

## **COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH (2)**

David Halbrook

“**Am I saved the moment I believe (by faith only)?**” The Bible teaches that we are saved by faith but “not by faith only” (Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8; James 2:24). Similarly, you live by drinking water but cannot live on water only. See the difference? God saves those who, by faith in the working of God, are baptized into Christ (Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21). You cannot find one person in Scripture who was saved by God by faith alone. This error misleads many.

“**Does God accept many faiths?**” Have you ever been asked “Of what faith are you?” Common answers include “I’m of the Baptist (or Catholic) faith.” How would the apostles have answered that question? Ephesians 4:5 says there is “one faith.” Our articles are not spreading “the church of Christ faith,” as if we made our own faith. We write and spread “the faith which was once for all delivered” (Jude 3). This one faith leads people to think and speak the same things, joined in the same mind (1 Corinthians 1:10).

What questions do you have about faith?

### **Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.**

- Can you post Scriptures on our signboard during Oct, Nov, or Dec? Sign up!
- Prepare for our fall meeting with Wayne Goff-- **September 22-27**.
- Future gospel meetings: Brett Hogland (Spring 2014), Ron Halbrook (Fall 2014), Donnie Rader (Spring 2015), Jimmy Stevens (Fall 2015).

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

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

Evangelist:  
David Halbrook 569-4491

# The Exhorter

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

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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[WWW.QVCOC.COM](http://WWW.QVCOC.COM)

## ***THE MEANING OF CONTENTMENT***

*Jerry Fite*

Paul reminds us that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And, in order to avoid many sorrows and more importantly, the falling away from the faith, we are to cultivate the attitude of godliness with contentment. Money is not our gain, but “*godliness with contentment is great gain*” (1 Timothy 6:6).

Contentment is experiencing the events of life with the attitude that we are “*sufficient*” for the occasion. Paul says “*having food and covering, we shall therewith be content*” (1 Timothy 6:8). What this means, is that I look at my situation and see that my basic needs are being supplied. I have a roof over my head, and food in my stomach. Therefore, I am good for another day. But wonder if that roof over my head is a cardboard box, and the food is just half a sandwich. Must I feel sufficient for the moment? Yes, I need to be *content*, but this does not mean I must *like* my present situation.

Some will equate “contentment” and “like.” But they are not the same. One, in order to be content, must not necessarily like the situation he or she is in. I do not have to like the fact that my covering is a box and my meal for the day is half of a sandwich, but I am to think that for this moment, I have food and covering and will be content.

The soldiers in John’s day were to be “content with their wages.” This does not mean they had to like what they were making, and never ask for a raise, but that they were to be sufficient for the moment. They were not to allow greed to move them to use their position of power and “extort” from others “by force” or “accuse any one wrongfully” in order to satisfy discontent with their wages. They did not have to like their wages, but they were to be content with their wages.

Paul was in prison when he wrote about his contentment. “*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content*” (Philippians 2:11). Surely, Paul did not like the fact that he was in prison,

and not able to be free to spread the gospel, but he was content. He was sufficient for the moment and even was able to teach those he was around in prison (Philippians 1:13, 4:22, Ephesians 6:19-20).

Contentment was not about how much Paul had, for he learned how to be content regardless if he was “abased” or living in “abundance” (Philippians 4:12). It was about “sufficiency.” He was sufficient for any occasion because he lived in the Lord. Paul says, “*I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me*” (Philippians 4:13). Regardless of how much or how little, Paul had the Lord with him to make him sufficient for the moment.

Life can be difficult when you are facing financial issues, or health issues. You are pinching pennies here and cutting back there. It is not a pleasant experience, and sometimes very difficult. When you have lost some of your health, and the remedial treatments make you weak and sick, it is often demoralizing. Contentment does not mean that you have to like the fact that you have lower wages or that you are not enjoying the health you once had, but it is about looking on your present situation and knowing you have the Lord with you strengthening you along the way. He is here with you. With him you can be sufficient for anything, even those things you do not like.

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## ***THE EARLY CHURCH***

*Stan Adams*

The early church was a growing church. The book of Acts is a written testimony to this fact. On the day of Pentecost (3,000), later we read of 5,000 men added, and then the word multitude is used along with daily additions. What caused the remarkable growth of the church during the first century, a time when no radios, televisions, or automobiles existed? Is it possible for the Church to grow that way today? God has made it possible for the Church to grow the same way today as it did in the first century. The “fields are still white unto harvest.” Is it really true that times have changed, or have Christians changed? Is it possible for us to kill the growth of a local congregation? Times may have changed but sin is still sin. Perhaps, it is Christians who have changed. Let’s consider that thought.

**Christians Are Not Zealous.** As one reads the book of Acts zeal is a dominant characteristic. These people had other things to do but they considered the kingdom the most important. They evidently believed what Jesus said in Matthew 6:33.

**Christians Are Worldly And Forget They Are To Be A Separate People.** When the light does not shine brightly then the “new life” is not clearly seen nor appealing. I really do not understand how some Christians can involve themselves in so many worldly activities and still claim to belong to Christ! It also seems as if some are oblivious to the fact that their ungodly behavior hinders those whom we try to reach, from obedience to the Gospel. The Gospel is still powerful (Rom. 1:16), but how powerful are the saints?

**Christians Have The Attitude Of Trying To Be As Weird As Possible.**

Separateness does not mean being as eccentric as possible. Some Christians can give the impression that serving the Lord is “such a chore”. They have no joy, enthusiasm, nor peace. They may have knowledge but it is hidden and hampered by their behavior. The Pharisees had this problem. See Matthew 23 to see what Jesus thought.

**Christians Have No Evangelistic Zeal.** How many times are opportunities presented by the local congregations in the form of Gospel meetings? These are opportunities for people to come and hear the Truth. But sadly, these are also times when some brethren have the notion they can go on vacation. They do not ask others to come, nor do they come. Consequently, some saints feel meetings do no good.

**Christians Have No Knowledge.** If saints would give themselves over to knowing the Bible, I believe they could not help but be what God intended them to be. Israel was destroyed for “lack of knowledge”. We are commanded to study and activate the Word in our lives (2 Tim. 2:15; Gal. 5:22). Many Christians are functional illiterates in Bible knowledge.

**Christians Have No Fear.** When brethren fail to discipline one another, then it will not be long before words of admonition become empty threats. Just as a parent who always threatens but never follows through, will be mocked, so will the church that fails to follow through in disciplining the members. It is wonderful to speak the right thing and to stand for the right things, but we must also rebuke and discipline those who fail to submit to God, so that proper church growth can continue. Those who belong to the world and will not repent must be disciplined! They must be held accountable for their rebellion. Church growth can be killed by tolerance of sin in the lives of the saints.

**Conclusion** Are you contributing to THE growth of this congregation? Are you living properly, studying properly, and do you have an attitude that shows you are thrilled to belong to Jesus Christ? May we all consider what kind of salt, leaven and light we are, and what effect our acts have on the growth of the congregation here. Some need to repent. Are you one of them?