

# The Gospel Preceptor

*Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Psa 119:104*

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## Christians—The Saved—Are In The Church

**Jerry C. Brewer**

Members of the church that Jesus built do not denominate themselves into parties by their names. There were no hyphenated Christians in the first century, such as “Baptist-Christians,” “Methodist-Christians,” “Presbyterian-Christians,” or Anglican-Christians.” Then, and now, the saved were, and are, simply “Christians” (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16) and **all** Christians are in the church of Christ. The church that Jesus built (Matt. 16:18) did not have a name. None was needed because He built only one (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). The term, *the church of Christ* is not a name, but a designation of ownership. Local congregations are designated as “churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16) and every saved person on earth is in Christ’s church. Not a single person is saved in a denomination.

Paul said that, “all spiritual blessings” are in Christ (Eph. 1:3) and that includes salvation. It is also manifest that those in Christ are in His church, for the church “is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23). To be in Christ is to be in His church and to be in His church is to be in Christ.

Those blessings in Christ are enumerated by Paul in Ephesians, chapter one. Those in Christ are the “chosen” of God (Eph. 1:4), God’s adopted children (Eph. 1:5), made acceptable to God (Eph. 1:6), redeemed and forgiven through Christ’s blood (Eph. 1:7), and heirs of heaven (Eph. 1:11). No one is in Christ who has not repented and been baptized into Him (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27).

When the gospel was first preached on Pentecost (Acts 2), 3,000 souls obeyed its message by repenting and being baptized, and the scripture says they were added to the church (Acts 2:38-41, 47). Now, this question arises: “To which denomination were they added?” The answer is “none.” Were the apostles, and others in the first century, members of a denomination? Absolutely not! No such thing as a denomination among professing Christians then existed. Those 3,000 souls were added to the church of which you should be a member—the church which Christ, its Founder, will save (Eph. 5:23). Not a single person in Acts two was added to any denomination. The church is the saved body of Christ and rejects denominationalism. God has only one family and all of His children are in that family. Paul told Timothy, “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God” (1 Tim. 3:14-15). This passage identifies God’s “house” as the church. As used in this context, the word “house” means “family.” The church is God’s family and it is so designated in Ephesians 3:15 as well.

God has only one family and to insist that He has children in all denominations is to accuse God of adultery. He has no children outside of His family.

Denominations are not the family of God and are no part of that family. They are man made “families” unknown in the word of God. The church of which you should be a member—the one you read about in the New Testament—rejects denominationalism because it blasphemes the name of God in its pretense that God has children in many different “families.”

# Guessing What Jesus Would Say

Cled E. Wallace

Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, a pastor of a denominational church in Topeka, Kan., won national fame many decades ago by writing a book entitled, *In His Steps*. He later wrote a series of articles in *Liberty*, a magazine of nationwide circulation. These articles expressed Dr. Sheldon's opinion of what Jesus would say and do should He come to Chicago, New York, etc. In one of his articles, he wrote of what Jesus would have said to President Franklin Roosevelt and a correspondent pleaded with him to tell what Jesus would say to Adolf Hitler.

The point that sticks out to me in all this is that so many preachers and others are so stirred up over what Jesus **would** say or **might** say under certain conditions, when they seem utterly uninterested in what He **has** actually **said** about certain vital matters. In these, they coldly ignore Him and follow the traditions of men or impudently exalt their own opinions.

Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). He did and it is a complete and perfect divine institution fully described in the New Testament. Its origin, nature, mission, terms of membership, organization, and worship are fully set forth. A rich nomenclature fully names and describes it.

In the face of all this, pious looking doctors, with tears in their eyes, pay eloquent lip tribute to Jesus as Lord, speculate endlessly over what Jesus **would** say, and **ignore** what He **has** said. They have built up and maintain a vast system of denominationalism whose universal success would nullify the prayer of Jesus for the unity of believers and mock the teaching of the apostles. This false system is mistaken for Christianity itself, and by reason of it the way of truth has been evil spoken of.

Denominationalism is not identical with the New Testament church in origin, organization, membership, doctrine, name, or worship. It is a religious crime, a spoliation of things divine. There need be no guessing about what Jesus **would** say about Dr. Sheldon's denominational business and that of his kind and other kinds, for **He has already said it**. "But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:13-14 ASV). If this does not teach that human churches and man-made ordinances in religion are about as welcome to God as noisome weeds are to a thrifty farmer, then it does not teach anything.

The weeds must be rooted up that the wholesome plants may thrive. They are enemies to a good crop. No compromise should be made with them. The field of religion is overgrown with denominational thistles, so that over wide areas should a pilgrim ask for a New Testament church by name, no one could be found who would even know what he was talking about. And men in high places talk sweetly about what Jesus **would** say when they are guilty of committing criminal assault on what He **did** say.

And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it: because it had been well builded. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation; against which the stream brake, and straightway it fell in; and the ruin of that house was great (Luke 6:46-49 ASV).

If I were inclined to speculate about what Jesus **would** say were He here under present conditions, I would at least try to make it consistent with what He **did** do and say while He was here before. It is assumed that his supreme interest would become economic and political. Why, I cannot see. He possibly would not have paid any more attention to Roosevelt and Hitler than He did to Caesar. To imagine Him in the midst of a political fight does violence to the whole history of Him.

Pilate examined Him closely for evidence of treachery against Rome, honeycombed

with corruption. All Pilate could get out of Him was, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). The one thing that sent Him into blazing eruption was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who led the people after their traditions into rebellion against God.

He did not pay much attention to Caesar, but He called these Pharisees, “sons of hell,” “a brood of vipers,” “whited sepulchres,” “fools and blind” (Matt. 23). If He were on earth now, it is more reasonable to think He would sting these “Doctors” who have played such havoc with His church than He would have told Mr. Roosevelt how to run his New Deal. If Jesus were to come and give foolproof directions to the world how to keep its stomach full, and people paid no more attention to Him than the divinity doctors do His prescription on how to be saved, the majority would starve to death anyway.

I found the question raised in my reading somewhere about what would happen were the apostle Paul to appear in a convention of delegates of all religions and inquire for the church he was a member of while he was on earth. Could any one delegate say, “I represent it?” Could all say, “We are all members of it?” Could he recognize it in one or all denominations? Here is what he said about it while he **was** here: “There is one body, and one spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all” (Eph. 4:4-6 ASV).

I am now going to indulge a little appetite I have for speculation. Should Dr. Sheldon, had he had the information and disposition to do so, have written a series of articles setting forth the fact that the church that Paul was a member of is older than all denominations, and that Christianity is older than all the creeds, and that the New Testament gives full information as to both, he could not have had it published in *Liberty* or any other magazine of like character.

As obvious as these truths are, the publication of such a series of articles would create a furor among religious leaders in this country that would be a cross between a tragedy and a comedy. You may have this bit of personal speculation for what it is worth without worrying over its relation to fellowship.

Jesus is Lord. His authority should be fully recognized. God, the Father, proclaimed Jesus as “my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” and shouted from heaven, “Hear ye him” (Matt. 17:5). He **has spoken**. This message from heaven is “the faith which was *once for all* delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3 ASV). There is nothing to be added to what He has said. All this bother about what Jesus **would** say smacks a little bit, if not a whole lot, of lack of confidence in the all-sufficiency of what He has said. It suggests that revelation is not complete.

