

Prayer List

Sierra
Gene
Veda
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia
Arley

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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UNACCEPTABLE BELIEVERS

In the early days of Jesus' ministry many people appear to have been drawn quickly to a belief in Him by the miracles which they witnessed Him perform. In the second chapter of the gospel of John we are told: "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did" (Jno. 2:23 NKJV). While the Bible makes it clear that much of the purpose of New Testament miracles was to confirm personal belief (Jno. 4:48; Mk. 16:20), the occasion to which these verses refer makes it evident that at times the faith which was produced from these miracles was not the sort which pleased the Lord. The next two verses state: "But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew all that was in man" (2:24,25). An interesting point is in these verses about the issue of faith. In the original Greek (from which our English versions have been translated) the word translated "believed" in verse 23 is the same as the word translated "commit" in verse 24. It is the word *pistis* meaning "Faith, trust -- 1. That

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

Who lived by Kerith Brook?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Song of Solomon - Song of Solomon 4:16

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which causes trust and faith, faithfulness, reliability...2. Trust, confidence, 3. That which is believed, body of faith or belief, doctrine." (Gingrich AB., 173). We could say then, that this text teaches us that although some "believed" in Jesus, He did not believe in them. Or to put it the other way; even though they had committed themselves to Jesus, He did not "commit" Himself to them. This brings up a number of points from which we can learn related to personal faith:

1. Enthusiasm And Saving Faith Are Different Things:

-- It must have been a marvelous thing to witness a miracle performed by the Lord. One can imagine the spirit of excitement that swept over the crowds leading scores of people to believe in this man of such great power. Yet we could say that it is one thing to "cheer in the stands" (so to speak) and another thing to "play the game." We don't know exactly what the Lord saw in the hearts of these people that led Him to reject them. But what ever it was it was enough to make their undoubted enthusiasm insufficient. It is very easy to misjudge someone's spirituality based on how excited or enthusiastic we perceive them to be. Following the Lord in true faithfulness will not always demonstrate itself in external displays of enthusiasm.

2. It Is Possible For Our Personal Faith Alone To Be Displeasing To The Lord:

-- The concept taught in much of the religious world that salvation is by faith alone is clearly refuted in this account. These people "believed in His name" but they still were unacceptable in the Lord's sight. Another clear example of this is found in Jas. 2:19 which points out: "Even the demons believe -- and

tremble!" Obviously the faith of a demon is not acceptable saving faith. Why? Because it has not been perfected by obedience. Jas. 2:22 asks regarding the faith of Abraham, "Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" Faith is only acceptable when it is "made perfect" (or complete) by works of obedience.

3. Just Because One Believes Doesn't Mean That He Belongs To The Lord:

-- The world is filled with churches that claim to belong to the Lord. Undoubtedly most of those who make up their membership are sincere people who to some degree believe in the Lord. Yet the account in Jno. 2:23-25 shows us that what determines who (in truth) belongs to the Lord is not a name on a building or a personal experience of faith but the Lord's examination of the human heart. In Acts 2:47 we learn that it is the Lord Who adds people to the church upon true faith and obedience. Heb. 5:8 identifies Jesus as "the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." 2 Jno. 9 shows that the one who has "both the Father and the Son" is "He who abides in the doctrine of Christ."

Let's make certain in our own lives that we not only believe in the name of Jesus, but that we are following Him in such away that He will "commit Himself to" (or believe in) us as well.

Kyle Pope in Truth Magazine, Vol. 50, No. 2, Feb. 2009.