

RESULTS

David Halbrook

How are you going to judge the success of the gospel meeting next week? As you choose your answer, consider two Bible preachers.

First, consider the prophet Jeremiah. He was as sincere and tender-hearted as any of the Old Testament prophets, sometimes called "The Weeping Prophet."

He *badly* wanted Israel to listen to God's instructions and warnings. Israel not only refused to listen, they fought against Jeremiah, putting him into prison. As Jeremiah increasingly saw the degree of Israel's rejection, he once decided to quit teaching. He was so discouraged at the lack of results which he hoped and worked to see, that when his expectations were unmet, he momentarily gave up.

Secondly, Paul reminded the Corinthians that *Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel* (1 Cor. 1:17). Paul had no control over who would accept the message. He only had control over his willingness to preach the message. Paul's preaching was rejected far more often than it was accepted—and he was preaching a relatively new message (new things always attract some interest just based on their "newness") accompanied by signs and wonders.

While Paul definitely saw more "visible" results than Jeremiah, overall they did the same basic work with the same sincere zeal.

Whether we live in a time that is more like Jeremiah's or Paul's isn't important. Let us constantly care and work like they both did. We can only control our heart and our hands. The results are outside of our control but not God's (Is. 55:11).

-- *Editor's Note:* The article in the *Arkansas Weekly* lists the topics of the week. Our funds pay for the articles. Our hands and mouths help people to find the articles.

Church of Christ—Quail Valley
4104 E. Harrison St.
Batesville, AR 72501
Office- (870) 793-6700

Evangelists:
David Halbrook 569-4491
Lenoard Westbrook 612-8409

The Exhorter

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

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

September 4, 2011

WWW.QVCOC.COM

A HOLY HIGHWAY

Burl Young, Jr.

In Isaiah 35:8, the prophet says, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. "

It is most probable that Isaiah was prophesying that there will be a way that men may travel to follow Christ. It is about this way that I will write.

Isaiah says that there would be a highway and a way: since a distinction is made by him, we should try to understand the existing difference. There is an actual difference in the meaning of the words themselves. Albert Barnes says that the word "highway" signified a raised causeway or turnpike. These highways were elevated and the many soldiers would use these highways on their way to and from battle. However the word "way" refers to any road or path that all men might walk. It is the latter word that we shall place most emphasis on.

The Apostle Paul made reference to the way that was called heresy by his accusers (Acts 24:14). The way that was preached by Paul was constantly causing him problems. He preached that Jesus had been raised from the dead. He preached that the kingdom was established (see Col. 1:13) and various other things that caused him many and varied problems. We should note that Paul did not turn to another way, but rather continued on the way that Jesus had revealed to him.

The way that is mentioned by Isaiah was to be a way of holiness. How much we need to understand this today. When we see Christians compromising their holiness for a few things of this world, we wonder if they are trying to walk on the way mentioned by Isaiah. By obeying Christ in faith, repentance, confession and baptism, we place ourselves on the highway. Then, we must continue to walk in it with a holy life. Jesus said, "Be thou faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10).

Because of the simplicity of God's plan of salvation, Isaiah next shows the kind of man that can travel the highway under consideration. A "wayfaring man though a fool" is here mentioned. Obviously, Isaiah does not mean the idiotic or moronic person that we sometime think of when we hear someone called a fool. He is, however, referring to someone of little ability and perhaps viewed as a fool by many in the world. When one dedicates himself to following God and his son Jesus, many will think him a fool in this life. God's plan was not designed so that only the talented few could understand, but made it so that all could understand from the least to the greatest.

"No lion shall be there." To our civilized world, the lion is of little consequence, except to look at in the zoo. However, in earlier days the lion was a real menace to the traveler on the highway. It appears that many a traveler was actually devoured by a lion when he did not take the proper precautions. We too, are warned to watch that Satan does not devour us by the things of this world (1 Pet. 5:8). Even though God has not taken away Satan from our midst, he has conquered him through his son Jesus. Jesus will walk with us in the highway if we will allow him to do so. Finally, Isaiah says, "The redeemed shall walk there." When one speaks of being redeemed, he makes reference to two things. First, the person being redeemed and second the price paid for the redemption. God loved man so much that he sent his only Son to die that we might live. That makes the redemption of extra value, in that it had such a wonderful price and most of all, it should cause us to desire to walk with the other redeemed of God and to some day stand in his wonderful presence.

(Guardian of Truth XXXIV: 11, p. 328 June 7, 1990)

"JUST AS I AM"

Frank Himmel (The Knollwood Reminder, 8-14-11)

The song *Just As I Am* is perhaps the most commonly used invitation song. The idea in the song is that we cannot make ourselves right with God on our own; apart from Jesus' blood we have no hope. That is precisely the New Testament picture (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; etc.).

I fear, however, that some folks have an erroneous idea about Jesus saving us "just as we are." They seem to think that He saves us without any change in our conduct. That is opposite to the New Testament picture. Jesus' charge to the apostles was "*that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations*" (Luke 24:47). Forgiveness is extended to those willing to abandon sinful conduct, not to those who insist on continuing in it.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, "*Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you...*" (1 Cor. 6:9-10). He did not say such **are** some of you, but such **were**. They changed their conduct in connection with being washed, sanctified, and justified (v. 11).

"Just as I am," if referring to our own helplessness, is a comforting sentiment. But to suggest it means salvation without repentance is to hold out false hope.

I WAS WRONG

Stan Mitchell (<http://susquehannachurchofchrist.org/>)

He wrote these words with a fountain pen before the greatest invasion in history began. The attempt to take the beaches at Normandy against Germany's entrenched defenses was a fearful risk. The effort would be massive, and if the attempt failed, he wanted someone to blame. Himself.

"Our landing has failed," he wrote, "And I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air, and the navy did all that bravery and devotion could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt, it is mine, and mine alone" (Dwight D. Eisenhower, June 5, 1944).

Thankfully that was a message he never had to deliver. It's ironic to learn that the secret to greatness is the ability to admit failure. Three words, more difficult to pronounce than "Mephibosheth" are, "I was wrong."

It's hard in a marriage to learn that the problem with us is me. It's too easy when we abandon the Lord to blame his church. People wonder why Saul was considered a failure as leader of Israel, and the flawed but earnest David achieved greatness.

It's not that David made fewer mistakes; he admitted responsibility for them.

"For I know my transgressions," he declared. We know our brethren's transgressions. David knew his own. "And my sin is always before me" (Psalm 51:3). In contrast, our sin is constantly repressed in our memories!

How's your pronunciation of hard-to-say words?