The authority of Jesus is recognized in faithful adherence to what He **has** said rather than to some imaginative program He **might** launch were He here on earth. He is not here and He is not coming “until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from old” (Acts 3:21 ASV). In the meantime, preachers should respect what Jesus has already said and teach the people to follow it. It is on record and fully confirmed (Heb. 2:1-4).

Preaching Christ to the lost and showing them how to be saved is a better and more profitable work for preachers than telling Mr. Roosevelt how to run the New Deal. He probably didn't pay much attention to them anyway. “I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:1-2 ASV).

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# The Second Coming of Christ

E. P. Watson

In the New Testament, a book that can be read in ten or twelve hours, there are no less than fifty direct calls to “watch” for the coming of the Lord—a call to every 25 minutes of reading. These exhortations scattered through its pages with that commanding word “watch” are so many taps on the shoulder by the finger of God bidding us look up for the appearing of Jesus. The time of his coming we do not and cannot know. But among the unknown things concerning His coming there are some that we can and do know, some of which are here set forth.

## The Manner Of His Coming

**1. He will come as he went away.** “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). He ascended in the clouds. “And a cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9). And so he will come. “Behold he cometh with the clouds and every eye shall see him” (Rev. 1:15).

**2. He shall come quickly.** “As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matt. 24:47). What a wonderful sight to contemplate; to see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven; coming with power and great glory; coming as quick as lightning, yet every eye shall see him!

**3. He shall come in glory.** “When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him” (Matt. 25:31). What unspeakable glory! Jude says “Behold he cometh with ten thousand of his saints” (Jude 14). That will be the greatest and grandest and most wonderful sight ever beheld in all the world.

## The Events Of His Coming

It is contended by some that Christ will come to Jerusalem and reign one thousand years on David’s literal throne. If that is taught in the Word of God, I confess my inability to find it. That a thousand year period is mentioned in the visions of John no one will deny, but being set forth in symbols it does not form a part of the plain teaching of the New Testament. It is best to study plain passages that deal with the events of the Lord’s coming that no violence may be done to the Word of God.

**1. When He comes His kingdom will be delivered to God.** Paul said that He (Christ) “must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Cor. 15:25). Verse 24 says, “Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.” Verse 26 says, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Death shall be destroyed when the dead are called from their graves. “Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O, death where is thy sting? O, grave where is thy victory?” (1 Cor. 15:55).

**2. When He comes there will be the resurrection of the dead.**

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. (1 Thess. 4: 14-15).

It should be observed that in First Corinthians 15 Paul said “the dead” should be raised “at the last trump”. He called it the resurrection of the dead—all the dead. But in First Thessalonians 4 he says “the dead in Christ shall rise first.” Yes, but first in relation to **what?** Here is a point where brethren who teach the thousand years reign on earth wrest the scripture. They argue that the dead in Christ shall rise first—that is, before the rest of the dead, then a thousand year reign on earth, and after that the resurrection of the rest of the dead. Now the passage does **not even hint** at such a thing. What it does say is that “we that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede, or go before) them which are asleep” but “we which

are alive and remain” shall with the dead in Christ “be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall ever be with the Lord.” In this passage Paul is not discussing the resurrection of the wicked nor the order in which it shall occur, but rather the order of the ascension of the living and the dead in Christ when they are caught up to meet Him in the air. The dead in Christ shall rise first, that is, before the living in Christ are “caught up” and they together shall ascend to meet the Lord and “so shall ever be with the Lord.”

But in First Corinthians 15 Paul discusses the resurrection of all the dead which, he says, will take place at the last trump. It is the same trump mentioned in First Thessalonians 4:16. In one the living are “translated” and in the other they are “caught up.” It is the same occasion of John 5:29 when “all that are in their tombs shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Language cannot be plainer. How can any one believe that there will be a thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked?

### **3. When He comes there will be the judgment of all the nations.**

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31-32).

Describing the same judgment scene, John said: “And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened and they were judged every man according to their works” (Rev. 20:12-14). John saw the dead and the judgment mentioned included every man.

### **4. When He comes it will be the end of the world.**

The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up...Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. 3:7-14).

A further description of the new heavens and the new earth—the Christian’s eternal home—may be found in the closing chapters of the New Testament. May God help us in the study of His word and to meet the Lord in peace when he comes.

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## **Are Mechanical Instruments Of Music Commanded In Worship?**

**Jerry C. Brewer**

The following email exchange was precipitated from our website in 2002 and is reprinted for our readers' study of the issue of mechanical instruments of music in worship. This respondent not only believes musical instruments are permissible in worship to God, but that they are *commanded*.

### **Original Question**

July 10, 2002, 12:20 p.m.

What is you[r] teaching on the instrument?

Beulah Wall, OKC.

### **My Reply**

July 10, 2002, 1:23 p.m.

My teaching on the instrument is that which the Bible teaches. Since we are to do all things by the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17) and He does not authorize mechanical instruments of music in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), therefore we are not permitted to use them. One can as easily pray to God with machinery as to sing to Him with it.

There are two kinds of music—instrumental and vocal. The Bible authorizes us to “sing” (Eph. 5:19). That's vocal music. In the absence of authorization for us to “play,”



(instrumental music) we must conclude that the only kind of music God ordains in worship is vocal. Thank you for your inquiry.

Jerry Brewer, Editor

### Her Answer, Number 1

July 10, 2002, 5:49 p.m.

Apparently you have never studied the Greek “psallo” for the word “sing”. It means accompanied in a few places (I Cor. 14:15 is one). Even if we did not know that, the instrument is actually commanded. In the Old Testament in 2 Chron 29:25, and the book of Rev. speaks of Moses and the Lamb, and the new song. The book of Psalms commands us to sing this new song with lots of instruments. In fact, we are commanded to sing psalms in Eph. 5:19, and psalms are always accompanied.

### My Answer, Number 2

July 11, 2002, 7:40 a.m.

**You wrote**, “Apparently you have never studied the Greek “psallo” for the word “sing.” It means accompanied in a few places (I Cor. 14:15 is one). Even if we did not know that, the instrument is actually commanded. .... The book of Psalms commands us to sing this new song with lots of instruments. In fact, we are commanded to sing psalms in Eph. 5:19, and psalms are always accompanied.”

**My Reply:** Yes, I have studied *psallo*. Lexicons generally define it as a verb, meaning, “to pluck, to strike, to rub, to pull, to twang.” But the object of a verb does not become part of its definition, and **no particular instrument** is **inherent** in the word. Pluck what? Strike what? Twang what? So the question is, “psallo what?” If it mentions the bowstring, it doesn't mean the harp. If it mentions the harp, it doesn't mean something else, and Paul said *psallo* the heart. The instrument that is to be “psalloed” is specified in Ephesians 5:19 and that instrument is the heart.

Of course our singing is accompanied! It is accompanied by plucking the spiritual strings of the heart. We are to *psallo* in the heart. That is what accompanies the singing of psalms and that is the exact meaning of Paul's statement in both Ephesians 5:19 and 1 Corinthians 14:15. Singing (*psalloing*) in the New Testament is not only “accompanied in a few places,” but in every place and the instrument which accompanies it is the heart.

