

An Escape From Suicide & Sin in One Night (1)

David Halbrook

Read Acts 16:16-27 to learn about the events in Philippi that led to a jailer preparing to kill himself. He stopped when he heard Paul say, Do yourself no harm, for we are all here (v28). The jailer then asked Paul, What must I do to be saved? (v30)—the jailer was lost and knew it!

First, Paul told him to Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. Not many people in Philippi knew the gospel yet, so this is a good “starting place” for the jailer. But this is not all that Paul told him. In verses 32-33, Paul taught the jailer what it meant to believe on Jesus and in response, immediately he and all his family were baptized. This is exactly what happened when the Ethiopian heard Philip preach Jesus (read Acts 8:35-38).

Is that what happened when you learned about Jesus? Today, when someone is told to believe on Jesus, they often wait days, weeks, or months to be baptized, but this man was baptized immediately, even though it was after midnight! If this is different than your story of learning about Jesus, ask yourself what is different and why. Then read our article next week or at our website today.

Editor’s Note: If you leave your house this week, you will meet someone, somewhere who needs to think about the topics of this article. Maybe even their life, at some point, has been as “low” as the jailer’s was. Will you find a way to give someone the opportunity to learn? With courage and love, use our article in *Arkansas Weekly* to help someone, somewhere think on things above. The decision is then theirs.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Please check the lists of various assignments and work needing volunteers on the bulletin board at the back.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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Discharging the Deserters?

Steven Klein

I’ve heard the following quote, or similar words, several times in recent years — “The church of Christ is the only army I know of that shoots its wounded.” Such a statement is neither accurate nor helpful. It attempts to lay guilt at the feet of the church which should be born by sinners who have deserted the church and left the Lord’s way.

Literally speaking, no church could shoot its own members without the event being thoroughly reported by the news media and soundly condemned by the public (remember Jim Jones and The Peoples Temple?). But the quote surely is not meant to be taken literally. Rather, it means to imply that the church is guilty of actively seeking to do spiritual harm to those whose souls have already been damaged by the working of Satan. This is nonsense. What church is going to purposely pursue a course which destroys the souls of those who have fought courageously (and would be willing to fight again) in the battle against Satan? The worst any church should be charged with is botching a surgery intended to heal the wounded.

While the Bible teaches that those who are overtaken in sin should be “restored in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal. 6:1), the reality is that there are those who do not respond either to gentle encouragement or fervent pleas. When, despite efforts to exhort, reprove, and correct, an individual continues in sin, the church must withdraw from that individual. 1 Corinthians 5:13 plainly charges the church to “put away from yourselves the evil person.” And in 2 Thessalonians 3:6, the inspired apostle Paul wrote, “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.” He is not a wounded soldier; he is a deserter. He is “walking disorderly” — out of step with the rest of the troops — and needs to be dishonorably discharged in the hope that such severe action will motivate him to “turn himself in” and take his place in the ranks once again. (*Truth Magazine, 12-17-98*)

Some Things That May Surprise You About The Church of Christ!

Ernest A. Finley

1. You may be surprised that everyone in the assembly is invited to participate in the singing portion of the worship services. We have no choirs, special groups or solos. We use no pianos, drums, organs or guitars, etc. All music is a capella (vocal) as the New Testament indicates it was in the apostolic days (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Do you know the meaning of “Accapella”? It is an Italian word that means literally “like the church.” **Accapella singing is singing “like the church.”** Contrary to what you may have heard, the singing is good singing, soul stirring and encouraging!

2. You may be surprised that visitors are NOT requested to make a contribution. Local members contribute on the first day of the week, each and every week. This is done without demand in the form of “tithes” or “assessments.” Free-will giving on the basis of other New Testament principles is impressed as the plan of scriptural giving. No cake sales, church fetês, raffles, or other money raising schemes are used! We do not appeal for, or beg from those outside the Lord’s own family. All contributions, if the Lord’s Will is respected, are freely given. We do not appeal for, or beg from those outside the Lord’s own family. All contributions, if the Lord’s Will is respected, are freely given.

3. If you visit with us on any Lord's Day (the “first day of the week”), you may be surprised to find that we commemorate the death of Christ by partaking of the Lord's supper, which was instituted by Christ and commanded and taught by Paul, the Apostle (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). In the first century, “upon the first day of the week [when, dh] the disciples came together to break bread” (Acts 20:7). Therefore, since every week has a first day, it follows that the Lord's death must be commemorated every week! Not once every six months, or only on “Easter Sunday”!

4. You may be surprised that no hyper-emotional appeals are made. You will not be urged to act or move in response to the invitation of the Lord until you have sufficient knowledge of the Truth, to serve as a basis for your faith (John 20:30-31; Acts 16:32).

5. It may surprise you that most Christians attend every assembly of the church because they want to, enjoy it, know it is commanded and because they realize that assembling to worship is vital to their spiritual growth and service to God (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25).

6. You may be surprised to know that we have no man-made prayer book, no church-authorized discipline, manual or creed and no ritualistic worship (2 Tim. 3:16-17 & 4:1-4).

7. You may be surprised at the manner of our services. You will not hear shouting, screaming or any other manifestation of unbridled emotions. No one will fall out in a faint, roll around on the floor or speak in “unknown” tongues. You will see that the admonition of the apostle Paul that all things “be done decently and in order,” is sincerely observed (1 Cor. 14:40).

8. You may be surprised that the service is NOT conducted by a man claiming to be a part of a special priesthood. Since the Lord Jesus Christ is our High Priest and all Christians now make up a general priesthood and can themselves approach God and offer their prayers and sacrifices, it should be evident that no special earthly priesthood is necessary today (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 4:14-16).

9. It may surprise you that the church of Christ has neither earthly headquarters nor an earthly head. Even though With virtually all denominations have earthly headquarters. Christ alone is head of His body and the church’s headquarters is in heaven, where Christ now sits and rules with ALL authority (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Phil. 3:20-21).

10. Contrary to what you may have heard, you may be surprised to know that the church of Christ is not intent on condemning everyone to Hell, but invites all to come to our Lord in obedient faith, in faithful service and worship and in Godly living, that one may enjoy the benefits of His grace and strive for the hope of eternal life (Tit. 2:11-12; 1 John 2:25).

11. Finally, you may be surprised to learn that the Lord’s church is neither Catholic, Protestant, sectarian nor denominational. The Lord’s church in the first century was obviously none of these. If we are correct in our claim that we follow His Word alone (admitting that not all “churches of Christ” can honestly make this claim) and in every way seek to be simple New Testament Christians, then we are the same as it was in the first century. Being of the same head, doctrine and practice results in being the same body the Lord purchased or built and therefore antedates both Catholicism and all Protestant denominations (Acts 20:28; Matt. 16:18).

We greatly desire the unity for which Jesus prayed, but, we believe that scriptural unity is found only in Christ (John 17:20-21). Both Catholicism and denominational sectarianism stands opposed to this unity. We stand upon the Word of our Lord alone, respecting His authority in everything and speaking only as He directs us if we “all be one” in Christ as He so fervently prayed (Matt. 28:18; 1 Peter 4:11).

Please attend our services and see for yourself!