

**CHINA MISSION
NEWSLETTER****MISSIONARY**

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Dear brethren:

When a student asks questions it is a good sign. It means he is engaged mentally. He is thinking. He is interested and inquisitive. He is trying to sort out and make sense of the knowledge you have imparted and is affording you the opportunity to help him accomplish this. Even if it is in the form of rebuttal, it reveals that he is dismissing neither you nor the subject under discussion. He is perhaps trying to resolve the dissonance in thinking that arises when truth assaults ingrained error.

I have been having weekly Bible studies for quite some time with three young men of high school age. Young students in this culture are reticent to ask many questions in any class environment. So it is especially satisfying when a student puts forth an occasional question.

Recently one of these young men asked a question that eventually crosses the mind of virtually all who hear the gospel, i.e., "What about those who have never heard the gospel?" The question came up during a discussion concerning the consequences of rejecting the gospel. The Holy Spirit reveals that those who "repudiate" the gospel "judge themselves unworthy of eternal life" (Acts 13:44-48). This occasioned his question and I first responded by saying to him that is why the Lord commanded: 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and 10, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). And it is for this same reason that I have come to Taiwan, I said. Our Lord also promised: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

In connection with this, we then pursued the exclusivity of true Christianity as expressed directly or indirectly in various passages, of which I here mention but a few. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6), i.e., only through His authority, sacrifice, and teaching can anyone come to the Father. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The name stands for the man and his authority, the entire body of His life's work and teaching. In this passage, it is the name of Jesus by which we "must be saved." Paul stated, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1: 16). The gospel is "the power of

God for salvation." God's word excludes any and all other competing powers purporting to save. Regardless of whether one views the passage as addressing the message of the gospel, the substance of the gospel, or quite correctly both, only the gospel of our Lord has the power to save. No other man or message has this power. Without the gospel, a man is lost.

We are, indeed, a chosen people. Read carefully Ephesians 1:3-5. It is we, those of us who are "in Him" (i.e., in Christ), who are the "chosen." It is not those who are of some other religion or philosophy, but only those who are in Christ. This distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian was determined by God "before the foundation of the world." It is "God ... who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ," therefore, it is paramount to be found "in Christ," to obtain the blessing of being among the "chosen." This is accomplished as we are "baptized into Christ" (Romans 6:3; Ephesians 3:27). Do not let Calvinism defraud you. God did not override individual free will to randomly choose who would be in Christ, but decreed that the chosen would be those who are in Christ. You may hear a U.S. Marine saying with pride that the President has chosen us in the Marine Corps to guard our embassies. This does not mean the President chose who joined the Corps. From Adam till now, man has always had a choice.

Your servant in Christ,

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