Your assertion that the mechanical instrument is “actually commanded,” requires you, and every person who sings in worship to God with you, to play an instrument. If God commands the mechanical instrument, then its omission would be a sin. If not, why not?

**You wrote**, “In the Old Testament in II Chron. 29:25, and the book of Rev. speaks of Moses and the Lamb-and the new song.”

**My Reply:** Where do you find “Moses and the Lamb-and the new song” in 2 Chron. 29:25? I can find cymbals, harps and psalteries there, but no mention of “Moses and the Lamb-and the new song.”

In the verse just prior to that one, it says, the priests killed the goats and “made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel” (2 Chron. 29:24). Will you argue for sacrificing goats as a sin offering today? The same chapter from which you derive your authority for mechanical instruments also authorizes killing goats and offering their blood upon an altar.

Sincerely,  
Jerry Brewer

### Her Answer, Number 2

July 12, 2002, 9:35 a.m.

Yes, the problem is that I have for around 15 years studied “psallo” (and also its counterpart Hebrew *zamar*). And the problem is, that I do not agree with your teaching. These words always include the instrument, but the instrument is not always named when either of these words is used. Just the “psa” in psalms should remind people of

some sort of rubbing, striking strings. Even Webster agrees that psalms are accompanied.

The object of the verb does not become part of the definition? That is exactly what happened in the later years during the development of the definition of “psallo.”

I am sick and tired of people saying that Paul said to psallo the heart. It is the biggest lie ever told. He did not want lip service, but sincere singing. And now, even to applying that to I Cor. 14:15 is disgraceful.

I do not see God as being so strict he would not allow singing without the instrument. In fact, the word “sing” (“*ado*”) in Eph. 5:19 is without the instrument. They did not even sing in the early church worship mentioned. They broke bread and Paul preached to them. Oh, you say, just because the singing is not mentioned is no sign—I could come back and say just because the instrument is not mentioned in I Cor. 14:15 is no sign it was not used.

Why in the world would God demand all those instruments in the Old Testament and then call them sin in the New Testament. That is not my God.

I'm sure you have Kurfees book with the 17 definitions of “psallo.” The only ones who do not agree that the instrument inheres in “psallo” are Greeks. The early church, because the pagans used it, I think was the main reason, removed the instrument. They felt so guilty they put it back in allegorically. It was commanded in 2 Chron 29:25. The Greeks never put it back in. In about 600 A.D. the Catholics put it back in. This is the most erroneous teaching I have ever heard, that they were the originators of using the instrument in worship. The Lost books of the Bible mention instruments, also the Dead Sea Scrolls.

I would hate to be in Kurfees skin when he gets to God. He is about the biggest liar I have ever heard, and has caused thousands of people to sin concerning this word “psallo.” After those 17 definitions he said what you are still saying today—the instrument is the heart. Not a single one of them even used that word.

### **My Answer, Number 3**

July 12, 2002, 12:45 p.m.

Hello Beulah, and thank you for your reply.

**You wrote**, “Yes, the problem is that I have for around 15 years studied 'psallo' (and also its counterpart Hebrew 'zamar'). And the problem is, that I do not agree with your teaching.”

**My Reply:** I'm sure that a lot of people do not agree with my teaching. Not everyone agreed with Jesus either. That's why He was crucified at the instigation of the religious leaders of His day. I don't get upset when someone disagrees with my teaching. But the Bible teaches what it teaches whether we agree with it or not. Our perception of it does not change Truth.

**You wrote**, “These words always include the instrument, but the instrument is not always named when either of these words is used. Just the 'psa' in psalms should remind people of some sort of rubbing, striking strings. Even Webster agrees that psalms are accompanied.”

**My Reply:** I do not dispute the fact that psalms are accompanied. What I do dispute is your contention that a mechanical instrument of music is inherent in the word *psallo*. The instrument which is rubbed, plucked, or twanged must be specified in the context and that's what Paul does in Ephesians 5:19.

Webster does not speak for God—Christ does (Matt. 17:5; Heb. 1:1-2).

**You wrote**, “The object of the verb does not become part of the definition? That is exactly what happened in the later years during the development of the definition of Psallo.”

**My Reply:** So, according to the above statement, the original use of the word “psallo” was insufficient and had to await “development of the definition” before it could be understood. What did the first century Christians do about the word while they awaited the “development” of its definition?

**You wrote,** “I am sick and tired of people saying that Paul said to psallo the heart. It is the biggest lie ever told. He did not want lip service, but sincere singing.”

**My Reply:** What did Paul say to psallo in Ephesians 5:19? Are you “sick and tired of that?” Do you know the difference between the heart and the lips? To psallo (twang) the strings of the heart is not the same thing as lip service. That was made clear by Jesus: “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.” (Matt. 15:9).

Notice the distinction between the lips and the heart in this passage. To make melody in the heart is not the same thing as lip service, but the lips will express what is in the heart. (Matt. 15:18-20).

**You wrote,** “I do not see God as being so strict he would not allow singing without the instrument.”

**My Reply:** Can you “see God being so strict that he would not allow” fried chicken and gravy as elements of the Lord's Supper? Can you see Him being “so strict that he would not allow” sprinkling for baptism?

**You wrote,** “Why in the world would God demand all those instruments in the Old Testament and then call them sin in the New Testament. That is not my God.”

**My Reply:** God never called an instrument sinful. There is nothing sinful about a guitar, banjo, trombone, flute, harp, or any other instrument. I have a guitar and love to play country music. I also had brisket yesterday for lunch—which is not sinful—but if I take my guitar and try to worship God with it I have sinned as surely as I would if I took that brisket and ate it for the Lord's Supper. The sin is not in the instrument itself. The sin is in a failure to respect the authority of God, expressed through Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

**You wrote,** “I'm sure you have Kurfees book with the 17 definitions of 'psallo'. The only ones who do not agree that the instrument inheres in 'psallo' are Greeks.”

**My Reply:** No, I don't have the Kurfees book, but I've heard of it. It's interesting that you mention that the only people who do not agree that the instrument inheres in *psallo* are the Greeks. Isn't that a Greek word? Who would know the Greek language better than Greeks? The Zulus? The Japanese, or Koreans, or English?

**You wrote,** “The early church, because the pagans used it, I think was the main reason, removed the instrument. They felt so guilty they put it back in allegorically. It was commanded in 2 Chron 29:25. The Greeks never put it back in. In about 600 A.D. the Catholics put it back in. This is the most erroneous teaching I have ever heard, that they were the originators of using the instrument in worship. The Lost books of the Bible mention instruments, also the Dead Sea Scrolls.”

**My Reply:** Where is your scriptural documentation that the early church removed the instrument because pagans used it? You are good at assertions without documentation. Furthermore, the passage in Second Chronicles 29 does mention the instruments. I haven't disputed that point either. On the other hand, you never answered my point about Second Chronicles 29:23-24 which is in the same context. Shall we offer the blood of a goat for sins? That's in the same context from which you derive authority for mechanical instruments of music.

