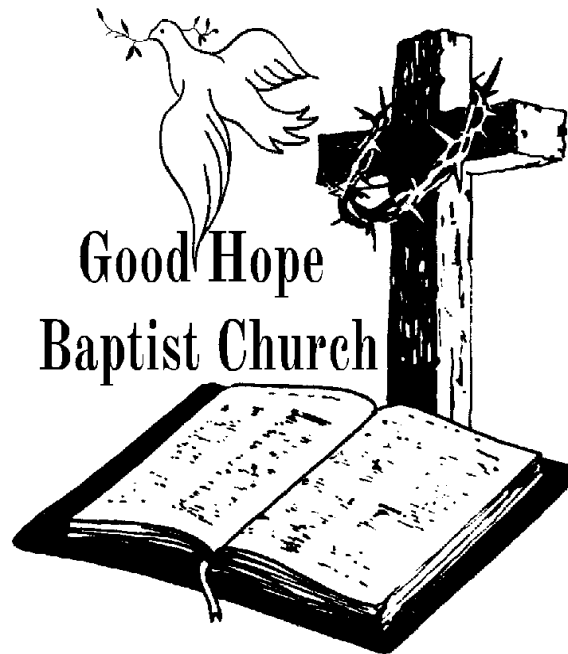


Remember The Words Of The Lord Jesus

Acts 20:35



Living Together In The Love Of God

4038 Graham Sherron Rd
Wake Forest, NC 27587

Pastor David Buffaloe
919-600-4925
online at bibleteacher.org

FOCAL Read Together Acts 20:35 ^(KJV) I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Illustrate An older missionary took a younger missionary with him into the bush of Africa. Arriving at a remote village they sought out the Chief and got his permission to set up a house from which they could preach. The first Sunday many natives came to that house to hear the preaching. The young missionary stood up and preached on “**The Reality of God**”. He asked the natives to look at the trees, the grass, the animal kingdom, and the wonderful design of all that they saw. He spoke on the fact that there is a Great Architect Who made it all. Following the message not one person came forward to be saved. The young missionary asked the older missionary, “**Why did none come? Was my translator in error? What happened?**” The older missionary replied, “**My son, you preached on the truth that God exists. That's not the problem these people have, for they know “God” exists. The problem is, they follow many gods and goddesses, and want to know which God they should follow.**”

There are many people today who “believe in Jesus”, but which “Jesus” do they believe in?

The Apostle told the Ephesian pastors:

Context Acts 20:29-30 ^(KJV) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among

you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Paul said that the Church would be attacked two ways. First, "**grievous or hungry wolves**" would come in among the sheep. "**not sparing the flock**". Their purpose would be to consume the Children of God, to destroy them. Secondly, "**from among the flock men would arise and speak perverse things, drawing people away after them**". You see both of these things happening in the Church in America today. There are **preachers who present a Jesus that is the god of prosperity**. This Jesus and this gospel says that the children of God never suffer want. Those who follow Jesus name it and claim it, and as a result have a Mercedes in the garage and fine china on the table. There are **preachers who present a Jesus that is the god of good health**. If you follow Him then you'll never be sick, never be in pain. Then there is the **Jesus Who is the Conductor of Heaven's train**. Those who are saved by Him need not serve Him. Saved, their salvation is secure. Discipleship and doing for Jesus is not commended nor commanded by this Jesus.

1 **The Biblical Gospel of Salvation is a Gospel that demands two things: repentance to God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.** For three years the Apostle Paul preached,

Context Acts 20:21 ^(KJV) **Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

a **The word "repentance" (Greek METANOIA) literally means "to change the mind".** The world has a sick mind. It chases after possessions, grabbing and grasping for temporal things, while ignoring the Eternal God Who makes all things. It is fixated on things. It is fixated on making money. **Though no one ever lays on their deathbed wishing they had made more money, the world and the worldly think about that to exclusion of all else.** This is sickness. When Jesus walked the earth Jewish men would betray Israel and sell themselves to the Roman conquerors, becoming *contract tax collectors* also known as **publicans**. Many women of that day would sell their bodies to *anyone*, becoming *contract sinners* also known as **prostitutes**. The Pharisees asked Jesus one day, "**Why do you spend time with these betrayers of Israel, these contract tax collectors and these contract prostitutes?**" Our Lord replied:

