

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

October 2008

Number: 1

THE FIRST ISSUE

DAVID ELDRIDGE

It would be drastically understating the case to say that my family and I are excited about the work at Samaria. Prayerfully, we will enjoy a long relationship with the church here as we work together in the Cookeville area to save lost souls. Part of the teaching that I will be involved with will be done through the medium of the written word. Lord willing, this monthly bulletin will contain articles devoted to three main spiritual goals. The purpose of a bulletin such as this is to...

PREACH THE WORD. Paul charged Timothy to, “*Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching*” (2 Tim. 4:2). To this end I dedicate both myself and this bulletin. Some articles you will find in this bulletin will persuade, some will rebuke, and some will exhort, but every article will be teaching God’s word. It is so very important that we unashamedly

declare this message because, “...*the gospel of Christ...is the power of God to salvation*” (Rom. 1:16).

EDIFY THE SAINTS. Christians need to be edified! In 1 Corinthians 14:26, Paul commanded that we should “*let all things be done for edification.*” Indeed, we should be using our words, as we will be using this bulletin, to build up one another in the most holy faith (Eph. 4:29).

CONVERT THE LOST. As Christians who are moved by love and compassion, we must see our need to convert the lost unto Christ. This bulletin will present the truth in a loving and kind, but also firm way (Eph. 4:15). It is my hope that you will not hesitate to share this bulletin with your neighbors, co-workers, and family members who are not yet members of the Lord’s church. We are saved to save others! Let us always be about this work (1 Tim. 4:16).

BIBLE BEGINNINGS

DAVID ELDRIDGE

In order to get anything going we must first begin. This month begins my work with the church here at Samaria, which Susan and I have looked forward to with great anticipation. The Bible speaks of a number of beginnings. Consider...

THE BEGINNING OF THE EARTH.

At the doorway of divine revelation, God's word states: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*" (Gen. 1:1). There are many who, considering themselves wise, assert that the earth and all we see was born of chance and consequence. This is not wisdom but rather foolishness as, "*The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'*" (Ps. 14:1). The wise will open their eyes and see that "*The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork*" (Ps. 19:1). Proponents of the big bang and evolutionary theories accept those things by faith as they are just that — theories, not fact. Christians accept by faith that an all-powerful God spoke the heavens and earth into existence in six days, and that evidence of this fact surrounds us everywhere.

THE BEGINNING OF THE HOME.

The home is a divine institution of God, not some idea that originated with man. God began the home in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:18-25). Jesus referenced this beginning of the home as an example for us today. In Matthew 19:4-9, as Jesus spoke

of actions in the past, He said, "*from the beginning it was not so.*" Jesus used the beginning of the home to teach that the home as God began and demands consists of one man and one woman for life. Let us always seek to have homes that follow the divine pattern God manifested when He first instituted the home.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH.

Peter stated, in reference to the events surrounding the conversion of Cornelius, "*And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning*" (Ac. 11:15). Of what beginning was he speaking? In Acts 2:1-4 we find the Holy Spirit being poured out on the apostles — this is the beginning that Peter is referencing. What began on the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2? The church! Everything prior to Acts 2 looked forward to the coming church, while everything after Acts 2 viewed the church as already being in existence. In Acts 2:47, it is recorded, "*And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*" The church began on this day so long ago. It would be good to note that any church that cannot trace its beginning to the day of Pentecost you read of in Acts 2 is not the church of Christ which you read about in the Bible.

Let us never forget these Bible beginnings and their significance.

DO YOU LIMIT GOD?

DAVID ELDRIDGE

Are you guilty of limiting God? Did you even know it was possible? In Psalm 78:41, the psalmist said that the Jews had "*limited the Holy One of Israel.*" Let us consider some ways in which we might be guilty of limiting the Holy One of Israel.

IN ANSWERING YOUR PRAYERS.

God stands ready to both hear and answer the prayers of His saints. John penned, "*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him*" (1 Jn. 5:14-15). However, did you know you could limit God in answering your prayers? Notice Jesus' words in Mark 11:24: "*Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.*" Thus, our prayers are ineffective if we do not believe that God both can and will give us those things for which we ask. James says of the one who doubts in prayer, "*Let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord*" (Jas. 1:7). Do not limit God in answering your prayers – believe that he both can and will grant your requests!

IN FORGIVING YOUR SINS. God wants to forgive our sins – it is the theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. But, we can limit God in forgiving those sins that would send us to Hell. Jesus said,

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (Mk. 11:25). Some think they can refuse to forgive and forget what others have done to them and still be right in the eyes of God. Jesus, however, says you cannot. We should be willing to forgive those who have done us wrong by remembering the words of Colossians 3:13. Paul commanded, "*Forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*" God has forgiven us of so much, surely we can forgive others. Do not limit God in forgiving your sins - forgive that you might be forgiven!

IN SAVING THOSE WHO ARE LOST.

God would have all men saved, and the gospel is the power to bring about such salvation (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 1:16). Have you ever considered that if we do not take the word to the lost, we are limiting the power of God to save them? Read Romans 10:13-15 and note how conversion begins and salvation is found. The genesis of salvation is teaching the one who is lost in sin the word of God. As Christians we should not limit God in saving others by our failure to teach those who are lost. Instead, we must always be teaching the word of God to the lost that their souls might be saved. Do not limit God in saving those who are lost - teach them His word!