You mention the “Lost books of the Bible.” What are those? My Bible tells me that “All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect; thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” and that God's divine power “hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

Do you mean to say the Bible I've been reading cannot be trusted since some of the books were lost? Did God lie when He inspired Peter to tell us that we have “all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him...?” Is God guilty of a falsehood by having Paul to write that all scripture is inspired and able to furnish us “thoroughly” or completely to every good work? Which “good work” will the “Lost books



of the Bible” supply if we do not now have all of God's word? If I cannot trust Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, how do you know 2 Chronicles 29:25 can be trusted?

**You wrote**, “I would hate to be in Kurfees skin when he gets to God. He is about the biggest liar I have ever heard, and has caused thousands of people to sin concerning this word “psallo”. After those 17 definitions he said what you are still saying today—the instrument is the heart. Not a single one of them even used that word.”

**My Reply:** How did Kurfees cause people to sin? Do you mean to say that the word *psallo* **requires** a mechanical instrument of music? If so, do you play a mechanical instrument when you worship? Does everyone else who worships with you play a mechanical instrument? If your assertion were true, then any person who fails to play an instrument in worship would sin. It seems that your assertion—not Kurfees' teaching—causes people to sin.

Of course, the word “heart” isn't in *psallo*. Neither is the word guitar, or harp, or mandolin, or fiddle. *Psallo* means “to pluck or twang, or rub.” I can *psallo* by plucking my eyebrows or my guitar. I can *psallo* by rubbing my stomach or the strings of a fiddle, but the word *psallo* alone does not define what is to be plucked, rubbed or twanged. That must be determined by the context and within the context of Eph. 5:19, Paul defines the heart as that which is to be *psalloed*.

Sincerely, In love of the Truth,  
Jerry C. Brewer

### Her Answer, Number 3

July 13, 2002, 12:27 p. m.

You say the Bible teaches what it teaches whether we agree or not. That is true. The problem is that people hear things all their lives and do not check them out for accuracy (sic). I do not feel that I am infallible in my interpretation. I just pray God to give me wisdom. I have a degree in English, so my ability to read and understand should be at least average. Webster is not speaking for God, not putting words in God's mouth. He just is telling us what God said. You seem to think you are better able to define what God said than Webster. What kind of education have you had that makes you so superior?

The Greek lexicographers needed a word to define “to sing accompanied” and this word was developed from the same word they used to rub kernels (sic) off the corncob—that sorta represented rubbing the strings of the harp. You must be a whiz to know more than Webster in his dictionary.

Surprise of surprises! You actually say you do not dispute that psalms are accompanied! I guess I did not make myself clear. The word *psallo* I think just means to sing accompanied—no particular instrument is mentioned, but it has to be one that requires rubbing, as the strings of the harp. That is in every definition I have seen. Please, please, tell me where God says to rub the strings of the heart. Who ever heard of the heart having strings? People must be getting a good laugh out of that one and think what a bunch of dummies we are.

What did the early Christians do about the word while they awaited [t]he development of the definition. Nothing. It had not even as yet been put into writing. Everything was oral.

“Twang the strings of the heart?”—I thought that one had gone out years ago. People must think the church of Christ people are awfully dumb. Yes, Jesus indicated at times that people were insincere. He hated insincerity. What comes from the lips is what is found in the heart. I never even indicated that the lips and the heart were the same. The lips express what is found in the heart. The scripture “make melody with the heart” means that what words you sing should come from the heart, have meaning. In other words, not a bunch of nonsense. Know what you are saying, and make it worthwhile, not just a bunch of jibberish.

God's chief interest is not the instrument. It is us. There are people around who have been taught this tradition all their lives. They would not change if God himself told them they were wrong.

“Fried chicken and gravy”—too stupid to even address. The problem is that you are so steeped in traditional teachings that even if you knew the truth, you would refuse to accept what the New Testament really teaches.

Psallo being a Greek word had absolutely nothing to do with the decision of the Greeks not to use the instrument. I have it in some of my studies—I think it was so as not to be confused with an unbiblical church in the area that used the instrument. They knew the language, just as the early Christians did. These Christians knew it was unbiblical not to use the instrument. That is why they put the instrument in allegorically. (I think I got that from Ferguson's A Cappella Music. I learned right off only to use his references, and never, never what he said. He distorts, and changes them to suit his traditional beliefs).

I'm surprised you have not had church history. What education do you have? Justin Martyr, I believe is one that is mentioned as removing the instrument.

You must remember that godly men had to choose what to put in the Bible. They had lots of books to review. They chose the four gospels out of many. The Lost books were among those. They mention the harp.

The name of the instrument in psallo is never spelled out—it could even be canned music. The accompaniment is unimportant. Singing praises to God is what is important. And also what is very important is that people quit lying about it. Lying is sin.

In Christian Love,  
Beulah Wall

#### **My Final Answer, Number 4**

July 13, 2002, 5:13 p.m.

**You wrote,** “You say the Bible teaches what it teaches whether we agree or not. That is true. The problem is that people hear things all their lives and do not check them out for accuracy (sic). I do not feel that I am infallible in my interpretation. I just pray God to give me wisdom. I have a degree in English, so my ability to read and understand should be at least average.”

**My Reply:** Yes, that is a common problem, isn't it? People have a tendency to cloud their own understanding by a failure to go to the Bible like the Bereans did (Acts 17:10-11).

I have never made a claim of infallibility, but the word of God is infallible and teaches what it teaches, regardless of what you or I think it teaches.

**You wrote,** “Webster is not speaking for God, not putting words in God's mouth. He just is telling us what God said. You seem to think you are better able to define what God said than Webster. What kind of education have you had that makes you so superior?”

**My Reply:** When the prophets spoke, God put the words in their mouths, they did not put words in His. Neither did I claim Webster was doing that. You are the one who cited Webster as an authority in religion. I prefer to let God Himself define what He said, rather than doing so myself or listening to Webster in matters religious. As for my “education,” that's a low blow in an otherwise reasonable and amicable discussion. Did I claim superiority? Please send me the quote in which I made such a claim.

**You wrote,** “The Greek lexicographers needed a word to define 'to sing accompanied' and this word was developed from the same word they used to rub kernels (sic) off the corn cob—that sorta represented rubbing the strings of the harp. You must be a whiz to know more than Webster in his dictionary.”

**My Reply:** There you go again—to quote a famous President. You are making fun of my education by saying “you must be a whiz to know more than Webster in his dictionary.” How did we get off on Webster anyway? I thought we were discussing instrumental music.

**You wrote,** “Surprise of surprises! You actually say you do not dispute that psalms are accompanied! I guess I did not make myself clear. The word psallo I think just means to sing accompanied—no particular instrument is mentioned, but it has to be

one that requires rubbing, as the strings of the harp. That is in every definition I have seen.”

**My Reply:** You're having fun at my expense, aren't you? I don't have a degree in English, so you are poking fun at me and punctuating your sentences with exclamation points.

Yes, you made yourself perfectly clear, and I agreed with you. *Psallo* means “to sing accompanied—no particular instrument is mentioned, but it has to be one that requires rubbing, as the strings of a harp.” I agree with that statement.

