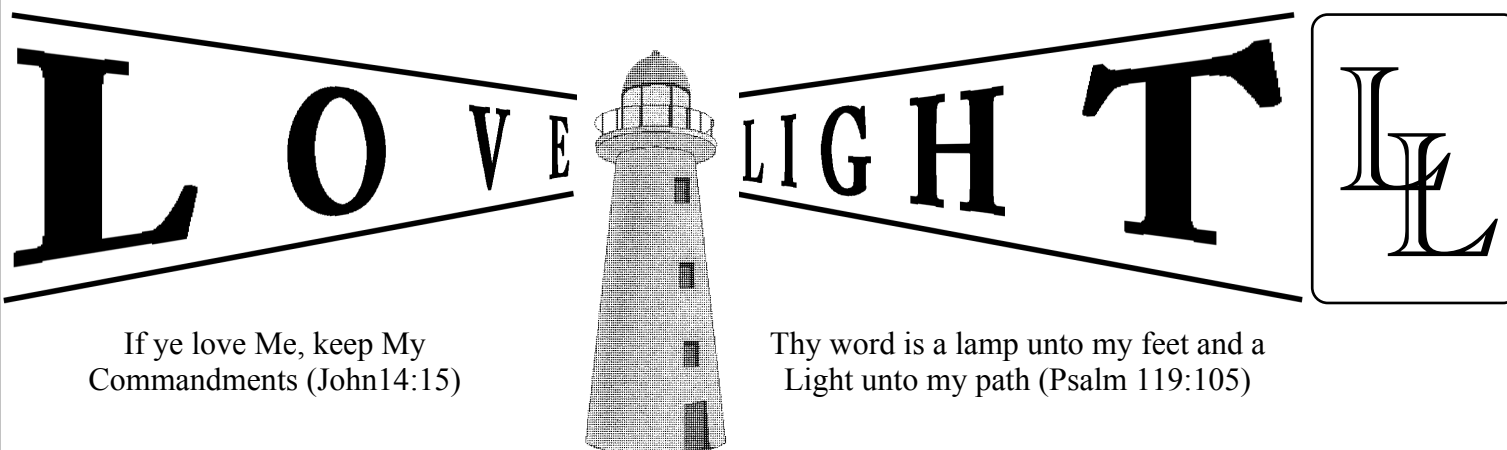


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If ye love Me, keep My
Commandments (John14:15)

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a
Light unto my path (Psalm 119:105)

Volume Thirteen

April - May

Number Two

**What Must I Do
To Be Saved?****Hear God's Word**

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and
hearing by the word of God"
(Romans 10:17)

**Believe That Jesus is the
Christ**

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall
die in your sins: for if ye believe not that
I am He, ye shall die in your sins"
(John 8:24)

Repent of your Sins

"And the times of this ignorance God
winked at; but now commandeth all men
everywhere to repent"
(Acts 17:30)

Confess Christ Before Men

"For with the heart man believeth unto
righteousness; and with the mouth
confession is made unto salvation"
(Romans 10:10)

**Be Baptized For the
Remission of your Sins**

"The like figure whereunto even baptism
doth also now save us (not the putting
away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer
of a good conscience toward God,)
by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"
(1 Peter 3:21)

**Opportunities for
Growth**

Sunday A.M. Bible Study 9:15
Sunday A.M. Worship 10:15
Sunday P.M. Worship 6:30
Wednesday Bible Study 6:30

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I Am What I Am

Tom L. Bright

The statement "I am what I am" is used frequently by a variety of people. We might hear it from the lips of a wicked person or a good man. It might come from an indecent person or a deeply religious individual. Its use is not limited to any specific type or class of people.

Generally speaking, the use of this terminology indicates the person is satisfied with things as they are, and they have no desire to make any changes. They are satisfied with things as they are. "I am what I am."

This poses an interesting question. What if every person who has ever lived or is living now, had this attitude? What would be our situation if every inventor in the last hundred years had been satisfied with the "status quo"? We would not have the radio, the automobile, the air conditioner, electric lights, or the airplane. The telephone as we know it would not exist. We would be a "backward" nation!

Let us suppose that every person who had ever lived, and is now living upon the earth, had this mindset. As strange as it may seem, the purpose of Christ coming to this earth would have never been realized. Man would still be separated from God by sin (Isa. 59:1-2). After all, they could say, "I am what I am." It does not make for a pretty picture, does it?

