

SERMON OF THE WEEK

PAUL'S QUESTION BROUGHT TO HIM THE RICHEST BLESSINGS



By: Rev. I. W. Wilson

A CHANNEL FOR HIS OUTSTANDING QUALITIES

Paul's question gave him a channel for his superior education, as well as for his natural abilities. He grew up in Tarsus. If he was not a student in the great university of Tarsus, he may have been influenced profoundly by the philosophy taught there. From Tarsus he entered Gamaliel's theological school in Jerusalem. Here his advantages were the very best to learn the Jewish theology. Gamaliel was among the best educators of that day. In these schools Paul's naturally logical mind, his adept inclination to acquire knowledge, his literary and intellectual bent were developed to a very high degree. When he became a Christian, he became Christianity's greatest intellect, heart, soul. All his natural abilities and acquired attainments were used with all their force in the promotion of his new-found faith. His gifted, talented personality was henceforth devoted wholly to the highest and broadest service. He wrote more of the New Testament than any of his competitors. He became immortal when he became a Christian.

God needs such men today, contrary to the shallow thinking of some people. He has used many men and women who have been limited in both talents and education. Yet, he has never placed a premium on ignorance.

"How do you mix your colors, Opie?" the famous painter was asked. "With brains, sir," was the laconic reply. That is the secret of the best workmanship, whether we are artists or artisans. Our minds must be given to our work if we are to be at our best in it. A changed, warm heart, blessed with godly training, means power.

In Christianity, Paul's boundless energies found the best channel. He was a dynamo of energy. Hear him, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . . ." It is dangerous to stop. We are often like the soldier who was missed from battle. He was found in a flower garden. When asked what he was doing there he answered, as he hung his head, "Sir, I am doing no harm." But he was tried, convicted and shot.

Paul failed on no occasion to pour his entire energies into his work for the Lord. He was never half-and-half in anything he undertook.

Ordinary abilities become charged with marvelous power when a man throws his whole heart and soul into the service of God. Then the Holy Spirit illumines his common gifts and makes them glorious and efficient.

For a man with such singleness of purpose, dark dungeons, lacerating whippings, and perils by land and by sea were but steppingstones to greater service. Paul knew that a quitter never wins and a winner never quits.

For Paul the question meant a surrendered life. His cry was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He had been doing the wrong things. He now wanted to do the right things. That day his life was laid on God's altar. His life from here on out shows what God can do with one man who is completely surrendered to his will and work. Christ conquered Paul completely. When he met Christ, his whole opposition to him collapsed like a great fortress whose foundations have been undermined. But upon a new foundation. "Christ the solid Rock," Paul placed his all his personality, his talent, his life. Every new thought of Paul now blazed a path for Christ's kingdom in words and in deeds. That one was right when he said that a man has very little Christianity if it is not making him do something. Real religion is not a theology to be argued about; it is a life to be lived. Paul dedicated his whole life to Jesus. He turned over to him the steering wheel, the controls as if to say, here am I send me. There were no reservations. He made Christ the master of the ship of his life.

If we are completely his, Christ must direct and control our entire lives. This means that we cannot shut the office door, the factory gate, the business ledger, the law office, the entrance to the hall of pleasure and pastime upon Christ. We should live as the man who declared, I mean to live and have no gaps of death in my life.

Paul's question led to sublime faith as he grew in grace. For he came to the close of his matchless career, he said, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

This question gave Paul radiant optimism. He was so optimistic that he was happy when his hands were chained to his guard in prison. Prisons, chains, stripes, shipwrecks were all ornaments and palaces to Paul, for all the time he was preaching Christ and winning those whom he could reach. It was from a prison cell that he wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice."

Paul's attitude was that of confidence, faith, and perseverance. He said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken" (2 Cor. 4: 8-9). Hear him again, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither life nor death, nor angles, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:28, 35-39).

Paul was led into a life of miraculous achievements. Follow him on his missionary journeys, listen to him as he preaches, analyze his logic, read his voluminous writings, hear him in his earnest, compassionate defense of Christianity! Listen as he relates his Christian conversion! Do not stop! Note the churches he established in Galatia, in Corinth, in Ephesus, in Colosse, in Philippi, in Thessalonica! Study the rich luminous, lasting, lifting letters he wrote to those churches.

His motto was, "For me to live is Christ." No wonder, then, that he could say at the end of the way, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. 4:6-8)! These words were uttered in the face of martyrdom; but martyrdom, for him, was but the opening of the gates into the city of God.



By: Evangelist Johnnie Powell

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST
"If any man preach any other Gospel . . ."
Gal. 1:9.

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, which we are, says, but though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accused and he also says not to bid him God speed, less you be a partaker of his evil deeds.

In Matt. 28:19 where Jesus told his disciples to go preach, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son; Holy Ghost. Because of their poor understanding he could not tell them all things. However he did say, in St. John 16:12 I have many things to say unto you but you cannot bear them now. You see he left much for the Holy Ghost to do and say read through the 16. Verse. Now let us go to St. Luke 24:44 through the 49th Verse you and I know that there was no church before the full day of pentecost and that before that there were Synagogues of the Jesus. At this time he had arose and was teaching his disciples how to preach and baptize. He said that repentance and remission of Sin should be preached in his name beginning at Jerusalem. The disciples did not argue with Jesus but obeyed his command.

They went on to Jerusalem, and received the Holy Ghost speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance Acts 2:4. And Peter standing with the rest of the disciples, began to preach using the keys that the Lord Jesus had given him to open the door to the kingdom of Heaven. Friends remember that Jesus is the door, and the gospel that Peter preached is the key. Every body wants to get into the kingdom but you can not climb up some other way or you will be a thief and a robber. There is one way into the kingdom (Jesus) is one, his name is one. There is one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism.

Eph. 4:5.

Peter preached the First Sermon after the blood was shed. And I am sure that all readers know that there was no salvation before Jesus died, and men had not the power of the Holy Ghost. When the Holy Ghost came it opened the first and only church and told the disciples how to baptize and that is why that all they did in word or deed they did it in the name of the Lord Jesus for there is no power in any other name. All demons have to go at the calling of the name Jesus have you my friend ever wondered? Why some people say yes to some of Peter's preaching and reject the other. Every Word of God is right, and all his works are done in truth. Who is there that have the gall to say that the disciples did not obey God when they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Acts 8:16. Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Acts 10:48. Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Acts 19:5 Baptized in the name of Jesus Christ Acts 2:38.

How can anyone worship a God, and do works in his name, if they don't know his name? Jesus told the woman at the well, that she did not know what she worshiped. Now I say unto you that if anyone repent and obey the word of God, the Mystery of the God-head will be automatically opened to them.

SO - BE - IT.

ATTEND THE CHURCH
OF YOUR CHOICE
EVERY SUNDAY