

# The Reflector

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## UNCONVERTED BELIEVERS!

Is there such a thing as an *“unconverted believer?”* The answer is Yes. Read John 12:42-43 with me.

*“Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”*

These chief rulers believed in Jesus but they were not converted. They would not confess their faith in Jesus. They were not saved just by believing in Jesus. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 10:33.

*“But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”*

While it is true that these chief rulers believed in Jesus, that belief did not bring about their conversion. Therefore it takes more than simply believing in Jesus to be saved. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 *“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”*

## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

Uzziah was the king of Judah that was struck with leprosy by God. This happened because he violated the law of God by going into the temple to burn incense. This was a responsibility of the priests only. (2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 26:16-23)

Naaman was the captain of the army of Syria, but he was a leper. However his leprosy was taken away by God when he obeyed God by dipping in the Jordan River seven times. (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 5:1-14)

## QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

What prophet of God anointed David to be the king of Israel?

What two angels are called by name in the Bible?

What is the name of the runaway slave who was converted by the Apostle Paul?

## “ALMOST THOU PERSUADEST ME TO BE A CHRISTIAN!”

In Acts 26 we read the story of Paul's testimony before Agrippa the king. He spoke of his conversion to Christ and the preaching that he did after his conversion. Paul knew that Agrippa believed the teaching that he had done about Christ. He said the following in verse 27: *“King Agrippa, believeth thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.”* Look at what Agrippa said to Paul in verse 28: *“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”* Although according to Paul's own words Agrippa was a believer, yet he did not consider himself to be a Christian. Once again we see that a person does not become a Christian by simply believing in Jesus as the Son of God. Verse 29 of this text makes it clear that Paul also did not consider Agrippa to be a Christian, even though he knew that Agrippa had believed his preaching about Jesus. According to John 1:12, believing in Jesus gives a person the *“power to become a child of God”*; it does not within itself make one a Christian.

## TRUE WORSHIP!

Throughout the religious world, God is worshipped in many different ways. But just because someone may be worshipping God doesn't mean that God accepts that worship. The Bible tells us that the Father is seeking "*true worshippers*"; that is those individuals who will "*worship God in spirit and in truth.*" (John 4:20-24) The Bible speaks of "*vain worship*" in Matthew 15:1-9. The Bible also speaks of "*ignorant worship*" in Acts 17:23. The Bible speaks of the "*worshipping of angels*" in Colossians 2:18 and of "*will worship*" in Colossians 2:23. In each of these cases worship is taking place, but it is not worship that is pleasing to God. How do we determine what kind of worship that will be pleasing to God? By looking to the word of God for instructions as to how God desires to be worshipped and then doing only those things that He has authorized. For example Colossians 3:17 says this: "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*" We must therefore do only those things that Jesus authorizes us to do in the New Testament, where the authority of Christ is expressed. Here is what the New Testament says about "*worshipping God in spirit and in truth.*"

We are to take the Lord's Supper consisting of "*unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine*" and this must be done "*upon the first day of the week.*" (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:23-26/Acts 20:7) A contribution is also to be taken "*upon the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week.*" (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:1-3) There are to be "*prayers offered, preaching done, and the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*" as well. (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:23,13-16,19) The singing being done must be done without musical instruments for while it is true that musical instruments were used in Old Testament worship (Psalms 150), it is also true that they were not used in the New Testament church by Christians. Our worship of God will only be pleasing to God when we worship Him "*in spirit and in truth.*" That is what Jesus taught in John 4:20-24.