The problem is that you claim a harp — or some sort of instrument — is **inherent** in the word *psallo*. *Psallo* is a verb, like the word “pick.” Neither of those verbs contains the object that is to be “psalloed” or “picked.” Since you like Webster, we will let him define “pick.” Here's what he says, in part, about this word:

**Pick\pik\vb** - 1: to pierce, penetrate or break up with a pointed instrument [~ed the hard clay] 2 a : to remove bit by bit [~meat from bones] b : to remove covering or adhering matter from [~the bones] 3 a : to gather by plucking [~apples] b : CHOOSE, SELECT [tried to~the shortest route] [she~ed out the most expensive dress] 4 : PILFER, ROB [~pockets] 5 : PROVOKE [~a quarrel] 6 a : to dig into : PROBE [~his teeth] b : to pluck with a pick or with the fingers [reputed to~a mighty mean guitar—G. S. Perry] c : to loosen or pull apart with a sharp point [~wool] 7 : to unlock with a device (as a wire) other than the key [~a lock]. (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1979, p. 860).

Now, Beulah, you can pick meat from bones, or you can pick apples, a short route, an expensive dress, pockets, a quarrel, your teeth, a guitar, wool, or a lock, but none of those things is inherent in the word “pick.” You can pick a friend, a teammate, or your nose, but none of those words inhere in the verb “pick.”

You can “psallo” a harp, a guitar, a piano, a wash board, your stomach, a banjo, or a mandolin, but none of those words is inherent in the verb “psallo.”

**You wrote**, “Please, please, tell me where God says to rub the strings of the heart.”

**My Reply:** In Ephesians 5:19—Singing, accompanied by the music that comes from the grateful, worshipful heart.

You wrote, “Who ever heard of the heart having strings? People must be getting a good laugh out of that one and think what a bunch of dummies we are.”

**My reply:** The soldiers in Pilate's hall got a good laugh out of Jesus, as did Herod's men. The same was true as those near Christ's cross reviled him and mocked and had fun at his expense. But their perception that Jesus was an imposter— a “dummy”— did not change the fact that He was who He claimed to be, and was proven so by His resurrection.

Does the heart have a foreskin? It can be circumcised (Deut. 10:16). Moreover, the heart can be melted (Josh. 5:1). Does it have weapons? It can smite (1 Sam. 24:5). Does it have yarn or thread? It can be knitted (1 Chron. 12:17). Does the heart have a voice? It can sing (Job 29:13), and utter things (Prov. 23:33). Does it have a conscience? It can be pricked (Acts 2:37). Does the heart have a door? It can be opened (Acts 16:14). Does the heart have strings? It can be plucked (Eph. 5:19).

**You wrote:** “What did the early Christians do about the word while they awaited [t]he development of the definition. Nothing. It had not even as yet been put into writing. Everything was oral.”

**My Reply:** Am I to understand, then, that spoken words have no definitions? They are only given definitions when they are written down?

**You wrote**, “Twang the strings of the heart?—I thought that one had gone out years ago. People must think the church of Christ people are awfully dumb.”

**My Reply:** A lot of people think the teaching that Christ established only one church went “out years ago,” but the Bible still teaches that. Again, what people think does not change what the Bible teaches.

**You wrote,** “What comes from the lips is what is found in the heart. I never even indicated that the lips and the heart were the same. The lips express what is found in the heart. The scripture 'make melody with the heart' means that what words you sing should come from the heart, have meaning. In other words not a bunch of nonsense. Know what you are saying. And make it worthwhile, not just a bunch of jibberish.”

**My Reply:** Again, there's no disagreement here. The lips vocalize what is played in the instrument of the heart.

**You wrote,** “God's chief interest is not the instrument. It is us.”

**My Reply:** Neither was gopher wood God's chief interest, but when He told Noah to use it, he thereby excluded every other kind of wood. Do you suppose Noah could have substituted pine or oak and still pleased God?

**You wrote,** “Fried chicken and gravy’—too stupid to even address. The problem is that you are so steeped in traditional teachings that even if you knew the truth, you would refuse to accept what the New Testament really teaches.”

**My Reply:** Now, you're calling me “stupid.” That hurts, but I've been called worse, and I don't believe you're the kind of person who would stoop to worse names.

**You wrote,** “I do not see God as being so strict he would not allow singing without the instrument.”

**My Reply:** I simply asked, Can you “see God being so strict that he would not allow” fried chicken and gravy as elements of the Lord's Supper? That was an honest question and a parallel to your statement about God not allowing “singing without the instrument.” Would God be “so strict” that we couldn't also use other food in the Lord's supper besides the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine? You name the food. Perhaps you dislike fried chicken and gravy and therefore believe it's “stupid.”

**You wrote,** “Psallo being a Greek word had absolutely nothing to do with the decision of the Greeks not to use the instrument. I have it in some of my studies. I think it was so as not to be confused with an unbiblical church in the area that used the instrument. They knew the language, just as the early Christians did. These Christians knew it was unbiblical not to use the instrument, that is why they put the instrument in allegorically. (I think I got that from Ferguson's A Cappella Music. I learned right off only to use his references, and never, never what he said. He distorts, and changes them to suit his traditional beliefs).”

**My Reply:** I'm sure the early Christians knew Greek, since Koine' Greek was the universal language of the Roman Empire and the New Testament was written in that language. Where in the Bible can you find that “These Christians knew it was unbiblical not to use the instrument?” That brings us to the same point I've been making since this discussion began, but which you have never addressed—If the instrument is “biblical” and “commanded” then every person who engages in worship must play an instrument. Do you? Does everyone else who worships with you? If you don't, then you sin by omitting it if the instrument is inherent in Ephesians 5:19. If not, why not?

**You wrote,** “I'm surprised you have not had church history. What education do you have?”

**My Reply:** Now you're giving me an inferiority complex. You keep questioning my education which doesn't seem germane to the discussion of instrumental music.

**You wrote,** “You must remember that godly men had to choose what to put in the Bible. They had lots of books to review. They chose the four gospels out of many. The Lost books were among those. They mention the harp.”

**My Reply:** So you believe the Bible is an anthology, compiled by fallible men from various sources? That is the philosophy of an infidel. The Bible is verbally, plenary, inspired (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:16-21; 1 Cor. 2:9-13). What “Lost Books” are you talking about and where do “they mention the harp?” There is only one gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). Where did you get the idea that there were “four gospels out of many?”

Your documentation of all you have asserted in this discussion is absolutely nil. Did your English major require documentation of papers you wrote, or were you allowed to just assert something without citing proof for your assertions? If you do not believe the Bible is the word of God, delivered through Holy Spirit inspired men and written down as we have it today for all men for all ages, then there is little point in continuing this discussion.

Yours Sincerely,  
Jerry Brewer

**Coming Soon: *"...To The Saints Which are at Ephesus"*  
A New Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians**

## Indications Of Bible Inspiration: Its Scientific Foreknowledge

**Jess Whitlock**

The Bible is abundant with scientific facts and principles, written down in many instances hundreds of years before their discovery by the scientific community. You can enter all the fields of science from anthropology to zoology and in numerous instances the Bible has already spoken. The writer without inspiration could not possibly have written what he wrote, without contradicting the scientific standing of his day. The word "science" means "to know" and there is not a single scientific fact today that contradicts anything found within God's Word. A few years ago, I taught a Wednesday night class on scientific facts that were already discussed in the Bible. That study lasted almost six months. So, we will only have time to skim the surface. I am amazed that the Bible and true science are never at variance with one another. Notice please, I said true science, and not the scientific "theories" that run counter to the Bible in hundreds of instances, i.e., the **theory of evolution!**

"He stretcheth out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7). It was in science 101 that I discovered our North star was not in the true northerly position, just a few degrees off. How did the author of Job know this fact? When powerful telescopes of men are trained in the exact northerly direction there is what is called a "black hole" or could we say, "empty space"? Also, how did the author of Job know that the earth was not supported on some unknown object? For centuries the "explanation" of science was that planet earth was supported on the shoulders of Atlas. Centuries prior to that, the scientific explanation was that earth was supported on the back of a giant elephant, which in turn was riding on the back of a giant turtle! Why is that "knowledge" not contained in the Bible? Remember, true "science" means "to know."

