

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

May 20

2018

## "All Readiness Of Mind"

The Bible tells us that the Bereans were *"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). How wonderful it would be if we could get all men today to receive the word with "all readiness of mind" as these did. Let's note what these individuals did that made it possible for them to be described as more noble than the unbelieving Jews in Thessalonica.

First, Luke notes that they were receptive to the word. They had not closed their minds to anything that may not be in agreement with what they wanted to believe or already believed. Many today refuse to listen to anything that may be contrary to their previous convictions, however, these noble Bereans were eager to hear what Paul had to say.

Also, the Bereans wanted to make sure that what they received was in harmony with the truth of God's word. They searched the scriptures to see whether the things taught were true. I am convinced that many today do not really care whether what they believe is in harmony with the scriptures or not. They have their minds made up as to what they are going to believe or not believe and have closed their minds to anything that may be contrary to these preconceived beliefs.

The person who closes his mind to the teaching of God's word or refuses to listen to that which may be contrary to what he already believes is wrong even if what he believes is true. His attitude is not what it should be and he is believing what he believes, not because it is the truth, but because it is what he wants to believe. The lover of truth will always be ready to study and investigate to be sure he is doing that which is pleasing to God. He will never close his mind or refuse to listen to the teaching of God's word even if it demands change on his part. What about you? Are you such a lover of truth? Can you say that you will receive the word with "all readiness of mind"?  
*✍ James Hahn*



## "ONE THING I KNOW"

I have always appreciated the response of the man in John 9 when the Jews tried to pressure him into condemning Jesus as a sinner. *"He therefore answered, Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see"* (John 9:25). I wish some of my brethren would have the same attitude this man had. There is an attitude manifested by many that says "if you don't know everything you can't be sure about anything."

We should be humble and recognize we can be wrong. This is why we need to constantly study the word and examine the things we believe and practice in the light thereof. However, I do not believe this humility demands that we accept anything or everything that comes along or that we accept the position that we just can't be sure or definite about anything.

I may not know everything but there are some things I know to be true and I am not ready to leave or compromise these truths simply because there are other things I do not know. We must continue to *"contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"* (Jude 3). Paul said, *"I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day"* (2 Timothy 1:12).  
*✍ James Hahn*

# "FROM THE INSIDE OUT"

David W. Bercot, in his book "Will The Real Heretics Please Stand Up," suggests some reasons why the early Christians "succeeded where we often fail." I do not have the space in this one article to look at all the things he had to say along this line but I do want to note one thing he mentioned.

Concerning the emphasis of the early church, he said, "the church emphasized the need for new believers to change from the inside out. Externals were considered worthless unless they reflected what was happening inside a person."

I believe Mr. Bercot's observation is correct, not because he said it, but because it is in harmony with what we can read in the New Testament. I do not want anyone to conclude that external acts are of no importance. What we do must conform to the teaching of God's word, however, simply going through outward acts without being truly dedicated to the Lord will not make us pleasing in His sight.

Jesus emphasized this fact when he spoke to the woman of Samaria about true worship. Jesus said, *"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23,24). Jesus certainly did not minimize the importance of the things we DO in worship being right for he said our worship must be "in truth." However, he also said that this worship must be from the "inside" by saying true worship must be "in spirit."

Paul taught this same truth when he wrote to the Roman brethren concerning their obedience. In the early verses of chapter six he notes that these brethren had been *"buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"* (Romans 6:4). Paul surely knew how important it was for one to be baptized and that this baptism must be a "burial." But later in this same chapter he teaches that for this obedience to make one *"free from sin"* it must be *"from the heart"* (Romans 6:17,18). If a person does not obey the Lord's command to be baptized for the remission of his sins from the heart he would simply "go down" a dry sinner and "come up" a wet sinner.

We can see how important the need to "change from the inside out" really is when we examine the actions of some today. When you question some about their irregular attendance they indicate that they do not "have to" attend any other time than Sunday morning. If they were converted "from the inside out" they would desire to be present at every opportunity possible.

Others, when questioned about their manner of dress (or lack of dress), want you to tell them just how long their skirts need to be or legislate specifically in regards to what they can or cannot wear. Those who seek such legislation are concerned with external conformity only. Paul teaches that *"women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety"* and *"which becometh women professing godliness"* (1 Timothy 2:9,10). When women (or men) have a sense of shamefacedness (decency - NIV) and profess godliness in their lives you will not need to be concerned about how they will dress. On the other hand, if they do not have these qualities "from the inside" they will allow the "fashion designers" to dictate their manner of dress, which may be modest, but not for the right reason.

Jesus condemned the Jews of His day by saying, *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me"* (Matthew 15:8). This was just another way of saying that he wanted them to serve Him "from the inside out." Have you been converted "from the inside out"? *✍ 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**

James Hahn . . . . .	(317) 745-1507
----------------------	----------------