



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

Volume XXIV

August 2003

Number 1

EXTENSION Classes, Fall Semester 2003 Semester Begins August 18, 2003			
Date _____		Phone _____	
Name _____		S.S.# _____	
Address _____			
City _____		State _____	Zip _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check Classes Desired			Note Extension Locations
Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Lev., Num. and Deut., 11310 church of Christ, High Springs, Florida	Burgett	2½
Tuesday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	The Pentateuch, 11364 church of Christ, Warner Robins, Georgia Minor Prophets, 21346 Midway church of Christ, Sarasota, Florida	Stilwell Elledge	2½ 2½
Thursday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Eph., Phil., and Colossians, 11336 Orange Street church of Christ, Auburndale, Florida Church History-General, 21341 Wesconnett church of Christ, Jacksonville, Florida	Bauer Colwell	2½ 2½
Cost: \$5.00 Registration Fee and Text Book Required for Class			

Gene Burgett Report

The last few months have been full of travel with much good to report. Memorial Day weekend I spoke at a Christian evidences workshop sponsored by the Alachua

church of Christ. Mike Elledge, a Florida School of Preaching graduate, also spoke. Mike and I also worked as counselors for the cabin containing the oldest boy campers. A special

highlight of the weekend for me was when I baptized a young lady who is a dear friend to my daughter.

The following Saturday my daughter graduated from high school

and will soon begin college. Tiffany was born just a few days after I graduated from the Florida School of Preaching in 1985. It just doesn't seem like that many years have passed since she was born.

Sunday, June 1, I taught the teen Bible class and preached during the morning assembly at the Orange Street church in Auburndale, Florida. Orange Street has faithfully supported the School in a variety of ways for many years, and we appreciate their continued support. The Orange Street evangelist, Bob Bauer, is a Florida School of Preaching graduate.

I accompanied Garrett Russell on Sunday, June 15 as he spoke during the evening assembly of the church in Lake City, Florida. Garrett did a great job and the Lake City brethren are also playing a part in financially supporting him as he begins full-time studies with the School in the fall.

On Sunday, June 22, I was once again accompanied by Garrett Russell as we had been invited to speak at the Pike Road church of Christ in Pantego, North Carolina. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the initiative of the Pike Road brethren. In the June issue of the Harvester I mentioned the continued need for financial support for Garrett Russell, who is a recent high school graduate. Ervin Manning, an elder at Pike Road, read the appeal and promptly called me, inviting Garrett and me to meet with them. We enjoyed the hospitality of Tim Hayes, another elder at Pike Road, along with his wife, Flora, while we stayed in North Carolina. I am pleased to announce that because of the generosity of churches like Pike Road the support for brother Russell has been raised.

My June odyssey continued as my family accompanied me on a foray into the great state of Alabama. My first Stop was Eufaula, Alabama, where I spoke on Wednesday, June 25. Brother James Carter is an elder at the Eufaula church, and he and his

dear wife, Doris, were gracious hosts for my family and me. I used the opportunity to address the need for men to consider preaching as a way of life, as well as the need to support men as they prepare and train to preach.

From Eufala my family and I went to my parent's home in Jasper, Alabama, and visited with them for a few days. The visit was brief, however, as I preached during the Sunday evening assembly of the Shiloh church of Christ in Hazel Green, Alabama on June 29. Justin Gerhardt, one of our graduates, preaches at the Shiloh church. I enjoyed the hospitality of Justin and Jennifer. They are a talented couple and it is easy to see that the brethren at Shiloh love them very much. I received a warm welcome at the church and look forward to being with them again.

I have been very pleased with the reception I have gotten at the various places where I have spoken. However, the need is greater than most realize. Garrett is only one of a number of men in need of financial support. That is why I so very much appreciate churches like Pike Road. They saw a need and didn't wait to be asked if they would help. Are there other churches or individuals among our readers that would like to help in this great work? Alfred Woodard is another man in need of help. Alfred's goal is to begin classes in August, but he is several hundred dollars short of the funds necessary to make it possible for a man with a family to attend full-time. If any of our readers believe they can help Alfred, please contact me by phone (352-339-3195) or email (burgett@atlantic.net).



Who (Or What) Is A Christian?

By

Brian Kenyon

What comes to your mind when you hear the term "Christian"? The world uses this word in a number

of different, contradictory ways. Unfortunately, even members of the church will betray a lack of understanding in their use of the word. Indeed, this word is one of the most misunderstood and misapplied words in the English language.

There are many passages that could be used in answering the above question, and there are many ways to approach such a study. However, in this article we will answer the question by examining each occurrence of the word in the New Testament. From the context of all three of these occurrences, we will see how inspiration identifies who is a Christian.

A Christian Is A True "Disciple"

The first occurrence of the word "Christian" is found in Acts 11:26, "...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Thus, a Christian is a disciple. A "disciple" is simply a "follower of," or a "learner from" someone else. To be more precise, however, a Christian is a *true* disciple, for not all "disciples" are *true disciples*. There are many "fair weather" disciples who claim to follow Jesus, but who are not committed to Christ. For example, in John 6:1-13, Jesus miraculously fed five thousand. The multitude liked what he did and tried to make Jesus

The Harvesters

Published Monthly
Florida School of Preaching
1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, Florida 33803
(863) 683-4043

Editor: Jackie M. Stearsman
Board of Directors

Gordon Methvin, President	George K. French
Paul Thornhill, Vice President	Scott Gerhardt
J. H. Blackman, Jr., Secretary	Greg Littleton
Allen Gardner, Treasurer	E. Robert McAnally
Glenn Burgess	John D. Smitherman
Elmer Burgett	Jackie M. Stearsman
Maurice Davis	Ted Wheeler

TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

their king (Jn. 6:15). When they finally caught up to Jesus, he let them know their motives were not right, told them to "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life," and gave his great discourse on his being the "bread of life" (Jn. 6:26-52). However, when they heard the level of commitment Jesus demanded of them (i.e. "eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood," Jn. 6:53-58), "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (Jn. 6:66).

