14-26, we will learn the following: *"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."* The kind of works under consideration in this text are those things that God commands us to do. (Verses 21-23) Baptism is this kind of a work. It is a *"command of God that must be obeyed"* in order for man to be saved. (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 2:38)

Even when we do those things that God has commanded us to do, we do not *"earn or merit our salvation"* any more than Naaman The Syrian *"earned his healing of leprosy"* by dipping in the Jordan River seven times according to the prophet Elisha's command. Nor did Noah and his family *"earn or merit their salvation"* by building the Ark. (Genesis 6) According to Ephesians 2:8-10 we are *"saved by grace through faith...not of works, lest any man should boast...For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

Baptism is necessary to salvation because it is a *"command of God that must be obeyed in order to have our sins washed away."* (Acts 22:16 & Revelations 1:5) Just as God removed Naaman's leprosy when he obeyed the command to *"dip in the Jordan River 7 times"*, so God also today *"removes a persons sins when they are baptized into Jesus Christ"* We are not earning our salvation or working for our salvation by being baptized into Jesus Christ; we are simply manifesting an obedient faith in Christ in so doing. Does not the Hebrew writer tell us that *"...Jesus is the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him?"* (Hebrews 5:8-9)