

“BUT” Michael Pickford

The question has been asked on various occasions for many years, “What is the saddest word in the English language?” Words such as “Hopeless,” “Forlorn,” and “Unloved” have been appropriately suggested.

Several decades ago, one famous person suggested the word “but” as the saddest word. I can see that. Jesus told the story in Luke 14:29-33 of a man who made a really good start in building a tower “but” he was unable to finish it. He also spoke of the foolishness of a king going to war without the resources needed to finish the job. Regardless of the tremendous value of a good start, it is all lost if the job isn’t completed.

Jesus said that He came to “Finish His work” (John 4:34). Jesus did finish the work God sent Him to do, and while hanging on the cross shortly before dying, He said, “It is finished.” Near the end of his earthly life Paul stated that he had “finished the race... kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

If the saddest word in the English language is “but,” then one of the happiest words might be “finish.” How many have begun well as Christians only to leave the work, to leave the faith, to leave the Lord! Jesus promised the crown of life to those who remain faithful until death. Regardless of how well we begin and how well we run, if we don’t finish the race we will lose our reward. 🔍

The elements of our worship, as prescribed by God’s word, are as follows:

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD’S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

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- www.defendthegospel.com
 - 1st Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
 - 5th Sunday Night: Guest Speaker
 - Men’s Business Meeting. 1st Sunday evenings following services.



SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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“They...searched the scriptures daily...” –Acts 17:11

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LOVE FEASTS

Michael Pickford

The term “love feasts” is found only once in the New Testament. In speaking of false teachers, Jude said, “These are spots in your love feasts” (vs 12). Peter made a similar statement in 2 Peter 2:13, “They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you.” Amazingly, many denominational “churches” and “churches of Christ” have leapt upon that phrase “Love feasts” in order to justify turning the Lord’s church into a cafeteria and buffet. From that phrase they have sought to justify church sponsored dinners and potlucks, the building of kitchens (called fellowship halls), and the observance of special days such as “Chicken day.”

It’s astounding that they have gotten so much out of this one little phrase when Jude doesn’t even tell us what he meant by the phrase. But there is one thing we can be certain of – love feasts were not church sponsored meals! This would contradict what Paul wrote. In 1 Corinthians 11:22, Paul said, “What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?” To this, he added in verse 34, “But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment.” I’m not sure how the statements could have been stated more clearly to condemn the notion of a church using its money and buildings for the purposes of supplying food and eating it. If “love feasts” in Jude 12 justifies church sponsored meals and fellowship halls then we have a blatant contradiction of scripture. Paul wrote Corinthians and Jude mentioned the “love feast” but they were both inspired by the same Holy Spirit! Why would God condemn in one place what He condoned in another? He wouldn’t. He didn’t!

Jude didn’t offer any explanation as to what these love feasts were so we need to be careful with how we interpret the phrase. We’ve already established the fact that the phrase cannot justify church sponsored meals and fellowship halls or else God has contradicted Himself. It is very reasonable to understand the love feasts symbolically as a reference to the Lord’s Supper. After all, the Lord’s Supper reflects the greatest act of love, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13). The Lord’s Supper is a memorial of Jesus laying down His life for us (1 Corinthians 11:26); so, we can speak of the Lord’s Supper as the ultimate love feast. Paul actually referred to the Lord’s Supper as a “Feast” (1 Cor. 5:7-8). It is both reasonable and scriptural to understand Jude to have been speaking of false teachers doing their deceptive work while at the same time observing the Lord’s Supper with the brethren. 🔍

Daily Bible Study

by Michael Pickford

This Week's Theme: Reputation

Weekly Memory Verse: Proverbs 22:1

Introduction: Do you care about what people think of you? You should! Reputation is the estimation in which a person or thing is held, especially by the community or the public generally. We have all known people of ill repute. These are people who because of the things they have done in life they've caused themselves to lose respect among their peers. Reputation and respect go hand and hand. When Jesus said that are the light of the world He was speaking of the fact that Christians are to influence the wicked world around us to seek after God and to glorify his name. If we damage our reputation with worldly living then our salt loses its flavor and our light is dimmed. This week, let's think about our reputation as we consider its inestimable value.

Monday: Every Christian should strive to have a good reputation.

1. Proverbs 3:3-5: In whose sight should we "find favor and high esteem?" From verses 3 and 5, list three things that can lead to a good reputation.
2. Luke 2:52: Who did Jesus increase in favor with?
3. Romans 14:17-18: Serving Christ in what three things can lead us to being "approved by men?"

Tuesday: A good reputation is of inestimable value.

1. Proverbs 22:1: This Proverbs follows a Hebraism in which the same thing is being spoken of in both lines. In this case the two things are "A good name" and "Loving favor?" What do the two phrases speak of? What value is placed upon it?
2. Ecclesiastes 7:1: What is a "good name" better than?
3. 1 Timothy 4:12, 16: Paul told Timothy to be an example to believers in what six things? What two things could Timothy accomplish by being a good example in these things? (vs 16).

Wednesday: Our reputation is often determined by our character.

1. Someone once said, "Take care of your character, and your reputation will take care of itself."
2. 2 Corinthians 8:16-24: Where did Paul say that Titus' praise was? (vs 18). What does this mean?
3. Acts 6:3, 5: Name two things that we can possess today caused these men to be "men of good reputation."

Thursday: Our reputation can determine how effective we can be in leading other to Christ.

1. Matthew 5:13-16: What did Jesus mean when he said that we are "The salt of the earth" and "the light of the world?"
2. Did He intend for us to make good use of our reputations?
3. What was the goal in using our reputations for good? (vs 16).

Friday: We must do all that we can to protect our good reputations.

1. We can spend years acquiring a good reputation and then lose that good standing in one moment of indiscretion.
2. 1 Peter 2:11-12: What should we do in order to have our conduct honorable among the Gentiles? What effect can our good reputation have on the Gentiles?
3. Philippians 2:14-16: What two things can damage our reputation among those in the world? (vs 14).
4. Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:7: What did Paul mean by the phrase "good testimony?" (1 Tim 3:7). Why is it important for leaders in the church to have a good testimony among those who aren't Christians? If a preacher, elders, deacon, or member has a bad reputation in the world, what can this cause in relation to God's name and His doctrine? (1 Timothy 6:1)
5. Titus 2:7-10: Name four things in which we should show a pattern of good works. What are the results? (vs 8b, 10b)

DUTY LIST...

SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Kenny Todd
Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:18-23
- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Opening Prayer.....Sam Miller
- Lord's Table:
Lead.....John Nelson
Serve.....Eli Todd
Serve.....Lynn Buttrey
- Closing Prayer.....Jeff Isbell

SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Lord's Table.....Michael Pickford

WEDNESDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Kenny Johnson
- Invitation.....Michael Pickford

Thank You For Serving!

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16;
Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

Obey Today!

*Home Bible Studies
Available Upon Request!*