

Back To School

by Wayne Goff

The summer is over, and it's back to school for all our children and grandchildren. Parents are probably rather happy that their children are back into a normal routine, and that a semblance of order has been restored. But did you stop to think that you and I — as Christians — are **always** in school? Until we have reached perfection (which is never), then we should still be learning to be more Christ-like every day.

Use It Or Lose It!

Some Christians stop studying God's Word and discover that their own personal faith suffers as a result. The Hebrew writer rebuked his Jewish Christian brethren with these words: *"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food"* (Heb. 5:12).

This is a much more serious problem than most brethren realize! Since faith comes by hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17), when you **stop** studying, your faith grows weaker, and if it *continues* then you will lose your faith altogether! Consider the many Scriptures that admonish you to **"continue"** in the Faith (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 14:22; Rom. 11:22; Col. 1:23; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:14; 1 Jn. 5:13). The antonym of "continue" is "stop"! Do you think it is healthy to stop doing what you are supposed to do as a Christian?

Who Me?

Other Christians are excellent at applying the Scriptures to everyone else, but not to themselves! They examine others' lives with a fine tooth comb, but miss out on glaring personal problems! Well, this is not new either. The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 2:3, *"And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?"* And unless you think this is not possible, Paul goes on to illustrate his point: *"You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?"*

It is important to study God's Word, to believe it with all your heart, and then to **do** it! *"But be **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves"* (James 1:22).

It's In There Somewhere!

Another problem some Christians experience is their lack of familiarity with the Scriptures. They strongly defend the Truth to their friends, family, and co-workers, but when it comes time to showing the truth in the Scriptures, they come up short and say, "Well, I know it's in there somewhere!" The apostle Peter admonished us to do better than that. *"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a **defense** to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear"* (1 Pet. 3:15). This is not to say that one has to remember every verse of Scripture off the top of his head, but it is good to have a working knowledge of the things that might come up in a discussion in this day and age. Study, discussion and regular memory work will help.

I've Done My Part

Finally, some Christians seem to think that they have earned a "retirement" from their responsibilities. While we recognize that health issues do limit us at some point in time, we also must realize that there is no retirement while we are able to work. Jesus softly stated: *"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, **'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'**"* (Lk. 17:10). We can **never** earn our salvation into heaven, but we can **always** do our duty as best we can with the time, ability, and opportunities given to us by God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

