

“If He Has A Soul”

By Bill Hall

A wonderful prospect for conversion is described in the 10th chapter of Acts: "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." If this man could just learn the truth he would obey it.

Tremendous pressure, however, was against Peter's preaching to him. He was a Gentile, and the Jews hated the Gentiles. Could Peter preach to one of this hated class of people? What would his brethren say? Would preaching to the Gentiles hurt his influence among the Jews? Maybe Peter shouldn't go. Maybe Cornelius should somehow learn the gospel on his own.

Peter might have followed this very line of reasoning had the Lord allowed it. But through a vision -a vision familiar to our readers -the Lord taught Peter that he "should not call any man common or unclean" (**Acts 10:28**). Because Peter learned this lesson and courageously preached to Cornelius and his household, the great work among the Gentiles, which has resulted in the salvation of thousands through the ages, was begun

Are there not hated classes of people in our society? Is it possible that in our search for "prospects" we have limited ourselves to those who are of the same economic, racial, and educational position which we occupy? And is it possible that in so limiting ourselves, we may be overlooking some of the greatest prospects that we have? Do we need to be taught that we are not to call any man common or unclean?

A quote from Henry Ficklin, an aged brother in Eastern Kentucky, now deceased, impressed me recently. Brother Ficklin and another brother were making house calls. Brother Ficklin was a bit uncertain as to the location of one house where they were going, so the other brother, seeing a man in a barn lot, pulled over and asked, "Do you suppose this is the man we are looking for?" "I suppose so," brother Ficklin replied; "if he has a soul he's the man we are looking for."

If he has a soul ... The Hebrew writer said that Jesus "tasted death for every man" (**Hebrews 2:9**). Let us not be guilty because of our prejudices of withholding the gospel from the "Corneliuses" of our society.



Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Bill Simmons (Jessica Anderson's gdad)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	James Palmer (Rachel Hobbgood's grandfather)

December Birthdays

2-Katelyn Sullivanne
5-Rusty Weldon
5-Charlie Johnson
5-Allie Hosey
5-Grace Green
8-Macy Johnson
9-Anna Acuff
9-Kayla Reid
9-Anna Cagle
11-Alex Nguyen
13-Dave Hosey
13-Will Bruce Harris
14-Beth Zeannah
15-Sabelis Moreno
17-Joseph Miller
18-Tin-Yau Tam
19-Chase Sanders
20-Chris Zeannah
20-Brandon Walker
20-Meredith Reid
20-Micah Waters
21-Holly Johnson
21-Andrew Dunaway
22-William Herd
22-Carter Burns
24-Jessica Yates
24-Dustin Marsh
27-Jacob Neeley
28-Turner Stephens
28-Gabby Borden
30-Douglas Bethea

News and Notes

- ☑ - Ruth Addison, grandmother of Julie Johnson and April Jenkins, continues to make progress and has moved to a facility close to home.
- ☑ - Those who graduate this semester: Winston Atnip, Stewart West, Micah Waters, Gaston Love, Robert Zama - Masters
- ☑ - The Green's Christian friend, Matt Jones, is out of ICU and making progress after his dirt bike accident. Please remember him and his family in your prayers.
- ☑ - Please continue to pray for Chuck Hunt's dad, as he receives his chemo treatments.
- ☑ - Chuck Hahn's cousin, Wayne Johnson, had stents put in and is doing better!
- ☑ - Please pray for another of Chuck Hahn's cousins, Bill Johnson, who had his gall bladder removed this week.
- ☑ - Ian Norman had successful knee surgery this week.
- ☑ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Amanda Stephens, Brooke Perkins, Fallon Hartsell and Jenna Vaughn.
- ☑ - Please continue to pray for Terri Sams who is not doing well in her battle with cancer.
- ☑ - Please keep those in your prayers who are in the adoption process: Kevin and Jessica Anderson.
- ☑ - Please pray for the Moreno's in the visa process.

The Auburn Beacon



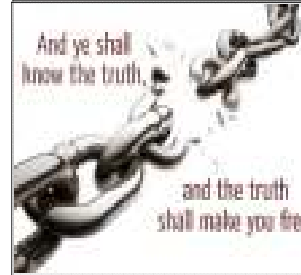
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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Freedom Under God

By Robert F. Turner



Thoughts to Ponder

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
(John 8:32)

Freedom ... The word is almost sacred to the American people, and over the world today it stirs great hope and aspirations. Our Declaration of Independence calls it an "inalienable" right and a truth "self-evident." What is the source of this freedom, and what does it mean to us?

Free agency, the right to choose, is a gift from God. He elevated man above the beasts of the field: making man in his image (**Gen. 1:26**), sharing with man the power of choice. Man need not be slave to instinct or norm. He may rise above self, pursue ideals, seek truth, and embrace it.

But with power there is responsibility. The ability to choose the right exposes us to the danger of choosing the wrong. The same justice that rewards the righteous, must also condemn the wicked. Freedom, then, cannot be free. Even in the moral realm it imposes obligations, and there are none more bound than those who foolishly de-

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mand unbridled liberty and become slaves of their own folly.

In free government a man can vote as he chooses, but he may not vote correctly. He may, by neglect or party politics, fail the responsibilities of this truth and encourage corruption.

In business, free enterprise allows a man to invest as he sees fit. But this is no guarantee of profit. He may invest unwisely, and "loose his shirt," the price paid for untrammelled opportunity.

