



The important thing for us all to remember is that we must always try to both understand what God has said and **“learn”** how to apply it in our lives. It is easy for us to get discouraged when we see our lives fall short of what the Lord teaches. However, in Christ Satan doesn’t win when we fall short but when we surrender. Paul shows us that even though he understood the Lord’s

us. We may understand that God is with us from day to day (Heb. 13:5) and that peace of mind is offered to us when we go to God in prayer (Phil. 4:6-7), but, we may not yet have learned to trust Him through times of difficulty, appealing to Him that we might have this peace. In each of these cases, we like Jesus’s critics need to **“go and learn** what this means.”

care in his life he had to “learn” to be content. In Philippians 4:12 he declared: **“I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”** Just before this Paul stated: **“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”** (vs. 11). Our task is just the same. May each of us work to better understand what God has said and diligently come to know the Scriptures. Yet, at the same time may we each take it a step further by “learning” what these things mean in our own lives.



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Welcome Visitors

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23.12

March 21, 2021

Faithful Sayings

**BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

“An Advocate with the Father”

By Kyle Pope

Services

**Sunday: 9:00 AM
10:00 AM
11:00 AM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM**

Elders:

**Pat Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Jeff Nunn**

Deacons:

**Ben Hight
Blake McAlister
Walker McAnear
Sam Nunn
Lance Purcell
Justin Smiley
Kevin Wise
Trevor Yontz**

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

We all have friends and family who lead very upright lives. They love their families. They pay their taxes. They are hard workers and do good to those around them. They are our neighbors and classmates. We see them at the grocery store and pass them on the street. From everything we can see with our eyes they are the “cream of the crop” of those this world has to offer. Within them, however, unseen to the naked eye is a fatal flaw—they are spiritually separated from God! The unseen bullet of sin has penetrated their soul leaving a mortal wound that has rendered them spiritually dead. Although they appear to be alive and well, they are walking corpses awaiting their everlasting cremation.

Why don’t we see this fatal flaw? Perhaps because we are so used to superficial observation. We judge according to how healthy someone looks in the flesh. Often, however, it may be that a person with a broken failing body is one of the most spiritually healthy among us because he or she does not trust in the flesh. We prize intellect and power, but it is often only the humble and meek that see the importance of reaching outside of themselves. The spiritually dead don’t stand out from the crowd. We won’t see an arrow floating over them and pointing

to them with the words “I am lost!” Yet, whether they realize it or not, the truth is that all souls separated from God because of sin are lost in sin.

The sad thing is that the Bible tells us that is the condition of *most* of the world! Jesus said of the gate leading to destruction “**there are many who go in by it**” (Matt. 7:13). While of the gate leading to life, He said, “**there are few who find it**” (Matt. 7:14). In fact, the Bible often uses the term “world,” not in reference to the pure and undefiled product of God’s work in creation, but of the corrupt results of what man has done to

it. So John teaches, “**If anyone loves the world the love of the Father is not in him**” (1 John 2:15).

How are we to rationalize in our minds that a loving God can view those whom we consider so decent and upright as separated from Him? How can we see them as God does? We often try to tell ourselves that the “good person” we know in the world is somehow accepted by God, but it is only the “bad person” who is not. But, who defines what is *good* and what is *bad*? God sets the standard of man’s behavior. It is His right to judge man’s deeds. In reality, no accountable soul can stand before God as a “good person” because “**all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**” (Rom. 3:23). Why is it that all who are outside of Christ are lost? Because sin prevents man from coming into the presence of a sinless and righteous God. If any souls could honestly claim that they had never sinned they could come before God without guilt. But, the Holy Spirit frankly tells any accountable soul who might cling to such wishful thinking, “**If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us**” (1 John 1:8).

How can the sinful soul approach God the Father? Jesus said, “**No one comes to the Father except through Me**” (John 14:6). The insurmountable obstacle to the human soul is sin! The necessary remedy to conquer it is Jesus Christ.

The fatal deficiency in the worldly soul outside of Christ is the lack of an Advocate with the Father on behalf of sin. That is, they need someone to approach the righteous judgment seat of God the Father and plead our case for us. The only One who can fill that role is Jesus, because, “**There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved**” (Acts 4:12).

The Bible declares to the Christian, “**If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the whole world**” (1 John 2:1-2). Jesus Christ is the most over-worked public defender in human history! Yet, He only works for those who accept His service through faith and obedience to the gospel. While His case load is full, He is always willing to take on more clients. May God help us to see those around us who need Him as desperately as we do, but have not yet come to realize it.



“Go and Learn What This Means”

By Kyle Pope

In Matthew 9:13, there is a simple, yet profound statement. As Jesus was criticized for His association with “**tax collectors and sinners**” (9:11), He gives this admonition—“**But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance**” (NKJV). As He quotes an Old Testament text from Hosea 6:6, it is interesting to consider what He

instructs the Pharisees to do. He challenges them to learn the meaning of Hosea’s statement. The statement itself is easy enough to understand: God wants people to be merciful to others more than He wants them to offer great sacrifices. Yet, Jesus suggests that although they might understand the words, they had not truly learned the principle. By criticizing His association with “**sinners**” they were failing to see the importance of the mercy He demonstrated in trying to teach sinners. He tells them to “**go and learn**” what the text means.

There are many things in the Christian life that have a similar application. We may understand that God wants us to be longsuffering and kind (1 Cor. 13:4), or that His word can work in us if we will study (1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17), but, we may not yet have learned how to act with patience and kindness, or we may not fully allow God’s word to work within



Olsen Park Church of Christ