"It is He that sitteth above the circle of the earth..." (Isa. 40:22). Nowadays, any school boy or girl will tell you that the earth is fashioned in the form of a circle. It was in 1492 that Columbus made the voyage that established the fact that earth was in circular form. Before that time, it was the thinking of the scientific world that this world was as flat as a pancake.

"As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites that minister unto Me" (Jer. 33:22, cf. Gen. 15:5). In 150 B.C. astronomers attempted to count the stars. Hipparchus guessed 1,026 stars. Ptolemy said there were 1,056 stars. In A.D. 600, Kepler counted 1,005 stars (notice that some were missing)! These men did not have the aid of telescopes. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century astronomers determined that the stars number into the billions. More importantly, they admitted that any attempt to count the stars is futile. How did Moses and Jeremiah know centuries earlier that the stars are numberless?

It was in 1820 that a great scientific mind, Hubert Spencer, announced those things necessary for the earth and our solar system to come into existence. The essential ingredients would be (1) Time (2) Force (3) Space (4) Matter (5) Motion. These things

would be required in just that order. Now, let your fingers do the walkin' and let the Bible do the talkin': "In the beginning (time) God (force) created the heavens (space) and the earth (matter)...and the Spirit of God moved (motion) upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:1-2). Well, what do you know? Hubert Spencer was absolutely right.

And we have only just begun!

1. That day and night occur simultaneously (Luke 17:3), was discovered in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Quarantine is the best way to control certain diseases (Lev. 13), discovered in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
3. The oceans have natural paths within them (Psa. 8:8), discovered in 1854.
4. The most seaworthy ship design is a ratio of 30 x 5 x 3 (Gen. 6), discovered in 1860.
5. Oceans contain fresh water springs (Job 38:16), discovered in 1920.
6. Snow has material value (Job 38:22), discovered in 1905.
7. Plants use sunlight to manufacture food (Job 8:16), discovered in 1920.
8. Arcturus and other stars move through space (Job 38:32), discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
9. The water cycle (Eccl. 1:7), discovered in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. As a substitute teacher I was dealing with the "water cycle" in science class. Those young minds were impressed when I read to them the words of Ecclesiastes 1:7.
10. Finally, the life is in the blood (Lev. 17:1), discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For centuries people "bled" people for certain diseases. George Washington died as a result of being "bled." Now we give blood transfusions. This is not an exhaustive list.

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## Remove Not The Ancient Landmark

Kent Bailey

In Proverbs 22:28 the divine record states, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." In consideration of this specific text, we note that this verse had reference to boundaries dealing with tribal allotments and individual family properties. In ancient times such landmarks were regarded with far more respect than they are in modern times. Among the Romans we find that landmarks were often deified. Ovid tells us that frequently the pagan priests would bring their sacrifices and offer them upon the landmarks as a testimony to the greatness and the seriousness of such.

In the Old Testament, the Jews had a high regard for landmarks. In Deuteronomy 19:14 Moses commanded that the Jew **remove not** his neighbor's landmarks. In accordance with this divine requirement we read of a curse placed upon any who violate Old Testament teaching regarding such. This, of course, was during a time prior to fences as we know them. Such being the case, landmarks were often nothing more than loose stones placed upon the ground, yet these boundaries were to be respected. The same was true regarding God's spiritual boundaries (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6). Under the Old Testament those who rejected God's spiritual landmarks were severely punished (Lev. 10:1-2). In Leviticus 10:1-2 we read of Nadab and Abihu introducing a strange fire into the Old Testament system of worship. In Leviticus 16:12 the fire introduced into the worship of God was to be taken from the altar. Nadab and Abihu introduced an unauthorized fire into worship and lost their lives as punishment due to their sin.

These men were the right men to offer up this incense. They brought the correct incense; they came to the correct place; however, they removed the ancient landmark in one area—they failed to respect divine authority by obtaining the fire that they introduced into worship from the wrong place! They were guilty of the sin of presumption. They presumed to do that which God had not authorized.

In the New Testament God has set spiritual landmarks that we dare not move. In First Peter 4:11 we note, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man



minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever, amen.” We also note in Colossians 3:17, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

In considering the above stated passages, we conclude that the New Testament authority of Christ is paramount. Please note the universal rule as set forth by Biblical inspiration—whatsoever we do in word (what we teach) or by deed (the practices in which we engage)—must be authorized by Christ as set forth in the New Testament. The vast majority of individuals within the religious world have not come to grips with this foundational Biblical truth. Thus, it is not uncommon at all to see individuals and collective religious groups of individuals remove ancient spiritual landmarks of God.

Spiritual landmarks of God have been moved relative to basic Biblical morality. In modern day society we constantly take note of how individuals violate the authority of Christ regarding the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). We also take note of how a general attitude of worldliness is readily accepted even by brethren (1 John 2:15-17).

This willingness to remove God's spiritual landmarks has destroyed the very foundation of many homes, in that the masses (including some brethren) have even rejected what the Bible teaches about marriage, divorce, and remarriage (Matt. 19:1-9). Our society has accepted Sodomite life styles and “same sex marriages” (Matt. 19:4-9; Rom. 1:24-28, 32). When one reads of the moral atrocities recorded in Romans chapter one, such is like reading news reports of modern day society.

Spiritual landmarks of God have been removed relative to the New Testament church. Christ built only one church (Matt. 16:18-19; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23). The church of Christ exists in only two senses:

1. In the totality of all those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ, i.e, saved individuals, and,
2. As a local, collective, functioning unit known as a local church (Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). When local churches seek to assume a work larger than the local church that is inclusive of works of other local churches, the by product of such an endeavor results in a larger organization than a local church and brethren seek to activate the universal extension of the church. Such activity is unauthorized by the New Testament.

Spiritual landmarks of God have been removed relative to the gospel plan of salvation. Those who have attained accountability and are outside of Christ are in a lost condition (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). To be saved from one's past alien sins one must believe the gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15-16), repent of sins (Acts 17:30), confess the Deity of Christ (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10), and be baptized for the remission of sins to enter the church (Acts 2:38,47). Regarding the simplicity of this plan, the denominational world rejects truth. The affirmation of the false doctrine of “salvation by faith alone” contradicts the very nature of Biblical faith (John 1:12). A Biblical faith necessitates actions of obedience (Jas. 2:24). When individuals or groups of individuals teach a false plan of salvation they remove spiritual landmarks of God.

Spiritual landmarks of God have been removed relative to the New Testament worship, work, organization of the church and the nature of Biblical fellowship. Within the scriptures God has specified divine requirements essential for us to worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24). We are authorized to engage within the preaching of the apostles doctrine, the Lord's supper every first day of the week, contributing financially as God has prospered us, prayer, and the singing of Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs To make addition, subtraction , or alterations regarding these Biblical concepts is to remove God's ancient landmarks (2 John 9-11).

