

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

Email any new prayer requests to me by Friday.

North Ridgeville church of Christ
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North Ridgeville, OH 44039

Website: nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day	9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages) 10:30 AM Worship
Wednesday	7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders
Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist
Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

June 12, 2022

What Do Angels Do Today?

Steven J. Wallace

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels” (Heb. 13:2).¹

As mentioned in the last article, the subject of angels is an intriguing one where Hollywood has produced various shows and movies to profit from the subject. In the first century, some were inclined to worship or at least claim to worship angels (Col. 2:18).

Still, some may wonder about angels today. What do they do? Do they interact with us today? Does their work bring them into contact with us? Could it be that we may entertain angels by entertaining strangers? Is the Hebrew writer suggesting such?

We are called to not forget some things in Hebrews 13. We may be inclined to not act when the duty to act falls upon us. He had spoken of *brotherly love* in the previous verse and these *strangers* may be brethren of who are not known to us. They were to remember the prisoners as if chained with them (13:3). They were to remember those who rule over them and note their example (13:7). They were to not forget to do good and share (13:16). *And so they were to remember to entertain strangers.* Some had

entertained angels unwittingly. Abraham entertained angels in Genesis 18. Lot entertained angels in Sodom (Gen. 19). Manoah had an exchange with the *Angel of the Lord* and did not know it until later (Jud. 13:16).

While we must note what the instruction is for us we must also resist the urge to read into the text what is not there. The Hebrew writer doesn't say *we may entertain angels*, only that some have. Well, what do angels do today? Anything?

Angels rejoice when a sinner repents. Jesus said, "...there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Lk. 15:10). This joy is in heaven, not on earth (Lk. 15:7). This proves that they know what goes on here and can find great delight when people obey the gospel. Paul wrote, "For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men" (1 Cor. 4:9). Notice that they were a spectacle to *angels also*. In some way, God's manifold wisdom is made known by the church here to the *principalities and powers in the heavenly places* (Eph. 4:10).

Angels accompany saints who die. Jesus taught that when Lazarus died, although destitute of a friend on earth, he was carried to Abraham's bosom *by the angels* (Lk. 16:22). What a comforting passage! We know that when the saint dies, he/she is not left alone to travel but is carried up by a company of angels! All of this is God's perfect will for us to hold to and believe in.

Angels are concerned with the status of the saved. Jesus propped up the innocence of little children in nature as worthy models of the nature of conversion (Matt. 18:1-4). *Humility* stands out as a key trait. He then transitions to the child of grace: a childlike disciple of Christ who believes in Jesus (Matt. 18:6-9). The one who causes such a "little one" to sin is doomed, and it would be better for a millstone to be hung around his neck and drowned in the sea.

The Lord then warns against despising one of these little ones: "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10). To despise is to look down upon or hold one with contempt.

Some have taken this passage to mean guardian angels that are assigned to each believer. They guide their paths and keep them from harm. This idea does not originate with the scriptures but with the imagination of man. What happens when a Christian dies or is harmed? Did the angel fail? Was the angel negligent? Jesus is not endorsing the guardian angel idea. Rather, He is teaching that their angels are in heaven, not on earth, and they always are before the Father, viz., they have constant access to Him. Just as they are joyful when a sinner repents, they must also be disturbed when a saint is despised, ridiculed, and spoken evil of.

The bigger point that Jesus seems to be making is that while the lowly disciple may be held in contempt by others, not only the angels in heaven know, but the Father is fully aware too! "Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!" (Jas. 5:9).

Some want to pursue mysterious and sensational material where the imagination can run wild. Preachers who venture into what seems sensational and secretive are in high demand by those who have ears to be tickled (2 Tim. 4:3-4). We must be content to stay within what is written and not go *beyond* what is taught in the Bible (1 Cor. 4:6).

Let's appreciate what the Bible gives to us and understand, that angels, as great as they are, cannot save us from sin. Our emphasis must be on Jesus. He is our savior, priest, king, shepherd, and captain of our salvation (Heb. 1:5, 6; 2:9-18; 8:1).

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