



## *Are You Trusting in a False Hope?*

*By: Ernest S Williams*

The church, in any community, is a great boon. The fact of its presence and the sincerity of its purpose uplift society. The church members radiate an honest and godly influence all about.

The church gives instruction in right living, and it declares the way of salvation. The faithful preacher who fulfills his calling is doing God's will, for the Bible says, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

It is a good thing to attend church and many people wish to unite with it. If they are permitted to join the church without first being joined to the family of God by being "born again," to use the words of our Lord Jesus, they fall into a snare.

Having secured church membership, these friends think they are safe and secure. Yet their personal lives are unchanged. Filthy habits still cling. Money and pleasure are still their goal. This injures the church, and membership in it provides these people with a false hope.

It is sad, later, to see the confusion of such people on the brink of the grave. They have never really trusted Christ. Instead they have preferred to "paddle their own canoe," and they have fallen overboard into the waters of sin. They have struggled with evil habits which have dragged them to the bottom. Conscious that life has been wasted, they now grasp in vain for some hope from the church and their membership there.

The church cannot save. Christ is the only Savior. The Bible says, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Examine your heart. Does Christ dwell there? Do you trust only in His sacrificial death on the cross as the atonement for your sins?

Consider carefully what the Scriptures say. Note that Christ Himself is the only way to God. "I am the way, the truth and the life," He said: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

The living, resurrected Christ is willing to come into your life and live in your heart, "As many as received him the Lord Jesus Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12).

Christ Himself is the source of heartfelt peace. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," (Matthew 11:28).

Once you have surrendered yourself to Christ you will find He gives you the strength you need to live a Christian life free from sin. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

It is not church membership that saves, but "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Therefore, "seek ye the Lord while he may be found." Do not depend upon a false hope. Put your trust in Jesus Himself. Be sure He is your personal Savior, for only He can give you the peace and security you need for life, death and eternity.

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