

# **The Power of an Invitation**

**Gary C. Hampton**

Each time the saints meet produces another opportunity to extend invitations to friends and loved ones. Some may wonder what good it does to invite others to join us.

Two disciples of John asked Jesus where he was staying. The Lord immediately said, “Come and see.” Andrew not only accepted the invitation, but also invited his brother, Simon, who was named Peter by the Master. Jesus invited Philip to follow him the next day. Philip went and invited Nathanael, who lived in the same city, Bethsaida (John 1:35-51). These four, along with eight more, stood up on the Pentecost proclaiming the good news about the resurrected Messiah. About three thousand responded to their teaching (Acts 2:1-41).

Our invitations can similarly impact the lives of untold numbers. An example of this is found in an invitation extended by one Christian girl to her friend to come to a Gospel meeting in Arkansas. The friend attended and obeyed the Lord by putting Him on in baptism. She later moved to Texas, where she met a soldier and taught him the truth. He, too, was baptized into Christ.

He and the young woman who taught him got married. They wrote letters to his parents in Salisbury, Maryland. The parents also learned and obeyed the Truth. The young couple eventually settled in Salisbury where a church exists because of one invitation in Arkansas.

Have you ever picked a dandelion and blown on the fuzzy looking ball? The little white seeds float on the wind, eventually producing many more dandelions. It does not take long for an entire field to be covered.

The Word of God is likewise a seed (Luke 8:11). Let us resolve to seize every opportunity to invite friends and family to attend Bible classes, worship gatherings, Vacation Bible School and other activities in which the seed will be sown. The Lord can produce fruit when we sow and water (1 Corinthians 3:6).

## **The Importance of Being Tied into Christ**

**By Mark T. Tonkery**

True story. One time when I was a kid, my mom and dad took my sister and me camping and fishing on the backwaters of the Tygart Lake. When it was time to go fishing, I rigged my fishing line and decided that since it was a big lake, I was going to cast my line as far as I could. So, I put all the fishing sinkers on the end of the line that it could hold, along with my bait. Once I did this, I was ready to cast and to catch that elusive, giant fish in this large lake. As I cast my fishing pole, the line kept going, going and going up into the air. About that time my sister said, “Hey Mark, that is pretty cool, how did you do that?” I said, “Do what?” She said, “How did you put all those spirals in your fishing line?” I replied, “I didn’t put any spirals in my line.” Then it was at that moment I realized my fishing line was so weighted with sinkers that it took all the line off my reel and the knot that I had tied was not tied tightly enough. This allowed my hook, bait, sinkers and line to go flying out in to the lake—lost and never to be seen again. Needless to say, the fishing for that day was over.

I learned a very valuable lesson that day; when using a knot, one must make sure the knot is tied tightly—especially when fishing. If one does not have his knots tied tightly, they could lose

his fish when it bites and starts struggling on the hook, or it is possible, one could even lose his whole line, like I did. Fishing line and lures are only as strong as the knot one uses to attach them to the reel.

There is a similar principle in our daily lives with Jesus. It's important to always be "tied" into Christ. When we are "tied" in and connected to Christ, we have strength to do His will and overcome the struggles that life brings our way.

The power we need in order to live the Christian life depends on each one of us being tied into Christ. It may be that you are not "tied" into Christ. If so, then, the Bible tells we are lost, like my fishing line that was not tied onto my fishing reel. Yet, we do not have to be lost forever. We can be "tied" into Christ; how? The Bible teaches we can be "tied" into Christ when we repent of our sins and are baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Acts 2:41 continues by adding, "So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls." In other words, they were "tied" into God's family, and they continued being "tied" to Him each day of their lives.

How do we continue to be "tied" into Christ after our baptism? We continue to be "tied" into Christ when we have a living faith. James 2:22 reminds, "You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works." Romans 10:17 tells us that our faith will grow and mature as we study the Word of Christ. So, along with an active faith, we must have a growing faith "tied" in a daily study of the Scriptures. We must worship with and study the Bible with the saints (Hebrews 10:25).

We also are tied into Christ when we spend time in prayer. Romans 12:12 reads, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." We are tied into Christ when we obey God's Word in our everyday lives. First John 5:2 states, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments." We are tied into Christ when we have the joy of the Lord. Nehemiah 8:10 says, "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Don't be lost! Get "tied" into Christ, and I promise that you will "knot" regret it. Are you "tied" into Christ? Think about it!