

Trends

A majority (52%) of all Americans who self-identify as 'Christians' think that at least some non-Christian faiths can lead to eternal life . . . The findings confirm that most people who take this view believe that even non-Christian faiths (including Judaism, Islam and Hinduism) can lead to eternal salvation.

- via The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life

Acts 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Sentence Sermons

"Jesus is not one of many ways to approach God, nor is He the best of several ways; He is the only way."

—A. W. Tozer

John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

"The Bible is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by God on the children of men. It has God for its author; salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture for its matter. It is all pure."

—John Locke

News & Notes

Pray for one another: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please pray that the seeds sown in our recent gospel meeting with Ron Halbrook will bring forth much fruit! Ron will be preaching a meeting with Ryan and Jennifer in Michigan (Oct. 29-Nov. 4). Pray for Ron, Ryan & Jennifer, and the meeting!

Please pray for the lost and that good and honest-hearted people can be found at such places as the IU campus.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets a great example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?! Let me know. If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know!

Words of Life is published by the Westside Church of Christ meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside church of Christ

Oct. 28, 2018

Vol. 10, No. 32

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Our Ruthless Society

Ryan Thomas

The book of Ruth is a story of a lovely young woman during the turbulent time of the judges. It paints a beautiful picture of love and devotion during a time of anarchy and trouble. It is sad to see that so few women of our time possess the same character and moral purity of Ruth. Most young ladies have not been taught the divine pattern and have forsaken their God-given role as mothers and teachers. In our society, women are encouraged to act more and more like men in order to advance themselves in business and politics. Sadly, more focus is being given to higher education and careers than the home. It is my hope that this article will encourage more women to emulate the qualities that made Ruth such a virtuous woman in the sight of God (Ruth 3:11).

(1) She Was Loyal: In spite of Naomi's plea for Ruth to return to her own country she refused to leave her side (1:14, 16-19). What a devoted friend! The wise man said, "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24). What is more precious to a man than having a woman he can trust (Prov. 31:11)? Keep in mind that faithfulness is something that the Lord demands of every person (1 Cor. 4:2). Ruth was faithful and as a result she was rewarded (2:12). We will be rewarded as well if we are faithful (Rev. 2:10).

(2) She Was Hardworking: Ruth was not embarrassed to be seen doing common labor as some are today (2:2-3). Women are not to be idle but are commanded to work (1 Tim. 5:13). Does this sound like a description of a "stay in bed mom" to you (Prov. 31:10-31)? Although not charged with the responsibility of providing for the household; a woman's work is very important, perhaps the most important of all. The Bible says that women are to be "teachers" and "keepers at home" (Titus 2:3-5). Even though it is not wrong for a woman to seek employment outside the home, this is not what God originally intended. A woman's first responsibility is in the home and this is, by far, the more honorable of the two (1 Tim. 5:14; Titus 2:4-5).

(3) She Was Modest: You do not have to look very long and hard to find women who adorn themselves in the attire of a harlot these days. Sadly, some are unaware that their dress is inappropriate. Immodesty is a plague of our society and

it encourages men to act less honorable and reduces women to a collection of body parts which cancels out their heart, soul, and intellect. Even worse, it is eating away at the very foundation of our country - the home. Older women and mothers, let's be sure to teach our young ladies to always be modest in how they dress and act (Titus 2:3-5). Women can dress fashionably without being immodest (1 Tim. 2:9-10).

(4) She Was Meek/Quiet: There is perhaps nothing more repulsive than being around a loud, foul-mouthed, ill-tempered woman. All women are to be of a "meek and quiet spirit" as was Sara, Abraham's wife (1 Pet. 3:1-6). This does not mean that women cannot be who they are. However, all women need to work on developing a quiet demeanor. Neither should they seek undue attention or usurp authority over a man (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34-35).

(5) She Was In Subjection: Ruth knew that in order to be pleasing to God she needed to be in subjection. When Naomi instructed her to go and ask that Boaz perform the role of a kinsman, Ruth obeyed (3:1-6). The Bible teaches that woman are to obey their husbands and remain in subjection (Eph. 5:23-33; 1 Pet. 3:6). Some have the idea that such takes away their rights and makes them second class citizens. However, nothing could be further from the truth. If a man assumes his God given role in the home (Eph. 5:25; 6:4) and the woman does the same, what a beautiful and precious thing it is!

We Are at War

Carey Scott

"You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3-4).

Most people who obey the gospel and become saints of God picture themselves with the wings, flowing robes, and smiling all day long. They see themselves as those who should be nice to everyone, and be a blessing to others. They believe that as long as they are good, kind, benevolent, and study their bibles; God will reward them and they will influence others to cause others to glorify God (Matthew 5:16).

This is one reason that when the darts, arrows, missiles, slings, and whatever start coming their way, they lose their faith and succumb to the devil and his ways. I hope you can see that while our side is to be calm, nice, generous, and every other characteristic of goodness, the other side is wicked, evil, mean, and willing to use any means necessary to defeat us. This appears one-sided, but remember that God is actually on our side to bring us to victory. That does not mean that God will do all the fighting. No, we must be engaged in this fight also. When the children of Israel were conquering the land of Caanan, God was with them helping them, but they were doing the fighting. Their only loss came as a result of sin in the camp when one of the soldiers kept some of the spoils of Jericho (Joshua 6). Remember what Paul wrote: *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,*

but divinely power for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

God also gives us the protection of His armor that we read about in Ephesians 6:14-18. The purpose we have the armor is to defeat Satan and his angels: *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"* (Ephesians 6:10-13).

We are called upon to be faithful soldiers of Christ. Every Christian is called into a spiritual battle. (Every Christian is not limited to the preacher or the elders, but to everyone who names the name of Jesus as their Lord and King. This battle is against the spiritual hosts of wickedness, against Satan and his wicked hosts. The Lord has given us all things necessary to win, to be victors in this spiritual war.

Christians, we have a daily battle against the forces of evil. It surrounds us, and those on that side are scheming to see our weaknesses so that they can exploit them and cause us harm. If we do not resist and remain quiet, they consider that a victory. If we lose our faith and turn back to our old ways, it is considered a victory. If we just shut up around them and stop talking about God or the Bible, they consider that a victory. It seems that many appear to consider that if they do not tell others that they are a Christian, it will be easier for them. For Paul wrote that *"all who desire to live godly will suffer persecution"* (2 Timothy 3:12).

In your life, are you putting aside *"the affairs of this life"* in order to please Him who enlisted you? The Lord is first. Your commitment to him is greater than any other commitment. While those in our nation's armed forces have committed themselves to our nation's service, that service is second to service in the Lord's army. As a soldier of Christ, are you serving him first and faithfully? If not, change!

Look again at the words of Paul above. Are you well protected, spiritually? Are you well practiced with the spiritual sword? As the soldier drills for perfection in our nation's army, so the soldier of Christ must constantly sharpen his or her skills. The defensive equipment must be kept in good repair. Attention to each piece of armor must be given lest the enemy finds a means of wounding us. Are you set for the battle? Have you taken up the armor of God so that you may win?

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

2 Timothy 4:7-8

Fight the good fight of the faith (see 2 Timothy 4:7)! Victory in this war brings eternal life. Fight, Christian soldier, fight!