(Continued on page 2)

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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A study of freedom in every facet of life will emphasize the obligations of those who enjoy it. Conversely, man's history shows that freedom is lost when its obligations are ignored.

Freedom in religion is widely acclaimed, but it is as widely misunderstood. The constitution guarantees religious freedom, but cannot make whatever one chooses to believe acceptable with God. At best, man can only endorse the freedom God originally granted a right inherent in the nature of man. Legislative, judicial, and executive authority in divine matters must be left to God.

The need to serve God according to his law is not diminished by free will. That need is, in fact, intensified. We are the more accountable before God for the way we exercise our free agency.

In the very early times the "priesthood" of all believers (**1 Pet. 2:5, 9**) was dominated by a rising clergy system. Each one's obligation to "prove all things" (**1 Thess. 5:21**) gave way to party loyalties and the word of the clergy. Soon the scriptural standard (**Acts 17:11**) was replaced by the usurped "authority of the church," and history repeated itself. When the obligations of true liberty are slighted, liberty itself is lost.

Individual liberty was not wrested from the church. It was lost by default. "Churchanity" dulls individual will and stifles initiative. In religion, as in business and government, the socialized slave is tranquilized by his lot and loses his taste for the rigorous life of true freedom.

Dear Reader, how much of your own religion have you proven by God's word? Perhaps you were baptized (?) by sprinkling, but have you ever read New Testament

authority for that? You may be a member of some denomination, but does the word of God authorize its name, doctrine, and practice? Do you accept a thing as right or wrong simply because the preacher so declares it? Do such questions irritate you? We hope not! They are asked to help you see how easily one may forfeit individual freedoms in favor of unproven traditions. Truth has nothing to fear from honest investigation, but freedom can be lost without it.

Fundamentally, religion is a choice of masters: God or self. Liberty under God is not the same as becoming your own God. Recognition of the Supreme Being should make us aware that man can no longer direct his own steps (**Jer. 10:23**). Jesus warned, "No man can serve two masters" (**Matt. 6:24**). Joshua said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . .", then he added that a decision for God imposed obligations (**Josh. 24:15, 19-23**).

Most pitiful of all are the willfully blind. Thinking they serve God, these allow the winds of the day to make their decisions. They stumble in the darkness of self-service, yet know not they are blind (**Rev. 3:17**). Freedom is not for the fearful, the crowd pleaser, or the lover of ease in Zion. It must be grasped with resoluteness, and retained with sacrifice eyes wide open.

Freedom under God involves individual responsibility toward God: to know his will (**John 17:17**), and be freed from sin (**John 8:32-36**). Truth severs the shackles of sectarianism and gives assurance that we walk in his light. But we are warned that if we fail to properly exercise our freedom in religion, as in government and business we shall be bound by sin and finally perish.

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Following The Bible

By Sewell Hall

Our claim to a unique position in the religious world is our determination to follow the Bible. But when this claim is made, the usual response is "All churches follow the Bible." This raises an obvious question: "If all churches follow the Bible, why the variety of doctrines and practices?"

Unacceptable Explanations

Some say the Bible cannot be understood sufficiently well to allow for unity. This questions God's wisdom, for God intended for us to understand.

"Be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (**Eph. 5:17**). Was God incapable of providing a book that men could understand?

Others insist that the Bible actually teaches many different things. Denominationalists have been claiming this for years. More recently, we even heard a preacher among churches of Christ say that the Bible can be used to justify different kinds of church government. Sometimes it is said, "You can prove anything by the Bible." This questions God's integrity. It is insulting to say of a man: "You can prove anything by him." How much worse to say this of a book given to us by God! It contains one consistent message and to make it support contradictory positions requires an abuse of its message.

The Real Problem

The problem is not with the Bible, nor with its source. The problem is the varying approaches to following the Bible. Some believe in a careful adherence to what the Bible says. Others believe in a rather casual following "not of the letter, but of the Spirit," as they put it, adopting the words but not the sense of **2 Corinthians 3:6**. Stated another way, some construe the Scriptures strictly, believing that we must do in religion only what the Scriptures authorize. Others construe the Scriptures

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loosely, believing that we may practice anything not plainly forbidden.

These two views formed a clear issue between the two great reformers of Germany and Switzerland, Luther and Zwingli. A History of the Christian Church, Lars Qualben explains: "One of the great differences between Zwingli and Luther was: Luther used the Bible as corrective, retaining those rites and ceremonies of the Medieval church which were not positively anti-scriptural. Hence he retained

images, altars, ornaments of the churches, organs, church bells, and the like. Zwingli used the Bible as a code of laws, rejecting everything not expressly enjoined in the Scriptures" (p. 255).

Following Recipes and Directions

If a teacher gives a student a recipe for making a cake, what does she expect? If the girl adds ingredients not found in the recipe, will the teacher credit her with following the recipe? Obviously, the student was following the recipe as long as she was using what the recipe required. But when she added other ingredients, she ceased following the recipe and began following her own way.

If a person is given directions for finding a location, what is involved in following those directions? As long as he is making the turns authorized, he is following directions. But when he begins making turns not called for, he has ceased following directions.

Are people actually following the Bible as they follow recipes or directions? The majority of ingredients in modern religion are nowhere authorized in Scripture. They are the products of human wisdom. And it is these additional ingredients, these unauthorized changes of directions that account for the differences that exist in religion.

