

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

November 16

2008

## Be Not Deceived!

It seems mankind's, God-given power of logic and reason have often been misused. The misuse of God's goodness has always led to mischief and misery. The misuse of the wonderful gift of speech is manifest in lying, cursing and gossip. The misuse of sex is manifest in fornication, adultery and incest. The misuse of logic and reason is self-deception, disobedience and sin.

In 1 Kings 12, we have a classic example of Israel reasoning themselves into disobedience. Jeroboam appeared on the political scene as a moderate and compassionate leader who cared more for the people than did Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. Hence, ten of the twelve tribes chose to follow Jeroboam.

He immediately realized he could never hold his new followers if they continued to return to Jerusalem to worship. Therefore, he who appeared to be a good and compassionate leader, turned into a terrible deceiver of the people. He convinced them that the journey back to Jerusalem was much too far and inconvenient. So, he set up places for them to worship at Bethel in the South and at Dan in the North. He built altars, appointed an unlawful priesthood and invented special feast days. The Bible says all this Jeroboam "devised of his own heart."

It is sad but true that we see the same kinds of self-deception all around us today. Self-righteous man has never been satisfied to worship God according to His divine directives. Cain, the Israelites, and modern man have all stumbled over God's worship commandments. Hence, today we see the masses engaged in countless religious practices which are unauthorized by God. Using

so-called "holy" water, incense burning, sprinkling, counting beads, quarterly communion and salvation by faith only, are but a few of the pseudo-religious acts and doctrines men have deceived themselves into accepting.

✍ Raymond E. Harris



## The Golden Rule

Matthew 7:12 reads, *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do you, do ye even so to them . . . ."* This verse expresses an attitude that has won for it the designation "The Golden Rule." Simply stated the principle is: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

It is interesting how some try to set certain bounds or limits to what is obviously a universal principle. The attempts to exercise such exemptions or exclusions clearly manifest areas of rebellion and selfishness.

For instance it is not uncommon to hear someone say, "Yes, the Golden Rule is a noble principle but after all business is business." It does not take a Solomon to perceive that anyone who would make such a statement is serving mammon and not God. Truly, the love of money is the root of all evil.

But let's now move into another area where the Golden Rule is neglected. One such area is most assuredly the home. In some cases people treat total strangers with more understanding and kindness than they do their own companions, children or parents.

Invariably, when I see where a divorce suit has been filed, I immediately know that one or both parties involved violated the Golden Rule. Put another way, there would have never been a divorce in the history of the world, if all husbands and wives had always kept the Golden Rule.

Some feel there is no better definition for the word "love" than the Golden Rule. Truly, if we love God, our companions and all our fellow men as we should, we will do unto them as we would want them to do unto us.

To illustrate the application of the Golden Rule in marriage:

1. We should not criticize our companions in the presence of others.

2. We should not nag.
3. We should not stir jealousy by being flirtatious.
4. We should never do anything out of spite.
5. We should do everything possible to control our own selfishness.

Verily, we would all live happier lives if we could always remember, on all occasions, and, in all circumstances, to keep the golden rule!

✍️ *Raymond E. Harris*



## What Is Repentance?

In Acts 17:30 Luke records a statement made by the apostle Paul to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill which, without doubt, has turned many souls from sin to a life with God. He said, *"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent ..."* . *"To repent"* translates the present infinitive *metanoeo*, and is defined *"to change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins."*

Since God's ways and man's ways are not alike (Isaiah 55:8, 9) but God's ways are right, it is necessary that man make the change in order to be right in his thinking and living. It is unthinkable that man can honestly and intelligently change his mind without evidence. The gospel of Christ is the evidence which leads to one changing his mind.

Repentance is not something God gives directly to a sinner. God grants repentance but it is through the process of teaching (Acts 11:14-18). There is not the slightest possibility for any one to repent, having never heard the gospel of Christ. Every case of conversion fully impresses one with the fact that one's ability to repent is based upon the evidence presented in the preaching of the gospel. Let none tell you that you can repent if you do not know the reasons for making such a change in your mind.

Hearing some of the denominational preachers one would think repentance is convulsion. They seem to think if they are able to manipulate one into screaming, jerking, going into emotional spells, to gibber, and foam at the mouth, they have caused repentance in that

individual's life! Such is not true. Repentance is a change of one's mind, not the personification of ignorance. Since repentance is a change of one's mind it then is an intellectual action: one is taught the truth and is thereby led to an abandonment of his own thoughts and an acceptance of God's word. It is then a change in one's mind that leads to a change in life to be acceptable to God (cf. the incestuous brother at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:1-9; 7:7-12). The case of Jonah illustrates the same thing (Jonah 3; Matthew 12:41). One cannot do any better than one knows; therefore, what one knows is the basis which leads to a change in life. When one changes his mind, that one will not refuse to obey God. *"Repent and be baptized"* is the command in Acts 2:38! Have you repented?

✍️ *Earl E. Robertson*



### What would this church be like if:

- **The preacher missed services as often as I do?**
- **Everyone in the Bible classes studied and prepared like me?**
- **All of the members contributed the way I do?**
- **The song leader was as tardy as me?**
- **Visitors were greeted by everyone in the same way I greet them?**

**What would this church be like if everyone in it was just like me?**

(From *The Beacon*, Columbia, TN)

## ***Belleville church of Christ***

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

**www.bellevillechurch.net**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Schedule of Services</b></p> <p>Sun. Bible Study. . . . . 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Sun. Morning Worship. . . . . 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Sun. Evening Worship. . . . . 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wed. Bible Study. . . . . 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Elders</b></p> <p>Charles Carpenter. . . . . (317) 839-3873</p> <p>James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deacons</b></p> <p>Leon Nevins. . . . . (317) 272-2966</p> <p>Don Perry. . . . . (765) 676-5825</p> <p>Alvin Stanley. . . . . (317) 831-3514</p>
<p><b>Evangelist</b></p> <p>James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507</p>	