In defense of his temper, an elder in the Church reasoned that it was "That old German temper." However, it is my understanding that the purpose of the gospel is to convince men they must change from what they are and become what God wants them to be. It will not suffice to stand before God and say, "I am what I am." Following this man's reasoning, I suppose every defect in one's character or nature could be justified because of his ancestors, background, culture, social standing, etc. This sure would make it easy, would it not!

Paul said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). However, if he had been of the mindset under consideration and said "I am what I am," we would not have his godly example. In a short period of time, Peter denied Jesus three times. If he had been of this philosophy, our hearts would have never been touched by the words "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:62).

The Real Issue

The issue is not "I am what I am," but "What does God want me to be?" It matters little what we are unless God is honored. Paul wrote, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). James added, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). I do not have to wander in doubt, speculating on what God desires of me. He has made it clear.

*Continued on page Two***Is Salvation In The Church?**

Billy Bland

While there is much confusion in the religious world on the subject of the church, the Bible is as plain as it has always been. It is God's will that we understand His word. Paul said, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Thus He clearly affirms that we can understand the will of God.

Perhaps one thing more than anything else that has contributed to the confusion on the subject of the church is present day denominationalism. Denominations came about as the result of a departure from the word of God. The people in the first century were not familiar with present day denominationalism. Today, if we go back to the Bible, it will do away with the denominations. Therefore, when we ask the question, "Is salvation in the church," we are not speaking with reference to a denomination. Rather, we are asking if salvation is in the Lord's church. I believe if people will honestly study the Bible and see what the church is, they will readily agree that salvation is in the church, NOT out of it. Therefore to help clarify this matter, let us notice some things that people can be saved without if we can be saved out of the church.

If one can be saved out of the church, he can be saved without being called out. The word "church" means the "called out," thereby signifying they have been called out of the world. Thus if one can be saved without being called out, he can be saved while he is still in the world. But Paul made it plain that those who are in the

Continued on page Two

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

The Bible, Logic, and Salvation

The Old and New Testaments teach individuals must believe, or put their trust, in God if they expect to be pleasing to Him and receive a heavenly reward (Genesis 15:6; Galatians 3:6; Hebrews 11:6). While they of the Old Testament Patriarchal and Mosaic periods believed, their obedience to God's commands was also required or they suffered the consequences for their disobedience (Genesis 2:16,17; Deut.30:16-18). Since no one obeys a God they do not believe exists, faith, or belief, is essential. However, Christ stated: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt.7:21-23). Some deny the necessity of obeying the Lord's commands claiming salvation is by "faith only." Still others insist God's "grace alone" saves man. Both views are unscriptural and deny the essentiality of "works"--namely *baptism*--in the plan of salvation.

Since the blood of bulls and goats offered by the Mosaic law could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:1-18), God became flesh in Christ Jesus (John 1:1-14) the "propitiation for our sins" (I John 2:2; Romans 3:25) that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Only Christ's blood could suffice because He, being the highest sentient, sinless Being (God incarnate), alone could make the perfect sacrificial atonement, or "propitiation" to cleanse sin.

"I Am What I Am" ...Continued from page one

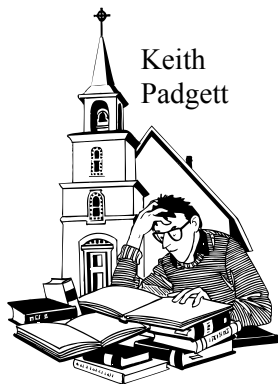
Why am I what I am? Will "nature," "characteristics," and "personality" be the only answer I can give? If my "nature" is a bad temper, a loose tongue, or a stinginess that rules every movement, is God pleased with such? The gospel has the power to change a bad temper to a composed frame of mind. It can change the loose tongue to a "tongue" that is trustworthy in every case. The heart of the "stingy giver" can be changed to one that manifests itself in a liberality that will astonish our former acquaintances.

Paul's statement to young Timothy is a clarion call to "the Book." He wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Think about it: Nothing else needed! Everything that God wants us to be and do is supplied by the all-sufficient Scriptures. What else could lay claim to "perfect" and "throughly furnished"?

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Jesus exhorted "Search the scriptures" (John 5:39). Luke, by inspiration, commended the Bereans for being "...more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). We should be satisfied with nothing less! Peter wrote, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18).

Paul wrote, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). The word translated "think" in this passage denotes to meditate upon a thing in such a way that it becomes a part of one. This certainly causes us to stop and think.