The same is true regarding the work of the local church and its organization. God has placed limitations on our activity both individually and collectively. That which is unauthorized is sinful (Col. 3:17; 2 John 9-11). The work of the church is limited to evangelism, edification, and benevolence. Such work must be accomplished by the local church with local oversight (1 Pet. 5:1-4). Again, any work and or oversight of a

work that is larger than the local church produces a different arrangement authorized by the scriptures and is wrong (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

Biblical fellowship is also a crucial spiritual landmark of God. Such is limited by the scriptures to those who walk in the light of God's truth. When either individuals or collectives of individuals walk in the darkness of sin they do not have the fellowship of God. Such is the case with Roman Catholicism, Protestant denominationalism, and all other false religion, as well as with all those with the Lord's church, who teach fatally false doctrines and practice error. We must respect God's laws of inclusion and exclusion regarding fellowship (2 John 9-11).

Let us have utmost concern and take heed to **not remove** God's ancient landmarks of the Faith.

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## There Is A Much Sorer Punishment Than Death Without Mercy

Nana Yaw Aidoo

Before the errors of modernism and post-modernism, the doctrine of eternal punishment for the wicked, was the prevailing view of "Christendom." Our Lord had much to say about this subject, so much that He used the word "Hell" (Ge-Hinnom/gehenna) 11 times. He said; "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched". Also, in revealing a little bit of the judgement scene, He made this statement; "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous to eternal life" (Matt. 25:46).

However, the doctrine of eternal punishment for the wicked, has fallen on such hard times that some people would move heaven and earth in order to teach that Jesus did not say what He meant and did not mean what He said. Some denominational sects teach that all evil men will cease to exist or be annihilated rather than suffer eternal torment in hell. This doctrine "is directly related to the doctrine of conditional immortality, the idea that a human soul is not immortal unless it is given eternal life" and thus "...God will eventually destroy the wicked, leaving only the righteous to live on in immortality" (*Wikipedia*). We submit that not only is this teaching false but that it is eternally fatal.

We begin by calling attention to the fact that in Matthew 25:46, the same Greek word that is used to describe the duration of the life received by those on the right hand of Christ is also used to describe the duration of the punishment received by those on His left hand. The word is *aionion* which is translated both *everlasting* and *eternal* in the text. If "everlasting punishment" as used by our Lord means punishment that shall terminate at some point in eternity, then we might as well believe that "eternal life" as used by our Lord, shall also terminate at some point in eternity. Of this point the 19th century gospel preacher, Benjamin Franklin wrote,

At the same time that the righteous enter into life, the wicked "go away into everlasting punishment," and the same word, in the same sentence, in the lips of our Lord, expresses the duration of both; and we have just as much respect for an expositor of Scripture that undertakes to prove that the state of glory shall cease to exist as for the expositor that undertakes to prove that the punishment shall cease to exist, no matter whether he be called Restorationist, universalist, Soul-sleeper or what. (*Book of Gems*, "Annihilation—Future Punishment", pp. 101-102).

Those who teach this doctrine argue that the word "destroy" in Matthew 10:28 means annihilation. If so, then the word "lost" in Luke 19:10 also means annihilation because the same Greek word *Apollumi* is used in both places. In Vine's Expository Dictionary, W.E. Vine wrote this of *Apollumi*: "The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well being. This is clear from its use, as, e.g., of the marring of wine skins, Luke 5:37...". If, as it is claimed, the word "destroy" in Matthew 10:28 means annihilation, then as well might we believe that Jesus Christ in Luke 19:10, came to

seek and save that which was annihilated.

Furthermore, the proponents of this doctrine teach that there shall be no eternal punishment for the wicked because man does not possess an immortal soul and that dead people have no consciousness beyond this life. “Well”, say they, “unless Jesus Christ raises to eternal life all who died in faithfulness to Him.” Some even go as far as proclaiming that, “The concept of an immortal soul came from Greek influence and not from the Bible...There is no text that says that the soul is immortal” (David Newman, [www.rachelheldevans.com/blog/ask-a-seventh-dayadventist-response](http://www.rachelheldevans.com/blog/ask-a-seventh-dayadventist-response)).

What about Revelation 6:9-10? Are the souls that were martyred while on earth not said to cry? The word “soul” (v9) is used and it is written that “...they cried with a loud voice...”, asking God to avenge their blood “...on them that dwell on earth...” (v.10). Is this not evidence of immortality and consciousness of the soul beyond the grave, while others lived on earth? “But, but, these were faithful to Christ!” Certainly they were! However, the doctrine under review says, those who are faithful, receive consciousness only when Christ returns. Newman posited; “Very briefly, we believe that when a person dies, they sleep in the grave until the resurrection...When Jesus comes back the second time, he raises to eternal life all who died trusting in Him.” Yet, the souls that cried in Revelation 6, did so while people lived on earth. Their souls were anything but unconscious at death.

Moreover, in Luke 16, we are told of a rich man who, though dead, lifted up his eyes, recognized others, spoke to others and even desired some water. “Oh it is a parable!” say they. In response to this assertion, we submit these words from Daniel Sommer; “If someone says that this is a parable it becomes the reader to consider that no inspired man ever called it a parable, and that the words, “and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus” are just as definite as these words: “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius” (Acts 10:1). To this it should be added that there is no more evidence that the case mentioned in Luke 16th chapter was a parable than that the one mentioned in Acts 10th chapter was a parable” (*Russelism*, p. 3).

My friends, annihilationism is false. It teaches people not to fear “the terror of the Lord” because after all, they would be “punished” with non-existence, even if they live their lives in a sinful manner. But all right-thinking people know that non-existence isn’t punishment “else” says Benjamin Franklin, “we were always in punishment till we were brought into existence” (ibid., pp.103). Also, annihilationism fails to take into consideration the infinite evil and heinousness of sin in the sight of God. What could possibly be so hated by God as to deserve eternal punishment? It is the same thing that brought God to earth, to be beaten and murdered by His own creation.

Those who subscribe to this teaching are in for a rude awakening on the day of judgement. The Hebrews writer wrote; “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. 10:28-29). There is a much sorer punishment than death without mercy and if it isn’t eternal punishment, then pray tell what it is. The inability of some men to reconcile God’s infinite love with His infinite justice is not God’s fault. We need to take heed because “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31).

Jesus Christ says He shall pronounce “everlasting punishment” on evil men. He is a wise man who takes the Son of God at His word, rather than wasting his time trying to prove that he would cease to exist even if he lives a useless and sinful life on earth. If you think that when Christ told Judas that it would have been good if he hadn’t been born, as a result of Judas’ role in the crucifixion (Matt. 26:24), that He had “everlasting non-existence/annihilation” in mind, then you certainly haven’t studied the justice and severity of He “...that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night...” (Amos 5:8).

