

Going to Heaven

By Ron Boatwright

Our number one priority in this life must be to go to Heaven. Nothing else is as important. Jesus says in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Our soul is the most precious thing we have. There is nothing that can equal its value. We read in Matthew 16:26, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" One certainly does not profit in the tragic loss of his soul.

It is easy in today's materialistic society to get caught up in the pursuit of materialism if we are not

careful. Our Lord says in Matthew 6:19-21, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Our bank account needs to be in heaven.

Everyday we need to tell ourselves that the main thing in this life is to go to Heaven. We read in Colossians 3:2, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." We should regularly think about going to Heaven.

Heaven is a prepared place (John

14:2-3) for a prepared people. It will be such a wonderful place, which is beyond our wildest dreams. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." There is no way that Heaven can be described so we as mortal human beings can understand how wonderful it will be.

A person will not accidentally go to Heaven. Going to Heaven is a lifelong race as we read in Hebrews 12:1, "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." Going to Heaven requires endurance, patience, and persistence. We must finish the race. ~

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call for directions and more information (850) 939-8109

Navarre church of Christ
8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

Place
Stamp
Here

Assembly Schedule Sunday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

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Read the Manual!



Mike Riley

A few years back, the Washington Post printed an article which pondered the reluctance of Americans to read the instructions that come with new products. Too often, consumers struggle with (or even end up returning) items they can't figure out how to use, or that they assume don't work because they're using the product incorrectly. Compa-

nies' customer service lines are tied up by people asking routine questions about their purchases, phone calls that could be avoided if people would take the time to read the manual.

Why Americans Don't Read Directions

The writer of the article wrote, "Why Americans don't read directions is no mystery. Consumers

want instant satisfaction — they don't want to wade through pages and pages of directions after they buy a product, especially if the directions are hard to understand or follow. Furthermore, even when the manuals are easy to understand, they may not be entertaining enough for today's consumer, especially younger ones who have grown up with the fast-paced world of MTV, computer games and the

Internet. They are used to having information delivered in a rapid, colorful and stimulating way, and they want directions to be equally snappy." Toll-free customer service numbers only compound the problem, because many people would rather call and ask for help than read the instructions already provided. Having worked as a representative for an insurance company for several months, I can attest to the accuracy of the author's observations. As many as one-third of the questions I received from policyholders had answers they could have easily obtain for themselves just by opening the materials they had been provided when they obtained the insurance coverage. But many folks are too lazy or stubborn to read those materials, and too quick to let others do their research for them.

Reading God's Instruction Manual

God's experience with humankind is exactly like that. We continually get ourselves into trouble and wreak havoc on our lives because we can't be bothered to read the

"owner's manual" God has provided - the Bible. Everything we need to know to live acceptably before God is contained in this inspired book (Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3).

But how many people really read it? And of those who do make some attempt to study the Bible, how many apply it diligently to every circumstance and situation of life? For some, the Scriptures just aren't "entertaining" enough. True, the Bible doesn't read like a comic book, or a romance novel, or the latest John Grisham thriller. But then, it's not a work of fiction: it's an instruction manual, one that not only is clear and concise, but addresses all the complexities of human existence. And, like the consumer quick to dial the 800 number for help, many folks — including far too many Christians — are content to let someone else do the reading. "The preacher knows all that stuff," they reason. But every individual is accountable to God for the contents of His word (John 12:48), because everyone will be judged from the same books (Revelation

20:12-13).

We all have the same responsibility to be diligent in our efforts to rightly handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). The Proverb writer wrote, "For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly" (Proverbs 2:6-7). Jesus taught that "you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32), and affirmed that God's word is truth (John 17:17). If it's freedom and wisdom that we desire, God's word is the only legitimate source.

Conclusion

Life is difficult because none of us have ever lived it before. The knowledge of how to live a righteous life is not innate but must be learned (Psalms 119:73; Proverbs 2:1-6). When life's difficult questions arise, or we don't know how things work, let's not be stubborn or lazy — let's read the manual! (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11). ~



JESUS CHRIST on the CROSS offers

**Forgiveness of
the Past,
Purpose for
the Present,
Hope for
the Future.**

What Can I Do?

G. E. Watkins

I remember in my youth playing little league baseball. To play a game there had to be players, coaches, umpires, statisticians, groundskeepers, announcers, fans, even someone to clean up afterward. Everyone seemed to be happy to do their job, even if it was remembering to bring the bubblegum. There's no game with just players. As you read this I exhort you to remember that it is no different in the Lord's church. All have a part to play, all have a job to do, all are important (1 Cor. 12:14-18).

Ask the question, "What can I do to make the work of the church a success?" Immediately the high-profile jobs come to mind, however only a few can be elder, deacon and preacher. Such things require much preparation and you may not be prepared to that degree. I'm going to assume you have little in the way of preparation, you're attending regularly and giving liberally. So, on to the question, What can I do?

Market your congregation's website. I think you can understand why I thought of this first. Websites are what I do. Your e-mail program will allow you to create a signature file which includes your name and whatever other information you'd like to include. Check the help files of the e-mail program for instructions. Include your congregation's web address in every personal e-mail you send out. If everyone in the congregation did this it would go a long

way toward making sure everyone knows about it. You might also include other good sites that deserve your support. Buy a stamp with the web address on it and stamp all of your bill envelopes with it. Someone will see it. There may be other opportunities that you have that I cannot see. Search these out and use them to get the word out about your congregation.

Get serious about distributing tracts. Most congregations have tracts available in the foyer for you to use and you should. I'm talking about going a little farther than that. It doesn't cost all that much to buy a hundred of a title every month for the purpose of distributing them. Stamp them on the back with the congregation's physical address and web address and hand them out. I know it feels weird doing it but it will propel you forward to the day when you'll actually be able to talk to others about the plan of salvation. Give them to people you know. Mail them to your neighbors. (It's against the law to put things in other's mailboxes.) Go downtown and hand them out on the sidewalk. In most cities it's not unusual for there to be someone handing out tracts downtown. Stand up straight, have a smile on your face and look like everyone should want what you have to offer. Most people are nicer than you think. It's easier if you don't go alone, even if your partner doesn't participate but will stand nearby. Please don't put the tracts under windshield wipers or go to private property (malls, strip centers, etc.) to hand

them out. Treat the tract like a gift. For this purpose choose titles that introduce the church of Christ, give the plan of salvation or that give information about a major topic of interest (ask the leaders of your congregation).

Visit the elderly and shut-ins. For a moment pretend that you've been active in the church for fifty years or more, have become infirm and you're alone. You counted on church members to edify you when you were able to attend but now there is no one. You needed those sermons, the prayers, the singing, all of it, but now there's nothing but soap operas on TV. In the bulletin, in a large portion of churches of Christ, there is a list of those who are exactly in this position. It's your job to make sure they never feel forgotten. Call them, send them cards on their special days, visit them, bring a cassette tape of last Sunday's sermon, sing with them, read the Bible to them, listen to their stories. Edify them. Perhaps they have physical needs you can fill or you can let an elder or deacon know if you can't. You'll be a very appreciated person.

If those three suggestions don't suit you I'm sure your elders can come up with something for you to do. The things I have suggested are things that, I believe, could make a huge difference if more participated. They don't take any training, don't require supervision and will have eternal consequences. Let's all go to work in the kingdom. ~