

SAMARIA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Water of Life

“...the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” - John 4:14

Volume: I

December 2008

Number: 3

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?

DAVID ELDRIDGE

After Moses returned from Mount Sinai, he saw the golden calf that the children of Israel had erected, and his anger was aroused. Moses then makes this great call to action: “*Whoever is on the LORD's side – come to me!*” (Ex. 32:26). The sons of Levi respond to Moses' call and are ordered to go through the camp and, without prejudice, slay the people because of their great transgression. That day about 3,000 Israelites died at the hands of these Levites. From their actions we learn much about those on the Lord's side. To be on the Lord's side means to...

OBEY GOD. The purging of sin from the camp was the command of God (Ex. 32:27). The sons of Levi went about this unpleasant task in obedience to God. Those on the Lord's side see the great need to obey God's commands. It is in this way that we show our allegiance to Him and also find great reward. John wrote, “*Blessed are those*

who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14). To be on the Lord's side is to obey God.

TAKE ACTION. The Levites took action in the service of God. The people of God are a people of action! Paul said, “*The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you*” (Phil. 4:9). Some sit on the sidelines without so much as lifting a finger in service. However, we must not only say we are on the Lord's side, but we must show that we are on His side by our righteous actions. Paul encourages us to “*be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (I Cor. 15:58). To be on the Lord's side is to take action in His service.

(continued on the next page)

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE? (CONTINUED)

BE LOYAL. As those who were on the Lord's side, the sons of Levi killed their brothers, companions, and neighbors (Ex. 32:27). In this we see that their loyalty to God came before their loyalty to any earthly relationships. Those on the Lord's side will be fiercely loyal to Him, putting Him above all other relationships on this earth. Jesus said, *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple"* (Lk. 14:26). We must be loyal to Him above any other – whether it is family or friend. To be on the Lord's side is to be loyal to Him above any other.

STAND AGAINST EVIL. A great evil had been committed by the Israelites making an idol and forsaking God. Those on the Lord's side took a stand against this evil. We are called not only to abstain from wrong, but also to hate and reprove those things which are evil. Paul said it this way, *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them"* (Eph. 5:11). We are embroiled in a great battle and we must fight (cf. Eph. 6:12)! Let us stand against evil that we might be able to say with the apostle Paul: *"I have fought the good fight...henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"* (2 Tim. 4:7). To be on the Lord's side is to take a firm stand against evil.

GAIN THE VICTORY. Those on the Lord's side will gain the victory and find reward. As a result of their actions, the Levites were blessed by the Lord (Ex. 32:29). Though we face a powerful enemy and his armies we shall overcome and be rewarded (1 Pet. 5:8). Remember, *"In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us"* (Rom. 8:37). Also, *"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Cor. 15:57). If we fight for the Lord, not a single enemy can stand before us, and we will receive the reward befitting a soldier of the cross – Heaven. Those on the Lord's side gain the victory for their dedication.

We must realize that one is either on the side of our Lord or the side of Satan. Our Lord said, *"He who is not with Me is against Me"* (Matt. 12:30). Again we find, *"Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God"* (Jas. 4:4). Are you God's friend through obedience (Jn.15:14), or are you His enemy and the friend of Satan? The way to be on the Lord's side is obey God's commands, take action in His service, be fiercely loyal to His cause, and to take your stand with Him against evil. Only in this way will you be on His side and gain the great victory! Whose side are you on?

PUTTING CHRIST BACK IN

DAVID ELDRIDGE

This time of year you will often hear that we need to be "putting Christ back into Christmas." Certainly, there is nothing wrong with families getting together and giving gifts on a particular day. However, we must note that the Bible never speaks of Christians celebrating the birth of Christ, nor is there a command to do so. In fact, no one knows the actual day that His birth occurred. We must not attempt to "put Christ in Christmas" where He does not belong. Nevertheless, the thought of "putting Christ back in" other areas is one sorely needed in our world today. Consider some places where we need to be "putting Christ back in."

PUTTING CHRIST BACK IN THE HOME. It is painfully obvious that Christ has been put out of most homes. In many homes the only time Christ is allowed a place is during the Christmas season. How often do we hear of "broken homes"? The psalmist penned, *"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it"* (Ps. 127:1). Homes will continue to fall apart if the Lord is not the foundation upon which the family is built! Every member in the home has responsibilities which the Lord has commanded them to keep. We need husbands who will heed the commandment to *"love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church"* (Eph. 5:25), and wives who will *"love their husbands"* (Tit. 2:4). Parents need to get back to bringing their children *"up in the train-*

ing and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Additionally, children are to *"obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord"* (Col. 3:20). Families would do well to be putting Christ back in their homes.

PUTTING CHRIST BACK IN OUR LIVES. Like the inn at Bethlehem, many simply have no room for Jesus (cf. Lk. 2:7). To be sure, some will make a little room for Him during this season. There are others who want Christ in their lives when they are facing hardships. However, few and far between are the souls who have Christ in their lives daily. For many, the price of truly having Jesus in their life is more than they are willing to pay. Jesus said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"* (Lk. 9:23), and *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you"* (Jn. 15:14). Many are simply unwilling to deny themselves that they might be His friend by keeping His commands. Yet, still the Lord says, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne"* (Rev. 3:20-21). The Lord Jesus wants to be in your life! If you will but allow Him to abide with you, He will give you great reward. Will you let Christ in?