

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

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THE NEED FOR PERSUASION

Larry R. Ping II

Often, we use the word "persuaded." Many of us sing a song entitled "Almost Persuaded." To be persuaded is to "be moved by argument, entreaty... to a belief, position or course of action." Even those in the Bible were persuaded to do and believe certain things.

1) The Chief Priests And Elders "Persuaded" The Multitude. *"But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus"* (Matt. 27:20). Clearly, persuasion can be used for the bad just as it can be for the good. Be sure persuasion is used for the benefit of God!

2) Paul And Barnabas "Persuaded" New Converts. *"Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God"* (Acts 13:43). There is an important lesson here. That is, those who are new Christians need to be heavily encouraged, edified, and educated so as to provide a

solid foundation upon which to stand. This is why, in the giving of the Great Commission, Jesus spoke of two different teaching needs. He said, *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"* (Matt. 28:18-20).

3) Out-Of-Town Jews "Persuaded" Lystra-Jews. *"And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead"* (Acts 14:19). This simply displays how far some folks will go to persuade others to do evil things. Some will stop at nothing! Solomon indicated some even forfeit sleep in order to pursue and cause trouble (Prov. 4:16). Be sure you are losing sleep urging others to do good.

4) Paul Almost "Persuaded" Agrippa. *"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"* (Acts 26:28). This very sad occurrence in the Bible clearly exhibits that "almost persuaded" is to be "altogether lost." On the final Day of Judgment, I will not be able to say, "I almost was baptized" or "I almost did the right thing" and be accepted.

5) Be In The Business of Persuading Others To Follow God. *"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men"* (II Cor. 5:11). Never, ever are we in the God-persuading business. Never shall we dictate to God in any way, shape or form.

On this day, be resolute in being "persuaded" to do good things, but be firm in not being "persuaded" to do bad things. Easier said than done? Yes! But done it must be. And let us help each other to ensure we are consistent in our good and Godly behavior.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE BIBLE

Larry R. Ping II

During trips to thrift stores or used book-stores, I often see Bibles. You can tell they have been rarely read, used, or studied. This makes me think there are scores of folks who do not know what to do with God's Word, the Bible. Here are some things you should do with the Bible!

1) Buy The Bible. The wise man penned, *"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding"* (Prov. 23:23). The Bible is such a great investment, one should purchase it without ever consider parting ways with it. To "buy the truth" is to "put God's Word into practice." One should do so as these are the same "words" by which Cornelius and his household were saved (Acts 11:14). One should do so because this "word" is able to "save" souls (Jam.1:21). Have you bought the Bible yet?

2) Investigate The Bible. Paul commanded, *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be*

ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). The Bereans were championed because they *"searched the scriptures daily"* (Acts 17:11). The Bible is well-worth investigating, for within it is the truth which *"shall make you free"* (Jn. 8:32). Be warned though, a lack of knowledge of God's Word leads to destruction (Hos. 4:6). Have you investigated the Bible yet?

3) Believe The Bible. It is one thing to have and read a Bible, but an entirely different thing to believe it. Paul wrote of those who *"believe and know the truth"* (I Tim. 4:3). It was the Lord who commanded, *"repent ye, and believe the gospel"* (Mk.1:15). The reader of God's Word must accept it is *"in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"* (I Thess. 2:13). Have you believed the Bible yet?

4) Love the Bible. The longest Psalm stands as a reminder of the Psalmist's love affair with God's Word. Of the 176 verses in Psalm 119, 170 of them have some sort of

reference to God's Word in some way. Be sure to read verses 97,113,119,127,159,163 and 165. Near the end, the write iterates, *"My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly"* (Psa. 119:167). The lover of God's Word will put it, and it alone, above all words of others. The lover of God's Word will make it their source of nourishment rather than binging on man's uninspired words (I Tim. 4:6). Have you loved the Bible yet?

5) Exemplify The Bible. Someone long ago said, "I would rather see a sermon any day rather than hear one." This is the essence of "Practice what you preach." Luke said of Jesus, he *"began both to do and teach"* (Acts 1:1). Like Paul, others must see Christ and His Word living in me (Gal. 2:20). Consider, it may never be the words you say which generates spiritual interest in others. Rather, it may be your actions which causes a spiritual stir in their heart (I Pet. 2:12). Have you exemplified the Bible yet?

Are you doing these things with the Bible?

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm