
Words of Truth

Is Finding The “Best” Congregation Acceptable To God?

By: Brian A. Yeager

It is a biblical fact that few will be saved (Matthew 7:13-14 and Luke 13:23-24). Few is a scary term when discussing the salvation of souls. Few, in one biblical account, was only eight individuals out of all of humanity (I Peter 3:20; cf. Genesis 7:13 and II Peter 2:5). When you study the Scriptures you see that there is rarely many who are doing what is acceptable to God. That includes individuals and even entire congregations (Revelation 2:1-3:22). Jesus said the laborers are few (Matthew 9:36-38). The harsh reality of how few there are is summed up in this question asked by Jesus: *“I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth”* (Luke 18:8)?

The Scriptures teach that Christians are called to our Lord through the Gospel of Christ (II Thessalonians 2:10-14). With that language, Christians are referred to as “the called” (Romans 1:1-8, Romans 9:24, I Corinthians 1:9, I Thessalonians 2:12, and Hebrews 3:1). In the Scriptures we discussed at the opening of this article we noted that few will be saved. What we need to further understand is that, even among “the called”, there are only a few that are faithful to our Lord. Notice: *“So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen... For many are called, but few are chosen”* (Matthew 20:16 and Matthew 22:14). What that should make us clearly understand is that few really does mean few. For, even among the few, there are yet fewer.

For over fifteen years I have preached these truths among many “brethren”. I have used the same Scriptures, with others too, to show that it is not just Brian Yeager’s opinion that there are few faithful. To date, no one has scripturally challenged that teaching. The evidence is abundant and undeniable. It is not my desired position. If it were my will, I would want to be able to say that you could worship with whomever and such would be acceptable. However, it is not my will that we all will answer to (John 12:48). I have taught about how hard it is to see real false doctrine, for it is not often apparent (Matthew 7:15-20 and Jude 4). Yet, even though I have taught these truths for over fifteen years, I have continually witnessed brethren gamble with their souls. I have witnessed brethren, whom have been taught these scriptural truths, still go on trips and move to new locations wherein they “try to find a faithful congregation to worship with”. I am frequently lost to what more I can say or do to help on this matter. This article is another sad attempt to make everyone think about these things.

If I were in the shoes of those who travel on Sundays or are considering moving to another location, I would think about what fellowship with the erring means for me. I would know that sins of ignorance are not excused (Proverbs 22:3 and Acts 17:30-31). Knowing that there are many false brethren (Acts 20:28-31, I Timothy 4:1, II Timothy 4:1-5, and II Peter 2:1-3), I would know that I am more likely to find those in error. I would know that I am commanded to test brethren (I John 4:1). That is not really possible with just a visit or a phone call (Luke 6:43-46). Thus, I would ask, am I sinning if I worship with the erring?

Is It A Sin To Worship With Those In Error?

Under the Law of Moses, which serves as a learning tool for us (Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-12), here is what GOD says: *“I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked... Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God... He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed... Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation”* (Psalms 26:4-5, Psalms 119:115, Proverbs 13:20, and Jeremiah 15:16-17).

Under the New Testament of Christ, which we are bound to keep every part of (James 2:10-12), here is what GOD says: *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple... And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them... Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure... If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself... Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is **partaker of his evil deeds**... But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth”* (Romans 16:17-18, Ephesians 5:11, I Timothy 5:22, I Timothy 6:3-5, II John 1:9-11, and Revelation 2:14-16).

How did Jesus act when He entered in among the erring (John 2:13-17; cf. Proverbs 28:4, Proverbs 29:27, and Jude 3)? I know the reasoning of some is that they do not know if a congregation is wrong. Doesn't that make worshipping with them wrong in itself (Romans 14:23 and Ephesians 5:10)? Brethren, if it is okay in your mind to worship with the erring because of a sign that says “the church of Christ”, you're stubborn and I cannot help you!

Conclusion

I have nothing more that I can say. I don't know what people do or how diligent they are when they leave El Paso. I cannot answer for or against what those folks do away from here. The harsh reality will come during the Judgment Day. The righteous (I John 3:1-10) are scarcely [hardly] saved (I Peter 4:17-19). Why make it harder because of a vacation, better job, to be closer to family, more desirable climate, etc.? Thankfully, each of you will stand accountable for those decisions and not I over this matter (II Corinthians 5:10).