

RE-DIGGING OLD WELLS

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Genesis 26:12-18**. From Roy H. Enoch (11-28-1993).
- B. It would be difficult to find a more appropriate figure for the need for religious reformation than to "re-dig a well."
 - 1. Water is necessary for life and is often used to represent God's spiritual blessings.
 - 2. A man whom the Lord blesses is described as "a tree planted by the rivers of water" (Psa. 1:3).
 - 3. Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born of water (Jn. 3:5).
 - 4. Jesus describes Himself as the source of "living water" (Jn. 4:14).
 - 5. One of the blessings of heaven is its "river of water" (Rev. 22:1).
- C. The setting of the Text for our lesson today was when Isaac was asked to leave Philistia because his flocks and herds were so great.
 - 1. When Isaac gets back to southern Palestine he re-digs the wells of his father Abraham.
 - a. The Philistines had filled them (Gen. 26:15).
 - b. Some work hard to destroy what others have built.
 - c. He renamed them the same as his father gave them.
 - 2. Jesus not only is the fountain of "living water" but promises that "the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn. 4:14)
 - a. But false teachers contaminate and stop up that fountain of blessings in our lives with the doctrines and traditions of men (Mt. 15:9; Gal. 1:6-7; 1Jn. 4:1).
 - 3. This "perverting" of the fountain of life was predicted by Paul (1Tim. 4:1-3).
- D. This lesson is to study some of the characteristics of the gospel of Christ and identify some of the things that have clogged the "wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:2-3).

I. **THERE WERE MANY "WELLS OF SALVATION" OPENED BY CHRIST.**

- A. There is but one church, His body, and He is its head (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 1. He built it on His deity (Mt. 16:18).
 - 2. It is purchased by His blood (Ac. 20:28).
 - 3. It wears His name.
 - a. It is the "church of the Lord," "the church of God who purchased it with His blood," or "the churches of Christ salute you."
 - b. The members are "Christians" as they are married to Christ and wear His name.
 - 4. It is composed of those who were "born of water and of the Spirit" (Jn. 3:6) and who were "cleansed by the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26).
- B. There is only one "faith" or body of doctrine by which we can be saved.
 - 1. That "faith came by Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:21-25).
 - 2. That "faith" or "gospel" replaced the "Law of Moses" which was until "that faith" should come.
 - 3. If we do not stay in that doctrine of Christ, we have not God (2Jn. 9).
- C. There is one baptism (Eph. 4:4-6).
 - 1. There had been others and will be another.
 - a. There had been baptisms or washings under the Law.
 - b. John's baptism was for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" before the kingdom or church came.
 - c. The Apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit when the kingdom came on Pentecost to give them inspiration.
 - d. Jesus will baptize with fire at the judgment.
 - e. But now there is only the baptism of the great commission (Mk. 16:16; Ac. 2:38).
- D. God's word is all-sufficient for every good work (2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:3).
 - 1. We have seen that to change it pollutes it.

2. To leave the "doctrine of Christ" is to leave God.
 3. Strict obedience is required (1Jn. 2:3-6).
- E. The Church was organized with Elders and deacons in every church.
1. The Elders were to pastor, oversee, shepherd and bishop the own local congregation.
 2. Deacons were to serve the congregation in areas assigned.

II. THE DOCTRINES AND TRADITIONS OF MEN CLOG THE "WELLS OF SALVATION."

- A. Men have built churches, written human creeds, and given them human names, claiming that they are as good as the one Christ built on His divinity and purchased with His own blood.
- B. Men have left the doctrine of Christ to teach the doctrines and traditions of men, or gone back to the OT for doctrine.
- C. The Lord's organization of His church has been changed to exalt men.
 1. Rather than many elders over an individual congregation, men have set one man over a church or over many churches.
 2. Rather than Christ being the head of the church on earth and heaven, they have made a man the head of their church on earth.
- D. They say they are married to Christ, but wear human names.

III. THE NEED TO RE-DIG THE OLD WELLS.

RESTORE THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST AND REJECT HUMAN DOCTRINES.

- A. Martin Luther was a devoted Roman Catholic monk who tried to reform the Catholic church of his day from abuses of Catholic doctrine, but he did not want to restore NT Christianity.
- B. But in the late nineteenth century, men from many denominations decided independently to go back to the Bible.
 1. They proposed to only be the church Christ built.
 2. They urged accepting only New Testament teachings.
 3. They said, "We will speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent. We will call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways" (1Pet. 4:11).
- C. "The seed is the word of God" (Lk. 8:11).

CONCLUSION.

- A. The teachings of Christ are "wells of salvation."
- B. They are polluted when mixed with the doctrines of men.
- C. They should be re-dug and restored to the original purity.
- D. Let us stay in the doctrine of Christ that we may dwell in Him.