



Oologah Observer

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

Jesus, Our High Priest

Chuck Northrop

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”
– Hebrews 3:1

The High Priest in both the Old and New Testaments served “that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin” (Hebrews 5:1) and by such he made reconciliation or propitiation “for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17). However, unlike the High Priests of the Old Testament who entered into the holy place year after year to offer up the blood of bulls and goats, our High Priest, Jesus Christ, entered into the holy place once to offer up His own blood to obtain eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9:11-14). “For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament...” (Hebrews 9:15).

A mediator is a “go-between.” He goes between two or more parties who are at odds with each other in view of producing peace. Jesus, our High Priest, mediates between God and man. A mediator (especially one who mediates between God and man) must have certain qualities.

For Jesus to be a mediator for man, He must be in sympathy with man. For this reason, He is a “partaker of flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14). “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17).

“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”
1 John 3:5

However, to be a mediator before the throne of God, He must be perfect and without sin. Paul attested to Christ’s sinlessness in 2 Corinthians 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Peter also declared, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22). In addition John affirmed in 1 John 3:5, “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

Jesus is the only one who could fit both of these criteria. To Timothy Paul wrote, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). He is “the *man* Christ Jesus” because He is human, the “son of man.” Also, He is “the man *Christ* Jesus” because He is deity, “the Son of God.” Notice both of these qualities are found in Hebrews 4:15 which says, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

Consider some other qualities of the “High Priest of our profession.” He is a merciful and faithful high priest” (Hebrews 2:17). He is merciful to us, His brethren, for He gave the ultimate sacrifice for sin, and He is faithful to God because He did it without sin. Because He is merciful and faithful, we can have full confidence in Him as our High Priest. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

Further notice the qualities of Hebrews 7:26, “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Our High Priest is “holy” or pious for He reverences God with the proper respect He deserves. He is also “harmless” in that He is kind and benevolent, without malice towards all. He is “undefiled” for He is without sin and corruption or any imperfection. He is “separate from sinners” because He is sinless and because He is exalted above the heavens and sits at the right hand of God (Hebrews 1:3).

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” (Hebrews 4:14).

Backsliding Is a Real Danger

Toney L. Smith

Many in the world of “religion” feel that one cannot turn away from God after he has come to salvation. Backsliding is a word that is found in the Word of God. It is found some twelve times in the Old Testament. It is found nine times in Jeremiah alone. “The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot” (Jeremiah 3:6). The word means “turning back or away.” Israel had made a covenant with God, therefore she was referred to as being the bride of Jehovah. But from the above verse we can clearly see that she had not been faithful.

Observations and Concerns

January 3, 2024

The children of God today are in the same situation as was Israel of old. The church of Christ is described as being the bride of Christ (Ephesians 6:22-32). And, if we turn back we are then guilty of going back or backsliding. Anytime that we as Christians join with religious error, or ungodly living, we have gone back. We have become unfaithful to the bridegroom. Therefore, we should be cautious so that we do not find ourselves in this position.

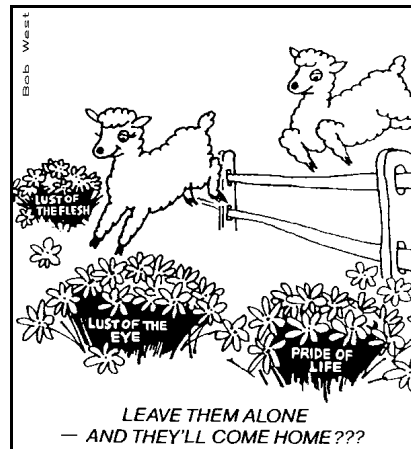
There are certain characteristics of the backslider which will help us be on guard.

(1) One of the first signs of backsliding will be manifested by **irregular attendance**. This individual will come for a few services than he/she will miss one or two. When this attitude is present there is a lack of interest in spiritual matters. Christians should relish the idea of attending worship and find joy in being with others of like-mind. The Psalmist stated: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1). The feeling of anticipation will help overcome irregular attendance.

(2) Also backsliding is evidenced when we do **not have a real spirit of love for our brethren**. It is a sad occurrence when brethren do not want to be together and have no interest in one another. The Bible speaks volumes on this subject. Notice: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35). "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8). When we fulfill this law we will have overcome to a great degree the "Backsliding mind-set."

(3) When we find ourselves **indulging in sinful practices** with little restraint we should know that we are drifting away from God (Isaiah 59:12). The children of Israel were often found in this condition. They had all blessings from God, but they were pulled into the world by unbelief. We must have the courage and set of mind to reject the pleasures of the world. The Hebrew writer spoke of Moses and his rejection of pleasure, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). We would do well to remember 1 John 2:15-17. The admonition is that we "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." The world will cause one to backslide.

The child of God must take stock in his relationship with God. From time to time we are encouraged to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates" (2 Corinthians 13:5)?



Welcome Visitors! You are our honored guests!

Praise in Psalm: "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints" (Psalm 89:5).

Declaration of Appreciation: We are thankful for those who do the accounting work for the church.

There will be a **youth devo** at 6:00 pm on Friday, January 5th at the church building. Please bring a side or sweet to go with taco soup.

The **men's budget planning meeting** is scheduled for Friday, January 12th at 6:00 pm.

We extend our sympathy to **Darla Smith** in the recent loss of her sister-in-law in Oklahoma City.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Sammy Gray** had a biopsy on December 29th, then suffered a fall the next day. He is sore but doing ok.
- ▶ **Andy Hudson** has not been feeling well.
- ▶ **Darla Smith** had surgery to remove cancer. The surgery went well, and she is recovering at home.
- ▶ **Ed Carmona** fell and suffered some injuries, and **Sherry** has recently had shingles.

Wisdom Begins with the Fear of God:

- ▶ Proverbs 1:7 – The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- ▶ Proverbs 9:10 – The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.
- ▶ Proverbs 15:33 – The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honour *is* humility.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, Jan. 3	Sunday, Jan. 7 AM	Sunday, Jan. 7 PM
Sundays			
Announcements	Chuck Northrop	Bill Dilks	Doyle Jackson
Prayer	Chuck Northrop	Bill Dilks	Doyle Jackson
Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen	Bill Dilks
Lord's Supper (speaker)		Chris Nelson	Chris Nelson
Lord's Supper		Doyle Jackson	
Lesson	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Chuck Northrop
Prayer	Bill Dilks	Chris Nelson	Ross Swearingen
Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
Bible Classes 9:30 AM			
Worship 10:30 AM			
Worship 5:00 PM			
Wednesdays			
Bible Classes 7:00 PM			
Website: oologahcofc.org			