A true disciple is not one who merely follows from ulterior motives (such as for the sake of a full belly), but is one who is truly committed (cf. Lk. 6:46). From this "bread of life" incident, Peter shows true discipleship. When Jesus turned to the twelve and asked, "Will ye also go away?" (Jn. 6:67), Peter responded, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn. 6:68-69). True, Peter had his inconsistencies, but his words here capture the meaning of true discipleship. In another place, Jesus defined what being a true disciple entailed. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (Jn. 6:31). The adverb "indeed" is from *alethes* (ἀληθής), which means, "true, truthful, honest; real, genuine."¹ Thus, only when one *continues* in God's word is he or she a *true disciple*! Are we Christians? Are we a true disciple of Jesus Christ, continuing in his word?

A Christian Is One Who Is "Persuaded"

The second occurrence of the word "Christian" is found in Acts 26:28, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Here, Agrippa did not become a Christian, but in his answer to Paul, he reveals that a Christian must be one who is truly persuaded that Jesus is the Christ. In this context, being persuaded is more than merely

believing. King Agrippa believed what the prophets said about the death, resurrection, and mission of Christ (Acts 26:27 cf. Acts 26:22-23). Additionally, Agrippa was an "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews" (Acts 26:3). Agrippa was well informed! Yet, this high ranking government official was not persuaded enough to do God's will.

Many times being persuaded is synonymous with believing (cf. Heb. 11:6), but where there is a difference, as in Acts 26:27-28, the difference is this: being persuaded is to believe God enough to do what he says, whereas to merely believe is to acknowledge without acting upon (cf. Jas. 2:19; Mt. 8:28-29). Abraham is a great example of being persuaded. Even though his body was apparently physically incapable of reproduction (Rom. 4:18-19), he still lived his life for God as if He would provide the promised seed. Paul says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being *fully persuaded* that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:20-21, emphasis mine, BRK). Being a Christian is impossible unless we are persuaded enough to do what the Lord says. Are we Christians?

A Christian Is One Who "Glorifies God"

The third occurrence of the word "Christian" is found in First Peter 4:16, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." The means by which one glorifies God in this context is persecution. Persecution is a tremendous barometer of our Christianity. Remember the beatitudes: 'willingness to suffer persecution is the apex (Mt. 5:3-10). One will never be willing to suffer for righteousness' sake unless he or she is first "poor in spirit," then of a mournful disposition to sin, then "meek," then hungering and thirsting "after righteousness," then "merciful,"

then "pure in heart," and then a "peacemaker" (Mt. 5:3-9). When one manifests these beatitudes, one can expect persecution (Mt. 5:11-12) because one certainly will have been living a life that is glorifying to God (2 Tim. 3:12). All suffering, however, is not glorifying to God (1 Pet. 4:15), only that which is for the "name of Christ" (1 Pet. 4:14).

Simply put, to glorify God is to do what he says, to act by his authority (Col. 3:17), no matter what the consequences (Acts 5:41). Glorifying God is to be the Christian's number one goal in life. Paul says, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20). He says in another text, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Are we Christians? Are we glorifying God in our lives?

Are You A Christian?

Having examined the only three occurrences of the word "Christian" in the New Testament, let us consider ourselves. First, have we obeyed the gospel, being baptized for the remission of our sins and added to the Lord's body, the church (Acts 2:38-47)? Second, are we continuing to live the gospel, truly walking in "newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4)? A true *disciple* would certainly follow the Lord's instructions concerning the gospel (Acts 11:26); one who is *persuaded* about Christ would seize the opportunity to obey and live the gospel (cf. Acts 26:28); and one who seeks to *glorify God* would gladly endure anything to be loyal to the Lord (1 Pet. 4:16). Are you a Christian?

Endnote

¹Barclay M. Newman, Jr., "A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament," in *The Greek New Testament*, 4th revised ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: United Bible Society, 1993) 7.

Registration Schedule Fall Semester Begins August 18, 2003

Date _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ S.S.# _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

✓ Check Classes Desired

Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Romans 21361	Davis	3
	Logic 31370	Kenyon	3
Tuesday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Revelation 21359	Stearsman	3
	Pentateuch 11364	Kenyon	3
	Hebrews and Galatians 21343	Blackman	2½
Wednesday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Computers and Churches 31387	Stearsman	3
	Church History 21341	Kenyon	3
Thursday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Preacher and His Work 12307	Stearsman	3
	Missions I, 21355	Wheeler	3
Friday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	1 st and 2 nd Corinthians 11355	Davidson	3
	1 st and 2 nd Thessalonians 21337	Kenyon	3

Please Include \$5.00 Registration Fee When Preregistering

FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING
 1807 SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE
 LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33803-2653
 PHONE (863) 683-4043 (800) 320-9780
 FAX: 863-683-0750
 E-MAIL: fsop@gte.net
 WEB SITE: www.fsop.net
 Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Lakeland, FL
 PERMIT #235