Luke 5:31-32 ^(HCSB) ... The healthy don't need a doctor, but the sick do. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Those who would sell themselves - their integrity, their bodies - for money are not well. They are sick and in need of the Great Physician. It is normal for little children to be greedy of things. A mother named **Deb Lawrence** watched her little toddlers playing and based on what she saw she wrote "**Property Laws of a Toddler**". Listen to this because it's so true. A toddler says ...

If I like it, it's mine.
If it's in my hand, it's mine.
If I can take it from you, it's mine.
If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
If I am building something, all the pieces are mine.
If it looks just like mine, it's mine.
If I saw it first, it's mine.
If you are playing with something and put it down,
it automatically becomes mine.
If it's broken, it's yours.

That's perfectly normal thinking for a toddler because he doesn't know any better. But this type of thinking is a sickness when it is carried with you into adulthood. Jesus said "This is a sickness, and I have come to call those bound in that sickness to repent - to change their minds - to come to Me and be made well".

b The second part of the Biblical Gospel of salvation is "faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ".

Context Acts 20:21 ^(KJV) Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

To hear the Gospel preached today in many Churches you would think that *we* are Lord and that Jesus is our servant. That's not what the Bible teaches, nor what we as Baptists believe. The **Baptist Faith and Message** states:

"Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as

Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. "

It is Jesus Who is Lord, not I. It is Jesus Who is Lord, not my possessions. There is no salvation apart from the Lordship of Christ. In the **Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook**, a manual that Billy developed for those who help him in his crusades, it reads:

"The Christian worker will sometimes encounter those who acclaim Jesus as the greatest religious leader who ever lived, as the most influential person in our planet's history, but who nonetheless refuse to accept Him as Savior and Lord. The person and work of Jesus Christ is the predominant theme of the Bible: He is God. He became a human being, died by crucifixion, was buried, and rose again from the dead. He is the only and the all-sufficient Savior of the world. ... The greatest response we can make to Jesus Christ and His claims is to: Receive Him as Lord and Savior. Ask the inquirer if he or she has done this."

He is Lord! You cannot separate the Lordship of Christ from the salvation of Christ. The Apostle Paul did not preach an easy Gospel.

Acts 20:18-19 ^(KJV) ... Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and

temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

The Apostle Paul was *hated* by the Jews. If you remember, he originally was commissioned by the Ruling Council of the Jews (also known as the Sanhedrin or *Seventy Elders*) to track down and prosecute Christians. When he became a Christian on the Damascus Road he lost all prestige. The "**Jews**" or the Council "**lay in wait**" for Paul. At one point in his ministry he had to be smuggled out of Jerusalem in a basket, let down the outer wall a piece of meat by his Christian brothers. But **Paul served the Lord with all humility of mind, and many tears and temptations.**

The Christian way of life was never promised to us as a trial free way of life. If you're a Christian serving the Lord, you're going to be tried.

The Apostle said:

Context Acts 20:23-24 ^(KJV) ... the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. **24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**

that the Holy Spirit told him that he was going to suffer - but he didn't care. What mattered most to Paul, and should matter most to us? It is that "**we finish our course - the purpose in life that God has given us -**

with joy, honoring the Lord Jesus Christ". To tell others by action and word the "**Gospel of the Grace of God**" - this is something imprinted on the heart of the Christian. Jesus is Lord. We love Him, and we serve Him, though all the world stand against us.

2 The unbeliever - sick in mind and worshipping possessions and created things rather than the Creator - does not do what God will honor. God honors those who support the weak. Children of God are distinguished from the lost in that they do good toward others - especially toward those in need. The Scripture says:

FOCAL Acts 20:35 ^(KJV) ... laboring ye ought to support the weak ...

a The saved person is called to labor to support the weak, whereas the unbelieving heart labors only for himself. Why is that? Because

The Christian is owned by the Lord, whereas the unbelieving heart is owned by his possessions.

Jesus told His disciples:

Luke 12:16-21 ^(HCSB) ... A rich man's land was very productive. **17 He thought to himself, 'What should I do, since I don't have anywhere to store my crops? 18 I will do this,' he said. 'I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and my goods there. 19 Then I'll say to myself, "You have**

many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy; eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.” ’ 20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is demanded of you. And the things you have prepared — whose will they be?’ ’ 21 “That’s how it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Listen Beloved: It's not wrong to own things - but it is wrong for things to own you! If you are saved then God owns you, and Jesus Christ is Lord of your life, your purse, your pockets, and your possessions. The Lord said:

Matthew 6:19-21 ^(HCSB) **Don’t collect for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But collect for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

If you're born again, saved by faith in Christ, then you are commanded to **labor to support the weak.**

b **Hell in the place where the selfish go.** In **Matthew Chapter 25** Jesus preached on His Second Coming. He said:

Matthew 25:32-33 ^(HCSB) **All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on His right**

and the goats on the left.

How will the Lord distinguish **sheep from goats?** He distinguishes one from the other by *their giving*. He said:

Matthew 25:34-40 ^(HCSB) **Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you took care of Me; I was in prison and you visited Me.’ 37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or without clothes and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and visit You?’ ’ 40 “And the King will answer them, ‘I assure you: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.’**

"The righteous" are not those who build large buildings or attend Church regularly - though these are not bad things. **"The righteous"** are those who do good toward the weak - laboring they support the weak. The "goats" however are told **"Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!"** (Matthew 25:41).

Why are they cast out? If you read the context you

will see it is because they *did not do good*. **God expects His people to do good**. He expects His Christians, like Jesus, to do good.

We support missions by our giving, and are missionaries ourselves.

When the stranger comes into our midst we "take them in", making them feel welcome and loved.

We reach out to the prisoners of sin, people bound by the insanities of this world, and share our testimony of salvation with them.

Illustrate Ruth went to her mail box and there was only one letter. It had no stamp, no postmark, only her name and address. She read:

Dear Ruth: I'm going to be in your neighborhood today and I would like to visit you. Love Always, the Lord Jesus.

"Why would the Lord want to visit me? I'm nobody special. I don't have anything to offer." Ruth remembered that she hadn't gone shopping, so she headed out to the store. Spending all that she had she bought groceries for her Guest. Heading home she heard someone call out. **"Hey lady, Can you help us?"** She saw a man and a woman, both of them dressed in little more than rags. **"I ain't got a job, ya know, and my wife and I have been living out here on the street, and, well, now it's getting cold and we're getting**

kinda hungry and, well, if you could help us, lady, we'd really appreciate it." Ruth said, **"I'd like to help you, but I'm a poor woman myself. All I have is a few cold cuts and some bread, and I'm having an important guest for dinner tonight and I was planning on serving that to Him."**

"Yeah, well, okay lady, I understand. Thanks anyway."

The man put his arm around the woman's shoulders, turned and he headed back into the alley. As she watched them leave, Ruth felt a familiar twinge in her heart. She called out, **"Look, why don't you take this food. I'll figure out something else to serve my guest."** With that she handed the man her grocery bag. **"Thank you lady. Thank you very much!"**

As Ruth headed home she thought, **"The Lord is coming, and I don't have a thing to offer Him"**. When she got to the door she saw another envelope pushed into the door frame. Opening it she read,

Dear Ruth: It was so good to see you again. Thank you for the lovely meal. Love Always, Jesus

Jesus said **"If you have done it unto the weak, the suffering, the needy, you have done it unto Me"**. God's Children find good to do - and do it!

