

“FOR THE EDIFYING OF THE BODY...” (1)

By Keith Greer

Previously, we have looked in our short series, on the Lord's Supper and Giving, discussing the various acts of worship. Today, we will begin to discuss the church's responsibility concerning the element of **TEACHING** as another commanded act of worship.

TEACHING is a vital part of our worship to God, but how is it to be accomplished? Certainly, **PREACHING** is an integral part of our worship "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." (1 Corinthians 1:18-21)

What about **BIBLE STUDY**? Why is it that so many of God's children feel that Bible studies are not an important part of our service to God? In most places, the Sunday morning Bible study and the Wednesday evening Bible study are the least attended of any of our assemblies. Could it be that these times together are not "required" for God's children? Does the church have a need to study God's word?

Under the Old Law, the children of Israel were to teach the law, "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." (Deuteronomy 6:6,7)

How could the Israelites know what God required them to do? How could they have the "knowledge" needed to teach their children?

In order to be able to teach their children, they would have to attain some understanding of the law. Where would they be able to receive this vital information? By hearing and being present when it was read aloud!

In our Old Testament studies, we have seen time and again how Israel turned away from God. He put the blame right where it belonged--on them! "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." (Hosea 4:6)

The nation of Israel had many opportunities to hear the law, yet they rejected the knowledge that was offered to them, and it led to their spiritual destruction. Could history be repeating itself today?

How well are we supposed to know God's law today? "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Hebrews 8:9,10)

Will we have God's law "written in our hearts" if Bible study is not a part of our lives? How can one expect to grow if they willingly exempt themselves from opportunities to openly discuss and study God's book? Could it be that people have "enough" knowledge already and therefore have no need of further study? Personally speaking, if any have that much knowledge they should be here teaching that wisdom to the rest of us! Knowledge is vitally important to all Christians in understanding how to apply God's laws in all aspects of our lives. Knowledge cannot be achieved without serious study and meditation on God's word – no short cuts. *** (continue)