Which best describes me, "I am what I am" or "I am what God wants me to be"? Which of the two should I strive to be? ☩



But if Christ's shed blood alone forgave sins, then the entire world was and is now forgiven and thus saved. Yet in Acts, the apostles continued to preach Christ and the way of salvation long after Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. So either the Apostles were confused or someone still needed salvation. Yet not everyone who merely believed the truth about Christ were considered Christians by the church and the apostles. In Acts 26:27-28 Paul asks a believing King Agrippa, "believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The implication is Agrippa knew and believed the truth, yet was not a Christian.

In Acts 18:8 Crispus, the chief ruler "believed on the Lord" with "many of the Corinthians," who, "hearing believed, and were baptized." Christ commanded His apostles to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Baptism is found in every detailed conversion account. Even John the baptizer, a name describing his actions, immersed (baptized) those "confessing their sins." They obviously believed John's message of the kingdom and the Christ to come but they were not yet Christians. Notice that repentance, confession of sins, and baptism brought forth "fruits meet (suitable) for repentance" (Matthew 3:1-8).

In Mark 16:16 Christ commanded His apostles: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." While most admit that the first part teaches one must "believe and be baptized" to be saved, some erroneously reject baptism's essentiality because the second part does not say "he that believeth not and is baptized not shall be damned." However, this reasoning is both intuitively and logically unsound.

If expressed categorically, Mark 16:16 reads:
P1 - "All persons who believe and are baptized are persons who shall be saved"

P2 - "All persons who do not believe are persons who shall be damned."

Since being "damned" is equivalent to "not being saved," then P2 can be rephrased to read:

P2' - "All persons who do not believe are persons who shall not be saved."

Logically in a compound antecedent (here "believeth and is baptized"), whatever relation the first term ("believeth") has on the consequent ("shall be saved"), applies equally to the second term ("is baptized") of the antecedent. So if belief in P1 implies one is saved, then baptized in P1 implies one is saved. Conversely, if non-belief in P2 implies damnation (or not saved), then non-baptism in P2 implies damnation. If one does not believe in something, one is not going to act on it. Thus it was not necessary for Christ to say "he that believeth not and is baptized not shall be damned" because it is implied in the compound antecedent.

Consider substituting the terms "believeth," "is baptized," "saved" and "damned" in Mark 16:16 with "chews," "digests," "nourished," and "famished," respectively. "He that chews and digests shall be nourished; but he that chews not shall be famished." Will anyone seriously say he who chews and digests will be nourished, but that does NOT mean he who does not digest will not be nourished?

Chewing without digestion brings starvation. Likewise, belief without baptism brings damnation. Think about it.

For a detailed analysis of this topic, see "Soteriological Suicide" on our Web Site: <http://www.ws-coc.com>



"...In The Church" Continued from page one

world are without God (Eph. 2:12). Also, if one can be saved without being called out, it naturally follows that he can be saved without that which calls him out of the world. Paul said that the gospel is God's instrument to call people out of the world, "Whereunto He called you by our gospel" (II Thess. 2:14). Therefore if one can be saved without being in the "called-out" (church), he can be saved without the gospel.

Next, let us notice that if one can be saved outside of the church, he can be saved without the blood of Christ. Surely, every reader of these lines believes that the blood of Christ is necessary unto salvation! Yet we read that He (Christ) purchased the church with His blood (Acts 20:28). Jesus did not shed His blood for something which is a non-essential! We also read that Christians "are bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:19). The price is the blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-19). The blood of Christ did not purchase two separate things. Christians are the church; they are the "called-out." Therefore, if one can be saved without the church, he can be saved without the blood of Christ!

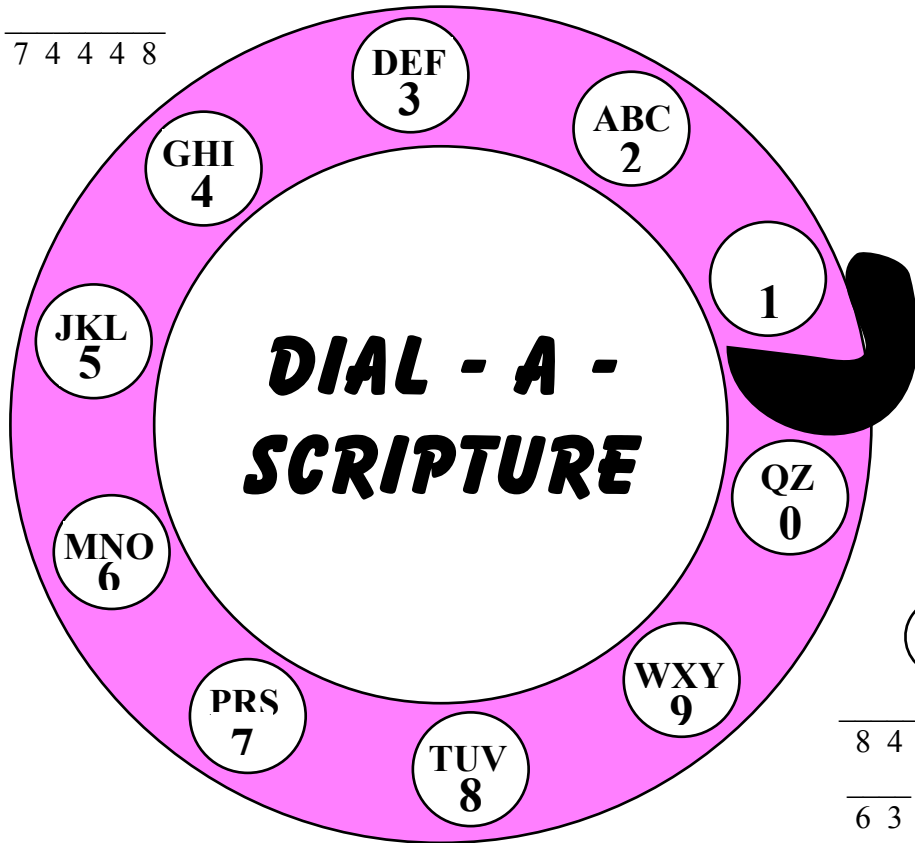
Again, if one can be saved out of the church, he can be saved without being reconciled to God. The word "reconciled" means "to change from enmity to friendship." Thus it means to be at peace with God. When a person sins, he is separated from God and needs to be reconciled to God. The Bible says that reconciliation unto God is in

Continued on page three

DIAL - A - SCRIPTURE PUZZLE

Child's Play

1. 2 4 4 5 3 7 6 6 2 3 9 9 6 8 7
7 2 7 3 6 8 7 4 6 8 4 3
5 6 7 3 3 6 7 8 4 4 7 4 7
7 4 4 4 8



2. 4 6 6 6 8 7 8 4 9 3 2 8 4 3 7
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2 3 2 5 9 2 9 7 9 4 8 4 4 7 2 2 3

4. 2 4 6 6 3 6 2 6 3 4 7 7 2 8 4 3 7 8 6 2 3
2 4 6 7 3 6 8 4 2 6 4 7 3 2 8 7 4 2 4 3 7

5. 8 4 3 3 3 2 7 6 3 8 4 3 5 6 7 3 4 7 8 4 3 2 3 4 4 6 4 6 4
6 3 5 6 6 9 5 3 3 4 3

Adapted by Leslie Marie

"I Refuse"

*I refuse to be discouraged, To be sad, or to cry;
 I refuse to be downhearted, and here's the reason why:
 I have a God who's mighty, Who's sovereign and supreme;
 I have a God who loves me, and by grace I'm on His team.*

*He is all-wise and powerful. Jesus is His name;
 Though everything is changeable, My God remains the same.
 My God knows all that's happening; Beginning to the end;
 His presence is my comfort; He is my dearest Friend.*

*When sickness comes to weaken me, To bring my head down low,
 I call upon my mighty God; Into His arms I go.
 When circumstances threaten to rob me of my peace;
 He draws me close unto His breast, Where all my strivings cease.*

*When my heart melts within me, and weakness takes control;
 He gathers me into His arms, He soothes my heart and soul.
 The great "I AM" is with me. My life is in His hand.
 The "Son of the Lord" is my hope. It's in His strength I stand.*

*I refuse to be defeated. My eyes are on my God;
 He has promised to be with me, As through this life I trod.
 I'm looking past all my circumstances, To Heaven's throne above;
 My prayers have reached the heart of God I'm resting in His love.*

*I give God thanks in everything. My eyes are on His face;
 The battle's His, the victory mine; He'll help me win the race.
 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!!!!
 ~author unknown~*

"Is Salvation In The Church?" ...Continued from page two

the "one body" (Eph. 2:16). Paul explains that the "body" is the "church" (Eph. 1:22-23). Therefore reconciliation unto God is in the church or body of Christ. To strengthen this affirmation even more, Paul said that Christ is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23). But remember that the body is the church. Therefore Christ is the Saviour of the church.

