

WISHING IS SCRIPTURAL

By Keith Greer

“For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh.” {Romans 9:3} “I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.” {1 Corinthians 14:5} On two different occasions, Paul, in his writing, discussed things for which he had wished. But, wishing alone will not...

Convert the world; teaching will! *“...I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.” {Acts 8:34,35}* All the wishing in the world that the truth will convert your friend or neighbor will not make him a bit more converted; but teaching him will! Christ gave the commission, *“Go into all the world,” {Matthew 28:19,20}*. Wishing and hoping will never get it done; someone must go and teach God’s word.

Supply answers to other people’s questions; study will! *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” {1 Peter 3:15}* Many are seeking answers to spiritual questions about the hypocrisy they see in the world religions; they need Bible-based answers to their questions. Wishing for them to get the answers is not enough; we must study so we can give them the answers they desperately need! *{2 Timothy 2:15}*.

Increase our abilities; practice will! *“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.” {Ecclesiastes 9:10}* Over the years, I’ve heard many brethren make the statement, “I wish I could remember the Scriptures like you do.” Wishing for the ability to remember where passages are located will not bring one closer to remembering; practicing the use of God’s book will. *“She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.” {Mark 14:8}* Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all Christians would do **“WHAT THEY COULD!”** Only by developing and putting our abilities into practice can we hope to increase them.

Restore the erring; admonition will! *“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” {Galatians 6:1,2}* Every time we assemble, we mention the Prayer List on the back board. A part of that list contains the names of our members who have fallen back into the world. Do you remember who they are? Do you just say “amen” to the prayers that men offer for their return? When did you last send a note to let one of them know you’re still concerned about his or her spiritual welfare and stand ready to help if given an opportunity?

Assure entry into heaven; faithful living will! *“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that*

they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” {Revelation 14:13} Heaven is the home prepared for those who love the Lord and His appearing {*2 Timothy 4:8*}. We can wish for an eternal, heavenly home, with the Lord and the saints of all ages, but wishing will not bring us any closer to having that home. Only if we faithfully obey and trust in God’s marvelous grace will it become a reality.

Good intentions are wonderful things yet, without following through to see them to completion they are useless. God doesn’t want you to just “wish” what you can do for His cause and church but to make plans to achieve those wishes! We need to complement our wishing with following God’s divine directions. My challenge to you is to match wishing with purpose to make those wishes a reality. ***