3 The Way to Blessing Is By Giving and Not Receiving. The Way to Cursing is by Receiving and Never Giving.

FOCAL Acts 20:35 ^(KJV) ... the Lord Jesus ... said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

a **It is more blessed to give than to receive because this is the Way of Christ.** Look at the life of Christ. A man came to Jesus and said "**Lord I'll follow You where ever You go**". Jesus looked at him and said,

Luke 9:58 ^(KJV) ... **Foxes have holes, and birds of the air [have] nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay [his] head.**

There is absolutely nothing wrong with owning property, which owning a house, a car, or clothing and jewelry. But Jesus showed us by His way of life that **these things are not the way to happiness.**

Our happiness, our joy is in knowing that God is our Father, Heaven is our inheritance, Eternal Life is our future, and that death has no hold on us.

Dr. Adrian Rogers once said:

“Unhappiness comes from mirrors. Happiness comes from windows. If you want to be miserable, then think about yourself first ... what you want, what people are saying about you, what you ought to have done for you, how down you feel, how good you feel. Just focus on yourself. Feeling good yet? If you are, then something is wrong. Selfishness and happiness just don't go hand in hand. If you are thinking it is

better to receive than to give, you'll never be happy. You'll never experience the blessing of giving that Jesus taught.”

Illustrate Self absorbed people are never happy. Hold out your hand and make a fist for a minute, clenching your hand tightly. Now relax. Which feels better, the fist or the relaxed hand? Give, and trust God.

b **It is more blessed to give than to receive because giving brings us nearer to God.** If you love somebody you give to them. I love to buy my wife little presents and leave them on her pillow on the bed so she can find it at the end of the day. It doesn't matter how big the gift is, she always responds with a smile and with love. **God does the same.** The Bible says:

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 ^(HCSB) Remember this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each person should do as he has decided in his heart — not reluctantly or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work.

God is the Author of all things. He is the Creator. He is the One Who can **make every grace to overflow to us, providing our every need and helping us to excel in every good work.**

Knowing this, we are to give. We're not to give

reluctantly or out of necessity. We're not to wait until the Pastor preaches a "Tithing Message" making us feel guilty enough to give. We're not to hold off on our giving until the electric company cuts the power off at the Church, and we're preaching by candlelight and under blankets. You who are Christians have been given much. Christ gave Himself for you, and He held back no blessing. We in turn are called to follow our Lord in giving, not just of our money but also of our time.

C If we have been saved, God wants us to give freely.

The Bible says "**God loves a cheerful giver**". The literal reading here is "**God loves a HILARIOUS giver**". We should take pleasure in our giving.

Illustrate Dr. Tony Campolo tells about a sociological study in which *fifty people over the age of ninety-five* were asked one question: "**If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently?**" The top answer was "**If I had to live life over again, I would risk more and do more things that would live on after I am dead**".

How will you be remembered? When you leave this life, will you leave your treasures behind and go to a place of eternal suffering, or will you leave this life to head to where your Treasure - the Eternal God of the Scripture - is. May God touch your hearts with His Word.



FOCAL Read Together Acts 20:35 ^(KJV) I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Acts 20:29-30

1 The Biblical Gospel of Salvation is a Gospel that demands two things: _____
_____ (Acts 20:21)

a The word "repentance" (Greek METANOIA) literally means _____
(Luke 5:31-32)

b The second part of the Biblical Gospel of salvation is _____ (Acts 20:21;
Acts 20:18-19; Acts 20:23-24)

(The Baptist Faith and Message) "Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. "

2 The unbeliever - sick in mind and worshipping possessions and created things rather than the Creator - does not do what _____
_____ (Acts 20:35)

a The saved person is called to labor to _____

(Luke 12:16-21; Matthew 6:19-21)

b Hell in the place where the _____ go.
(Matthew 25:32-33; Matthew 25:34-40; Matthew 25:41)

3 The Way to Blessing Is By _____
_____. The Way to Cursing is
by _____
(Acts 20:35)

a It is more blessed to give than to receive because _____
(Luke 9:58)

b It is more blessed to give than to receive because _____

(2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

c If we have been saved, God wants us to give _____
