

## AN EXAMINATION

An important question comes to mind to which all Christians must give attention from time to time. That question is: "How shall we live?" It comes from the prophet Ezekiel while he was reflecting upon the sins of Israel and the consequences of such. He was told to say to the house of Israel, "Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE?" (Ezekiel 33:10). The point there was this: if we are living in sin, there is no way that we will be able to "get away with it" and live.

Happily, the Lord's attitude is one of forgiveness and mercy. As He went on to say to Ezekiel, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked TURN FROM HIS WAY and live: turn ye, TURN YE FROM YOUR EVIL WAYS; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11). The obvious answer to the question regarding whether we can live while being in sin is: REPENT!. Otherwise we will have no life abiding in us. We will be lost!

The title of our article comes from II Corinthians 13:5 where Paul wrote, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." In light of this self-examination and the question of our living apart from sin (on-going, habitual, continual practice of sin), we ask ourselves: "Shall we live in view of tomorrow?" The Bible answer is NO! As James would write, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow" (James 4:13-14). Jesus taught us not to count on

tomorrow, but to take care of today's worries: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6:31-34).

Shall we live in view of yesterday? The Bible answer is NO! Listen to Paul, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Philippians 3:13-15). This is Paul's "rule to live by."

Brethren, let us live for today, yet not as the heathen or hedonists who say, "let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (I Corinthians 15:32). Rather, let us live with our eye upon eternity (Acts 24:25; Titus 2:12; I Timothy 4:8), seeking always to be found in Christ when He returns. **EXAMINE YOURSELVES!**

## True Religion

What would you say true religion is? A study of Amos 5:21-24 will show us what it is not, yet illustrates what many people do today in the name of religion, either out of ignorance or laziness.

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:21-24).

God was having trouble with His people. They were obeying the Law, making their sacrifices and saying the proper prayers at the proper time, but God was not interested. Why? He wanted their hearts, their sincerity, their love for Him and their fellow man. The Jews did not want to listen to the prophets of God that were telling them to repent. By the time Jesus got to this earth, they were divided into five different sects with the Pharisees being the most hypocritical.

God wants what is **right**, not merely what is "**rite**." If religion were in truth an outward process of expression, the Jews would not have been ridiculed and reprimanded by Jesus, nor would any of today's religions and denominations. But the fact is, Jesus wants us to be religious in a certain way with a certain frame of mind or spirit or attitude. He came to show us what the one, true religion is: duty to God and to our fellow man.

True religion is a lifestyle. James addresses this very point in his little book: "For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing. If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:23-27). No matter how "correct" our Sunday morning process is, if we do not serve one another and God from the heart, we have missed the whole point of Christianity.

# RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

May 31, 2009

Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

### Wednesday's Wisdom:

*"Include God in your plans...He promises to bless you!" Robin Haley*

Remember our sick!

**Sister Cassandra Gumbs** had foot surgery and came through in fine shape. Pray for her continued recovery.

Please pray that the **Whites** have a safe return home from Tennessee.

School is ending and some will be traveling. **Naomi, Melanie and their children** will all be traveling to Oklahoma this week to spend a few days. Please pray for their safe travel, arrival, and return home.

Tonight is **question/answer** night. It is not too late to turn in questions to Robin.