

Why Do You Do It?

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

1 Peter 3:15.

Those people who don't know the Lord can't understand why Christians live like they do. We praise the Lord that the world can't see and give thanks even in the midst of troubles. Yes, believers have the same temptations, problems, trials, and most everything else that anyone faces. Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." **Matt 5:43-45.** As Jesus said here, Christians have joys and troubles just like all people do.

So, if believers have problems here like the unbeliever,

the question would be, why do they, we, continue to believe and to serve God as we do? The answer is really simple - we believe in God and what he said. That makes the difference if life, for we are not alone.

First of all, we have placed our faith in the God of creation. We live here on earth, subject to the things of life like all of mankind. No serious Christian would claim to be perfect and without sin. It is what we strive for, but the reality is that we are in the flesh and have to contend with its weaknesses. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would," **Gal 5:17.** We are in a constant battle and will be as long as we are in the flesh. There is the same concerns in our lives as there is in the lives of the sinners. In addition the Christian has the pressure of striving against sin. We are tempted to take shortcuts to get ahead, or to get a profit. Some would call it good business, but when it is doing wrong the believer can't go that way. The unbeliever will sometimes ask why you didn't take the easy route, saying that they would have. They don't see any harm in profiting from some one's else's mistake. If they knew the Lord then they would understand.

I have heard people say, "You have to go along to get along." Meaning that you have to compromise and agree

with people to avoid trouble. That is an option to those who don't follow the Lord, but it is not for the Christian. Jesus told the truth to the Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, and others that he spoke too. Often they didn't like what he had to say, for he condemned their sins.

Then look at the Apostles and the Christians that came after. They were persecuted about everywhere they went. Some were placed in prison and suffered the loss of their belongings. Why? They didn't go along with the world, but followed along after the example of Jesus. Some believers were beaten, in addition to being locked up. I'm sure there were some who asked why they would suffer like they did. Others were killed, suffering cruel deaths for their faith. They may have been stoned, thrown to the lions, crucified, or beheaded. Again some would wonder why they would face such things when all they had to do was to quit and to deny Jesus.

So why did they in that day, and even through the years to our day, suffer for their faith? The answer is simple. They believed in Jesus and what he said. They feared God and not man, knowing that they had the promise of life eternal. Why does a person put God first in life and follow the Lord's teaching each day? He trusts in the promises of God and looks for the coming of Jesus. That's why we do it - we believe God's word.

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MESHA AND THE MOABITE STONE

MESHA WAS THE MOABITE KING WHO ERECTED WHAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS "THE MOABITE STONE." THIS STONE WAS RAISED TO COMMEMORATE THE SUCCESSFUL REVOLT OF THE KINGDOM OF MOAB, LED BY ITS KING MESHA, AGAINST THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL AFTER THE DEATH OF KING AHAB IN BATTLE. (II KINGS 3:5) EVER SINCE THE DAYS OF OMRI, KING OF ISRAEL, MOAB HAD BEEN PAYING TRIBUTE TO ISRAEL. THE BIBLE TELLS US THIS TRIBUTE AMOUNTED TO 100,000 LAMBS AND 100,000 RAMS WITH ALL THEIR WOOL! (II KINGS 3:4) THIS WAS A COSTLY PAYMENT, YEAR AFTER YEAR, AND WHEN KING AHAB WAS KILLED AND ISRAEL DEFEATED IN BATTLE KING MESHA, OBVIOUSLY, DECIDED THAT THIS WAS THE BEST TIME TO REFUSE TO PAY THE TRIBUTE! WHEN JEHORAM, THE SON OF AHAB, BEGAN HIS REIGN, HE INQUIRED OF THE KING OF JUDAH, JEHOASHAPHAT, IF HE WOULD AID HIM IN CONQUERING MOAB, AND WHEN HE GOT AN AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER HE SET OUT WITH A THIRD KING, THE KING OF EDMOM, TO INVADE MOAB! THE CAMPAIGN MAKES INTERESTING READING (II KINGS 3:5-27) AND EVEN INVOLVES THE PROPHET ELISHA AND BOTH THE GULLIBILITY AND THE GREED FOR LOOT OF THE MOABITES! ALTHOUGH MOAB WAS DECISIVELY DEFEATED IN BATTLE, THE ISRAELITES DID NOT DEMAND ANY FURTHER TRIBUTE BUT WENT BACK TO ISRAEL - KING MESHA ERECTED THE STONE AND CALLED HIS REVOLT A SUCCESS - WHICH IT WAS, FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES!!



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