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SAYING GOODBYE!

Our good friend and brother in Christ Jim Everett passed away Sunday morning February 20th at his home in Cedar Park, Texas. Jim was a faithful preacher of the gospel for many years and worked with the church here in Vidor in the middle 1980's for about three years. There are many brethren here who have fond memories of the time that he was here, including as recently as the spring of 2003 for a gospel meeting. He was a very dignified and eloquent speaker of God's word, very intelligent, and he no doubt helped many a gospel preacher, including myself, throughout his career. Jim was a fun-loving person who liked to kid around with his family and his brethren. Yet he was also a very quiet person who treated people with great respect. I was fortunate to have been able to spend time with Jim in his last meeting with us as he stayed with my wife and I at our house in Vidor. He would wake up each morning while here and fix us all coffee with the old coffee pot he had brought with him on his trip. It was some of the best coffee we had ever had. Jim, Jack Thompson, and myself played golf together on a number of occasions with Jim shooting the lowest score most of the time. He was a great athlete in a number of sports. He was a pleasure to be around and I thank God for the friendship and fellowship that I personally had with him.

Most of all however, Jim was a devoted servant of God who touched many lives during his work as a gospel preacher. He was a devoted husband and father and he will be greatly missed by everyone whose path he crossed. Our heartfelt sympathies go to his wife Margaret and her family. Please keep the Everett family in your prayers and thoughts as they go through this time of sorrow.

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ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

Hilkiah is the name of the priest that found a copy of the Law of Moses during Josiah's reign. Shaphan the scribe read the book to Josiah and he rent his clothes because he realized the judgment of God that was going to come upon the Jews because of their sins.
(2nd Chronicles 34)

The list of the original twelve apostles is found at Matthew 10:1-4. Matthias was selected as a replacement for Judas in Acts 1. Paul was also an apostle. (Romans 1:1) Barnabas was referred to as an apostle as well. (Acts 14:14) And Jesus himself is referred to as an **"apostle"** in Hebrews 3:1. The word **"apostle"** simply means **"one sent forth"**.

QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

What is the name of the king that sent workers to build a house for David the king?

What prophet of God spoke to Hezekiah the king and told him that he was going to die? (How did Hezekiah respond to this news and what did God do at this time as well?)

"WASH, AND BE CLEAN!"

In 2nd Kings 5:1-14 we read about Naaman, who is the captain of the army of the king of Assyria, and yet Naaman was a leper. Elisha the prophet sent a message to him to dip in the Jordan River seven times and the leprosy would disappear. Naaman thought that things should be different as to the cleansing of his leprosy and he went away angry. Finally the servant of the prophet Elisha told Naaman that if he had been instructed to do some great thing, he would have done it. Why then would he not simply **"wash, and be clean?"** So Naaman went and dipped in the Jordan River seven times as he had been instructed and his leprosy disappeared. It wasn't the water that washed his leprosy away, but rather it was God who removed his leprosy when Naaman obeyed the instructions that had been given to him.

In the same way today our sins are **"washed away by the blood of Jesus"** when we obey God's instructions through his servant Paul to be **"baptized into the death of Christ."** (Romans 6:3-4) Acts 22:16 says **"And now, why tarriest thou, Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."** What a tragedy it is that so many people today in a sense get angry when the truth is taught to **"wash, and be clean."** Yet until people are baptized they will remain in their sins just as Naaman remained a leper until he dipped in the Jordan River seven times. Have you been baptized for the remission of your sins? Why not **"wash, and be clean?"**

"CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD!"

Have you ever noticed that Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13 both make the same statement? That statement is: **"...For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** In order to understand what is involved in **"calling on the name of the Lord"**, we simply need to know what a person must do in order to be saved. Consider the following scriptures.

John 3:16 – **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."**

2nd Corinthians 7:10 – **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of this world worketh death."**

Romans 10:10 – **"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."**

Mark 16:16 – **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."**

From the scriptures listed above, we learn that **"faith in Jesus Christ, repentance of sins, confessing Christ, and being baptized"**, are all necessary in order to be saved. What this means then is that **"calling on the name of the Lord"** involves all of these activities. It is not as many people say simply **"believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God"**, but involves **"faith, repentance, confession, and baptism."** If you carefully read Romans 10:8-17, you will see that **"calling on the name of the Lord"** and **"obeying the gospel"** are terms that are used interchangeably in this chapter. In other words, when a person **"obeys the gospel"**, he is also **"calling on the name of the Lord"**, for they are one and the same thing. This can be seen in Acts 22:16 where Ananias tells Saul to **"...Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."** By the way, Saul had already believed in Jesus on the road to Damascus, but according to Acts 22:16 he had not yet **"called upon the name of the Lord."** This clearly tells us that there is a difference between **"believing in Jesus"** and **"calling upon the name of the Lord."**

Have you truly **"called upon the name of the Lord?"** It is only when you have **"believed in Jesus as the Son of God, repented of your sins, confessed your faith in Jesus Christ, and been baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins"** that you can say that you have truly **"called upon the name of the Lord."** And it is then, and only then, that you can say that you have been truly saved because you have **"obeyed the gospel."** Hebrews 5:9 says that Jesus is the **"...author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."**