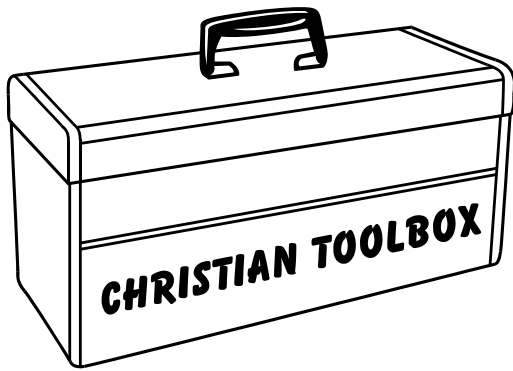
Again if one can be saved out of the church, he can be saved outside the family (house) of God. When writing unto Timothy, Paul said; "But if I tarry long, That thou may know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Paul says the "house" of God is the "church" but note, if one can be saved out of the house (family) of God, he can be saved in the family of Satan (John 8:44).

Finally, if one can be saved outside the church, he can be saved without being married unto Christ. The church is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5; Rev. 21:9, 22:17). Christians are married to Christ. Paul said that Christians are "dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).

Reader friend, are you in the bride of Christ, the one body, the family of God, the called out? All of these are descriptive terms of the Lord's church. If you are not in the church of our Lord, why not obey the gospel this very day by repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and the Lord will add you to "the church" (Acts 2:47), of which He is the Saviour (Eph. 5:23).☩



And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).



How To Walk With God

- ❖ 1. Don't be a hypocrite: (Galatians 2:14)
But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?
- ❖ 2. Be wise in your conduct: (Ephesians 5:15-17)
See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.
- ❖ 3. Learn to be pleasing to Him: (Colossians 1:9-10)
For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.
- ❖ 4. Be Honest: (Romans 13:13-14)
Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

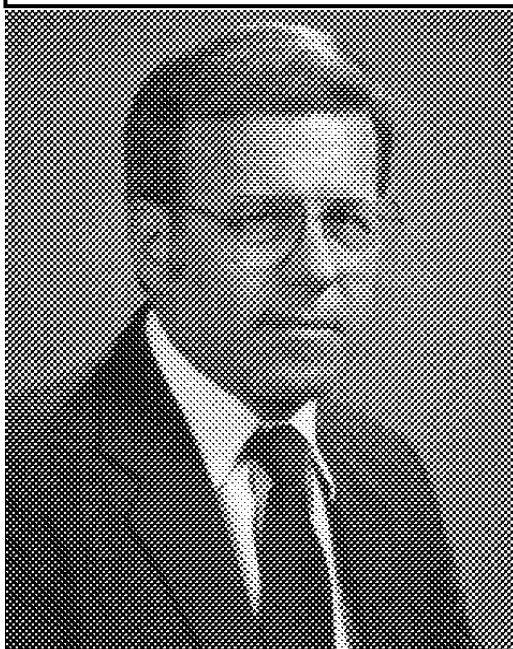
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- ⌘ Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal _____ are his delight (Proverbs 12:22).
- ⌘ The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is _____ (Proverbs 12:15).
- ⌘ Strive not with a man without _____, if he have done thee no harm (Proverbs 3:30).
- ⌘ Withhold not _____ from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it (Proverbs 3:27).
- ⌘ Happy is the man that findeth _____, and the man that getteth understanding (Proverbs 3:13).
- ⌘ Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own _____ (Proverbs 3:5).
- ⌘ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but _____ despise wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7).



TOM L. BRIGHT

GOSPEL MEETING MAY 26TH - 29TH

9:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. Sunday Morning
7:00 p.m. Sunday and Weekday Evenings

Dinner On The Grounds Sunday At Noon
Nursery

Sunday Morning Bible Class: How Are You Walking Today?
Sunday Morning Worship: He Cannot Deny Himself
Sunday Evening: Paul's Sermon to Felix
Monday Evening: The Influence of the Holy Spirit
Tuesday Evening: A Man of God Named Caleb
Wednesday Evening: If the Foundations Be Destroyed

Bring Your Bibles And An Open Mind!

Let Us Help You Find
"The Way" (John 14:6)

