

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 17

2017

## ***"OWNED, BUT NOT READ"***

On a TV quiz show, a number of people were asked to name a book that nearly everyone owned but did not read. It came as no surprise to me when they revealed that the number one answer was the Bible. I believe it is a sad commentary on our nation when this condition is not only present, but is readily admitted by all.

I am sure that nearly every person reading this article has a copy of the Bible in your home. When was the last time you studied the Bible? I am convinced that the great lack of knowledge most have of the Bible is the reason the majority of the people listen to "their" preachers without questioning what they teach. Many do not know enough about the word of God to raise any questions about anything they may hear.

It may come as a shock to many, but you need to realize that you have no hope of salvation if you have no knowledge of God's word. Jesus said, *"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:32). If the truth is that which will make us free from our sins then how can we even think of being saved if we have no knowledge of the truth.

Friends, we not only invite you to examine the things we teach in the light of God's word, we beg you to do so. This is the only way you can be sure that you are obeying the truth. Those who do not

want you to question what they teach either do not have the truth or they are not worthy of the truth. Study the Bible; then submit your life in obedience to His will revealed therein. This is the only way you can be right and have the hope of heaven when this life is over.

*✠ James Hahn*



(The following article is a follow-up to the preceding article.)

## **"THE BIBLE IN HUNGARY" (OR COULD IT BE THE UNITED STATES?)**

*"The Bible In Hungary"* was the title of a short article appearing in *"Parade"* magazine several years ago. The article dealt with what was happening to the Bible in Communist-bloc countries. The article states, *"In Hungary, for example, which is still a strongly Catholic country, hardly any young people read it."* We may read this statement and think how sad it is that young people in Hungary do not read the Bible, but how much different would the statement be if we were discussing the young people of the United States? It would be sad to live in a country where you may receive opposition or even persecution if you were to read the Bible, but I feel that it is even sadder to live in a country such as we do where we face no such persecution but yet many still do not read the Bible.

The article further states, *"In the larger cities of Hungary hardly any school children are taught the rudiments of religion, and in the small towns where the church still dominates, only about 25% of the youngsters submit to religious instruction."* Again I ask, would this statement be much different if you were talking of the young people of this nation? How many parents really spend much time in teaching their children the word of God? We find some parents who claim to be members of the Lord's church who have little or no knowledge of God's word and put forth no effort to increase their own knowledge or to reach their children. And we don't even have the excuse of living in a "Communist-bloc" country.

Many people cry out against Communism (and rightly so) and talk of the sad conditions that would exist in this country if "they" ever gained control, however many of these "sad" conditions already exist in this nation even without the people being forced to do (or not do) the things under consideration. One thing that many note is that if the Communists gain control they will "force" people to quit reading the Bible. I have often wondered how the Communists (or anyone else) could force people to stop doing something they are not even doing. I know that this is not true of every person, but I believe that I would be safe in saying that the majority of the people in the United States do not engage in any serious Bible reading or study. Even among those who claim to believe in God or Jesus Christ, you find very few who have any respect for the authority of God's word, and if we do not have any respect for the authority of God's word we may as well not even read it. What's the difference between the person who reads the word but refuses to respect or obey it and the person who just refuses to read it at all? They are both in the same sad, lost condition.

Some who claim to be children of God place little importance upon the reading and studying of God's word. Some will not even take advantage of the opportunity they have to attend the Bible study classes designed to help all of us increase our knowledge and understanding of His word. Some like the truth to be taught so long as it is what they **LIKE** to hear or so long as it does not demand any change in their lives.

Yes, it is sad that such conditions existed in Hungary and other Communist-bloc countries (and may still exist in some countries), but is it really any "less sad" that we can find the same attitudes toward the Bible in our own nation? *✍ James Hahn*



## “DOING RIGHT”

“I want to do what is right.” How many times have you heard someone make that statement? Truly, this is a commendable

statement and every person should have such a desire, however, I am convinced that not everyone who makes this statement really has the desire to do what is right. This is especially true in matters of religion.

Some want to do what is right so long as it is what they want to do. If “right” demands doing something contrary to their personal desires they will not do it. Others want to do right so long as it agrees with the teachings of their parents or loved ones. Some want to do right so long as it makes them feel good or it agrees with their feelings.

We need to recognize that in the above situations those with such feelings about “*doing right*” really have no desire to do right, but really just desire to please themselves.

A friend of mine once said, “James, it is always right to do right and it is always wrong to do wrong.” How true! To do right means to desire and accept the truth in all things. Jesus tells us that God's word is truth (John 17:17). Therefore, to do right means to follow God's word in all things. Do you really want to do right?

*✍ James Hahn*

**Belleville church of Christ**  
 5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258  
[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

**Schedule of Services**

Sunday Bible Study . . . . .	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship . . . . .	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship . . . . .	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study . . . . .	7:00 p.m.

**Evangelist**

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