

Being A Christian

Have you ever questioned your relationship with God? Have you ever just sat down and asked the question, "Will I be found acceptable to God after I pass from this life to the next?" To some the question is absurd! "Why," they say, "Of course I'm going to be found acceptable to God! I'm a good person. I don't lie, cheat, or steal. I help my fellow man, and God is a God of love and will not reject anyone." The truth is, religions have provisions built into their doctrines that provide "acceptance" for all people. The individual's actual condition may not be the highest level he/she could have obtained if they had been true believers, or the individual may have to endure a certain amount of torment before they are allowed admittance before God, but they would nonetheless receive a crown. The question we must ask is, "Is it so?" Just because a person is taught something by a religious leader, or believes something is spiritual, does not make it so. There are many things people believe in life that just aren't so. The sons of Jacob sold their younger brother Joseph into Egyptian bondage. Jacob's sons didn't come right out and tell their father that Joseph was dead, but what they did was take Joseph's coat and kill a he-goat, "and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father, and said, This have we found: know now whether it is thy son's coat or not. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days" (Genesis 37:31-34). Jacob believed his son was dead, though he was very much alive. In the writing of First Kings, a young prophet had been sent to Bethel to cry against the altar that Jeroboam had raised that caused Israel to sin. God told the young prophet, "Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, neither return by the way that thou camest" (13:9). After refusing Jeroboam's request to "come home with me and refresh thyself" (13:7), the scriptures tell us "there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and one of his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them also they told unto their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? Now his sons had seen what way the man of God went, that came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass; and he rode thereon. And he went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak; and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: for it was said to me by the word of Jehovah, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. And he said unto him, I also am a prophet as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of Jehovah, saying, Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him. So he went back with him and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of Jehovah came unto the prophet that brought him back; and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Forasmuch as thou hast been disobedient unto the mouth of Jehovah, and hast not kept the commandment which Jehovah thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which he said to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy body shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his body was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the body" (13:11-24).

No matter how sincere the young prophet was in his actions, he had believed a lie and it cost him his life because he had been "disobedient unto the mouth of Jehovah." Many people have fallen to similar false prophets. They have been told "an angel spake unto me by the word of Jehovah, saying..." Time and again Jehovah warns us about such men. The scriptures say, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits,

whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). They tell us, “But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings” (2 Peter 2:1). And, the apostle Paul sealed the warning, when he said, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema” (Galatians 1:8).

False teachers attempt to side-step these warnings by insisting Bible translations have been corrupted and are unreliable. So, they have their own “true word” that is the “only pure word of God.” And by such, many have followed their lascivious doings.

Following the teaching of the Lord’s apostles will make you a Christian. If you take the Bible, and some writing of man, you become something other than a Christian, something other than a child of God. In so doing, you will not be “found acceptable to God after you pass from this life.” “And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). What name do you wear? ret