

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Christ**

An Imperishable Crown

Joe R. Price

The Olympic Games being held in Athens, Greece, remind us once again of the discipline, training and commitment required to win the prize. Like the successful athlete, Christians must always:

1. Exercise self-control: *"And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown"* (1 Cor. 9:25). Reckless abandon not only costs the athlete the prize, it costs one his soul. So, discipline yourself to conform to the image of the Son of God in all things (1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 8:29; Gal. 2:20).
2. Follow the rules: *"And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules"* (2 Tim. 2:5). The body of law ("rules") we must follow in order to be crowned is the gospel of Christ, also called the *"pattern of sound*

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	

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words...the word of God...word of truth...Scripture...the word...sound doctrine...the truth" (2 Tim. 1:13; 2:9; 2:15; 3:15; 4:2-4). In the Olympics, not competing by the rules results in disqualification. By carefully following the *"good doctrine"* of Christ, we will be crowned with the eternal reward (1 Tim. 4:6; Matt. 7:21-23; 2 Tim. 4:7-8).

3. Endure to the finish line: *"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us"* (Heb. 12:1). Physical conditioning is crucial to an athlete's success. Spiritual conditioning is crucial to entering heaven. We must constantly exercise ourselves toward godliness (1 Tim. 4:7-8).

"Do You Understand What You Are Reading"

By Chris J. Holp

"How can I, unless someone guides me?" was the reply to this question in Acts 8:31. Understanding the Bible is essential for our salvation. Without understanding, we cannot know the will of the Lord (Eph 5:17).

Proper guidance saves souls! We may save others' souls when we give the guidance (like Philip) or save our own when we seek and receive competent instruction, like the eunuch (1 Tim 4:16). In Acts 18:24-28, Apollos gained a *"more accurate knowledge"* of the way of God from Priscilla and Aquila. He was then able to go into Achaia, where he furthered the cause of Christ. Philip, Priscilla and Aquila proved to be competent guides in the Scriptures because the instruction they gave was from God, not their own.

All too often, people fall under the tutelage of guides who do not understand the Bible themselves (Mk 4:11, 12; Eph 4:17-19; 1 Tim 1:5-7; 1 Pet 3:16). They know not that they follow blind guides who make them perpetuate their error (Matt 15:14, 23:15, 16). Sadly, some harden their hearts and refuse to have God in their knowledge (Rom 1:28). Oh, they will tell you that they have God in their knowledge, but like the Pharisees who Jesus rebukes in Matthew 23, they fall under condemnation (Matt 7:21-23).

Yet hidden among the ranks of the erring are those who would turn aside from that which they practice without authority. Look at the brethren in your congregation: how many of them came from denominations? This is the fruit that was yielded because someone took the time to plant the seed of the Gospel in their hearts (Matt 13:8, 23).

Friends, the seed of the Gospel brings forth Christians – not Catholics, not Baptists, not Mormons, etc. These purport that out of the same Gospel, they receive instruction or authority for infant baptism, "faith only" salvation and supplemental scripture. These are ones without understanding. Some may know the Bible front to back, but such knowledge is vain without the wisdom and spiritual discernment to properly obey and teach it (Col 1:9-10; Phil 1:9-10). These will face the same condemnation as the murderers and homosexuals (Rom 1: 21-32).

Remember, only one is your teacher: Jesus Christ (Matt 23: 8)! He has instructed godly men in the way of truth through the scriptures and through the mouths of those who understood the scriptures (2 Tim 2:2). Let us heed their good counsel, knowing by whom they've been taught (Heb 13:7).

"But Where Are the Nine?"

By Robert Wayne LaCoste

What would you say to a group of men who were cured of a terminal disease (as cancer or AIDS) and didn't pay their doctor's bill? What would be your response to a man whose life you had saved, and he didn't appreciate it enough to stop and even say, "Thank you?"

Luke records in Luke 17:11-19 just such an incident. Ten men were cured of a dreadful terminal disease known as leprosy. They were made white as snow and their skin, as well as their health, returned as they had it as a child. Nine of these ten men went their merry way and didn't so much as send word by another how thankful they were. None gave glory to God.

However, one of the ten men, when *"he saw that he was healed, turned back and with a loud voice glorified God"* (Luke 17:15). When the inspired record says that he *"turned back"* it is meant he went on his merry way at first, but got to thinking about what had been done and decided to return to the one responsible and thank Him. He fell down after giving glory to God at the feet of Jesus. Of course, through such an action he glorified God again, for when one honors the Son, he honors the Father who sent Him (John 5:23).

Jesus wanted to know about these other men who had been healed. He asked this Samaritan, *"Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"* The response was: *"There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger"* (17:17-18).

Was Jesus angry or hurt? Was the Savior of men disappointed or did He brush it off as being simply the nature of men? We know not. The record tells us very little about the Savior's feelings on this occasion. HOWEVER, THE SCRIPTURES IN MANY PLACES TELL US THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING THANKFUL AND HOW GOD SMILES ON ONE WHO IS! How displeased He is with one who isn't thankful!

Dear reader, we may not possess a terminal disease, but if we are God's children, we have been cleansed of something far worse! The blood of the Christ has "cleansed us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Sin to the soul of a man is as leprosy to the body of a man, except sin has a more tragic end: eternal death! These facts alone behoove us to be thankful. Each day of our lives we should ask God for sins to be remitted, as we repent of them. Each day we should turn to Him and thank God for what this precious blood does for us.

Let it never be said of any of us we are an ungrateful people. One thing is for certain: we can't be the people of God and not glorify our heavenly Father. Saying thank you is only one way we can and must and should.