

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 19

2021

Put Christ Back In...

Around December 25th we often hear the expression, “Put Christ Back In Christmas.” However, it is impossible to put Christ back into something that He never was in. You see, although many in the world relate December 25th to being the birthdate of Jesus Christ, the truth is, the Bible does not reveal the birthdate of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to us. However, although the Bible says nothing about the official birthdate of Christ, and nothing about anything called Christmas, we can still use the expression “Putting Christ Back In” to learn some valuable lessons. Beginning with, we need to put Christ back in...

The Position of Authority

Unfortunately, there are many today who do not abide in the authority of Christ. However, it is very important to understand that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18). What does that mean? When defined, authority is “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.” Therefore, Christ has all “power to command,” and since Christ has all authority over men (1 Corinthians 11:3) may we never be one who questions or disobeys the authority of Christ (Matthew 21:23-27), and may we do all that we do in the name of the Lord Jesus (i.e. by His authority) just as the apostle Paul instructs in Colossians 3:17. So, put Christ back in the position of authority, and keep Him there (Colossians 1:18).

Our Preaching and Teaching

We also need to put Christ back in our preaching and teaching. You see, much of the preaching recorded in the New Testament is centered around Jesus Christ (Acts 4:2, 8:5, 35, 9:20). Therefore, we too need to likewise preach Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23), rather than the wisdom of men (1 Corinthians 2:1-5), and we need to always preach and teach the doctrine of Christ (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9), rather than philosophy and empty deceit according to the tradition of men (Colossians 2:8). So, let’s put Christ back in our preaching and teaching, and let’s diligently preach and teach Christ Jesus the Lord (2 Corinthians 4:5).

The Christian

Last, but certainly not least, Christ needs to be put back in the Christian. You see, sadly there are many today who profess to be Christians, but they do not act like it. However, the Christian is one who has put Christ on through baptism (Galatians 3:27), and disciples of Christ wear the name Christian (Acts 11:26). Therefore, the Christian needs to let the world see Christ living in them (Galatians 2:20), they need to shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15), and they must walk (i.e. pattern their life) as Christ walked (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6), and not according to darkness, lest they be a liar (1 John 1:6). So, with that said, may all Christians always strive to be imitators of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Now, the phrase “Put Christ Back In” is not so bad of an idea, provided He is put back in the right things.

✍ Brad Phillips

"Alas, My Brother"

1 Kings 13 presents a very melancholy story. It is always infinitely sad to see those who were once faithful in the service of God fall. It is pathetic to behold those who were once "meet for the master's use" tripped up in the end through temptation, and become prey to him who walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. This chapter of 1 Kings deals with the exploits of a servant of God who began well,

preached faithfully for a period, but had a tragic end. We say it happened to others but it can never be my lot. Alas, my brother! You had best take heed. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). There are seven things about this unfortunate man that we desire to point out:

1. He was a true believer. He is called "A man of God" (v. 1). He was not a mere "man of the world" whose portion is in this life, but one who has personal dealings with God, and who, in heart and life, belonged to him. He was not a mere professor or time-server, but a true servant of God.

2. He was a man with a message. He came "by the word of the Lord unto Bethel" (v. 1). He had a ministry committed to him by God, a message of warning and condemnation. No evangelist was ever more surely called of God than this man. The narration abounds with evidence that he was sent by God.

3. He was a man of courage. "And he cried against the altar in the Word of the Lord" (v. 2). He testified with a loud voice against this altar built by Jeroboam as a rival of Jehovah's, even while the king "stood by." The Word of God evidently burned in his bones and he could not but speak the things which he had heard from him. It was similar with Peter and John in Acts 4:20.

4. He was a man with power. God bore witness to his testimony by signs and wonders in the stiffening of the king's arm and hand which was stretched out to "lay hold on him" and also in the "rending of the altar" and the spilling of ashes. The servant of God had every reason to believe that God was with him and what he was doing was God approved. He knew such power was not from himself.

5. He was a man of self-denial. After prayer for the restoration of the king's hand, the king asked him, "Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward," but he would not (vv. 6-9). The Lord had charged him not to do so! He was no hireling in the work of the Lord. He knew what it was to deny himself and be true to God's directions in saying "No" to the king. Surely such a mighty man as this will never fall! But, alas!

6. He believed a lie and fell through deception. The old prophet pretended that an angel had spoken to him, saying, "Bring him back with

thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him" (v. 18). He turned aside from the revealed will of God to obey the invention of man. "So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water." The temptation was doubtlessly great, but his was perfectly clear. He knew God's will. In obeying the false prophet he was contradicting the will of God that he had previously been so faithful in its execution. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn. 4:1). He didn't try the old prophet as he should have or else he just threw all conviction or proper reason to the wind and gave in to the stronger call to eat and drink with him. Regardless of the explanation, this man disobeyed God and it cost him his life. No more was he to carry the message of God. He had forfeited his life by believing and obeying a lie. Truly pathetic, but true!

7. He was mourned over by the one who deceived him. "He laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother! " (v. 30) Yes, well may he mourn, after tempting the man of God into the net of destruction. Even being buried in the same grave will not atone for the sin of deception. How will he face him in the judgment whom he had lured from the will of God by substituting his own thoughts for God's? How shall it fare with the false teachers of our day when in the presence of God they are face to face with the fact that they have led souls to disobey? "Alas, my brother," take heed who you hear and what you hear! It can happen to us. These things were written for our learning.

✍ Bobby K. Thompson

Belleville church of Christ

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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

Brad Phillips..... (765) 720-2816