

TEACHING GOAL

Show that there is only one way to get to heaven, namely, through Jesus Christ the Redeemer of His people.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. Who is the only Redeemer of God's elect?
- A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was and continues to be God and Man in two distinct natures and one person forever.

S.C. 21; L.C. 36-42; W.C. of F. VIII; Savoy 8; Young 46-47

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: I Timothy 2:1-7

Support Passages: Matthew 7:13-14; John 1:9, 6:35-40, 10:9, 14:6, 17:1-3; Acts 4:12, 27-28, 2:23; Hebrews 9:11-15; I John 5:12, II John 9

BIBLE STORY

II Kings 5:1-15; Naaman could be cleansed from his sickness in only one way and that was to bathe in the Jordan river seven times. No other river could be used.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, ESV)

APPLICATION

The Christian cannot believe that all roads lead to heaven, nor can he be tolerant of such heresy in the church. There is only one narrow way and one small gate - Jesus Christ the Righteous, therefore we must strive to enter it to be saved.

SUMMARY

Naaman's attitude toward the things of God is typical of the attitude of people today. "Are not Abnah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" And we read that he went away from Elisha's messenger in a rage (II Kings 5:12). God's answer to such things is, if you wish to be clean, you must do it my way. To rid himself of his awful leprosy, Naaman must bathe seven times in the Jordan river and nowhere else for that was God's way. Today if we would be clean from our sin we must also follow God's way which is to repent from our sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ alone as our Lord and Savior.

How often I have spoken to the ungodly about things of the Lord just to hear them say, "we will all get there if we just do our own thing." To the liberal theologian this narrowness of the gospel is bigotry and of course it is to any one who does not believe the Scriptures. The thrust of Theosophy or Bahaim, two rapidly growing eastern cults, is the unification of the world under one religion. The theosophist would glean the best from all religions, and the Bahai constructs his place of worship with many entrances to signify that all roads lead to heaven. The World Council of Churches would agree with the Bahai when they say, "The foundation of all religions is one. Religion must be the cause of unity."¹ But how different is the testimony of the Bible, that there is only one mediator between God and man - Christ Jesus. Or the words of the Lord Himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6). When I quoted this verse to one who was well schooled in modern theology he said, "I just do not believe that Christ ever said such a thing."

Another error regarding the uniqueness of the Mediator is summarized by Dr. Charles Hodge.² "The Romish Church regards priests, and the saints, and angels, and especially the Virgin Mary, as mediators, not only in the sense of intercessors, but as peace-makers without whose intervention, reconciliation with God cannot be attained. This arises from two erroneous principles involved in the theology of the Church of Rome. The first concerns the office of the priesthood. Romanists teach that the benefits of redemption can be obtained only through the intervention of the priests. Those benefits flow through the sacraments. The sacraments to be available must be administered by men canonically ordained. The priests offer sacrifices and grant absolution. They are as truly mediators, although in a subordinate station, as Christ himself. No man can come to God except through them. And this is the main idea in mediation in the Scriptural sense of the word.

The other principle is involved in the doctrine of merit as held by Romanists. According to them, good works done after regeneration have real merit in the sight of God. It is possible for the people of God not only to acquire a degree of merit sufficient for their own salvation, but more than suffices for them-

selves. This, on the principle of the communion of saints, may be made available for others. The saints, therefore, are appealed to, to plead their own merits before the throne of God as the ground of pardon or deliverance of those for whom they intercede. This according to the Scriptures is the peculiar work of Christ as our mediator; assigning it to the saints, therefore, constitutes them mediators. As the Christian minister is not a priest, and as no man has any merit in the sight of God, much less a superabundance thereof, the whole foundation of this Romish doctrine is done away. Christ is our only mediator, not merely because the Scriptures so teach, but also because He only can and does accomplish what is necessary for our reconciliation to God; and He only has the personal qualifications for the work."

¹ Virgilius Ferm, *Living Schools of Religion*, Ames, Iowa, Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1956, p. 313.

² Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965, Vol II, p. 455.