It needs be noted that we can be saved from this horror of everlasting punishment by keeping God’s commandments. It is written; “Blessed are they that do his

commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14). What then must we do to be saved? We must believe in the gospel, in the fact that Jesus is God’s Son and that He died, was buried and arose on the third day (John 8:24). We must repent of all our sins (Luke 13:3). We must confess faith in Christ before men (Matt. 10:32). We must be baptized in order to the remission of sins (Acts 22:16) and to be added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:47; Rom. 16:16). And then, we must remain faithful unto death so as to receive eternal life as our victor’s crown (Rev. 2:10). Do these and we shall be saved from everlasting punishment as God **cannot** lie (Titus 1:2).

## The Conversion of The Eunuch

### B.C. Goodpasture

The conversion of the eunuch differs from other cases of conversion recorded in the book of Acts only in the incidentals. The essentials of conversion are uniformly the same. In the great commission, Jesus mentioned the terms upon which the obedient of all nations would be accepted—namely, faith (Mark 16:16), repentance (Luke 24:47), and baptism (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16). These are the essentials of conversion.

In conversion, there are three fundamental changes—a change of heart, a change of conduct, and a change of state. Faith changes the heart (Acts 15:9); repentance changes the conduct (Matt. 12:41; Jonah 3:5-10); and baptism, the state (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). These are found in every case of conversion under the preaching of the gospel. If they are not all mentioned, they are all necessarily understood.

But the incidentals, such as the number of preachers present, the number and nationality of the hearers, the means employed in bringing the preacher in contact with the hearer, the time, the place, and the like, may vary. Again, according to the divine plan, there is uniformity, in that we always have the messenger, the message, and the hearer.

It was God's good pleasure through “the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21 ASV). The gospel is the subject of the preaching (Mark 16:16). It is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). It must be preached to every creature. The divine scheme for the conversion of the world involves the preaching of the gospel **by** man **to** man. This order is unvarying. Under no circumstances do we find, after Pentecost, either Christ, the Spirit, or an angel preaching the gospel directly to any man. Since the preaching of the gospel has been committed to men (Mark 16:15) we find only men preaching it. With these preliminary considerations in mind, we shall now look for their application in the conversion of the eunuch.

The preacher, in this case, was “Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven” (Acts 21:8 ASV) who had been appointed to distribute food to the widows among the Grecian Jews in the daily ministrations (Acts 6:1-6). He was a man of “good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3 ASV).

In the great persecution that arose about the time of Stephen's death, he was driven from Jerusalem, and went down to the city of Samaria, where he preached Christ with outstanding results, when he received instructions from the angel of the Lord. “Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert” (Acts 8:26 ASV). It should be observed that the angel, in this case, speaks to the preacher rather than to the man to be converted, as in the case of Cornelius (Acts 10:3); but the angel appeared in each instance for the same purpose—to put the man who needed the gospel in touch with the man who had it, the preacher. As incidentals, these differ in that one spoke to the preacher; the other, to the man who needed to hear the preacher.

Later in the story, the **Spirit** spoke to Philip and for the same purpose as the angel. Of course, they **could** have preached the gospel directly to the eunuch, if it had been God's will; but it was not. However, the fact that the angel and the Spirit spoke to Philip as they did, shows beyond a doubt that he was divinely endorsed as a preacher and amply qualified to instruct the eunuch in the way of salvation.

Having received specific instructions to go “toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza,” the Gaza which was in ruins and deserted, as opposed to the new and flourishing Gaza (see George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography Of The Holy Land*, p. 186) Philip “arose and went.” He did not pause to object, question, or obtain permission from any man or board of men. Having traveled the road from Samaria to its junction with the road from Jerusalem to deserted Gaza, he met the man who needed to hear the gospel of Christ, and, at the command of the Spirit, joined himself to the chariot.

This man was a “eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship” (Acts 8:27 ASV). Whether he was a Jew or a proselyte, we do not certainly know, but it seems likely that he, like Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah, had risen as a Jew, to a position of influence and power in a foreign government. The fact that he held this important office shows that he was a man of honesty and integrity.

He was a religious man—in fact, a **very** religious man. He had made a journey of more than 1,000 miles from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship. He came to Jerusalem to worship God. He had some truth, but not all the truth. He was a Bible reader, and, what is more, a truth seeker. He was modest and open to conviction. When asked by Philip, “Understandest thou what thou readest?” he replied, “How can I, except some man shall guide me?” Philip knew from this answer that he did not know anything about Jesus, and that he had an “honest and good heart.” He was sincerely religious, but he still needed something.

Through the angel of the Lord and the Spirit, Philip was directed to this man to tell him what to do to be saved. This shows clearly that the mere fact that one is religious, and sincere in his religion, is not sufficient to save him. One must be sincerely religious to be saved, but it is possible for one to be sincerely religious and at the same time to be lost. Philip did not regard the eunuch as a saved man. But taking advantage of the text from Isaiah 53, which the eunuch was reading when he met him, he “preached unto him Jesus.” Philip preached the same doctrine to the eunuch that he had previously preached in Samaria (Acts 8:5, 12).

What is it to “preach Jesus?” We have an illustration in this connection. The eunuch was reading Isaiah. What is it to read Isaiah? It is to read the teachings of Isaiah. If reading the teachings of Isaiah is reading Isaiah, why would not “preaching Jesus” be preaching the teachings of Jesus?

We do not know how far back into the life and teachings of Jesus Philip went, but it is certain that he related the story of His death, because his text was a prophecy that described Him as a sheep led “to the slaughter.” He doubtless preached not only Jesus' death, but also His burial and resurrection. “And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” (Acts 8:36 ASV). Why did the eunuch ask this question? If he had heard some preachers today preach for a year, he would not have so much as known there was such a thing as Christian baptism, to say nothing of having been so impressed with the importance of attending to it as soon as opportunity afforded. The only tenable answer to the question is that Philip preached Jesus, and in preaching Jesus he preached baptism. If it was necessary to preach baptism in order to preach Jesus then, it is necessary to preach baptism in order to preach Jesus now, and that without apology.

“Behold, here is water.” Evidently for the lack of water the act of baptism could not be attended to sooner; but since there was water in sufficiency, the eunuch inquired, “What doth hinder me to be baptized?” What did Philip answer? Did he say, “We will have to go back to Jerusalem or to the nearest church of like faith and order and have you relate your experience before the brethren; and if they think well of it, then I will baptize you?” No, he did not say that. Philip was the kind of preacher who could baptize a man by himself. He replied,

If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot



to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him (Acts 8:37-38).

Note carefully that they **came** to the water—they did not **bring** it. They “both” went down into the water, the act of baptism was administered, and “they came up out of the water.” Only one thing practiced as baptism necessitates all that they did—that is a burial in water (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).

Did the eunuch comply with the conditions mentioned in the beginning of this article? Did he believe? Yes, he believed. He said he did, and Philip accepted his statement. Moreover if it had not been so stated that he believed, we would know it from the fact that no one can be saved without faith (Mark 16:16; John 8:24; Heb. 11:6); and from the fact that Philip baptized him; for faith is a prerequisite of baptism (Mark 16:15-16).

Did he repent? Yes, he repented. How do you know, since it is not expressly stated? It is a matter of implication. No man can be saved without repentance (Luke 13:3, 5; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30). Like faith, repentance is a prerequisite of baptism (Acts 2:38). Moreover, we know he turned from one system of worship to another.

Was he baptized? Yes, it is so stated. Again, Philip preached the gospel to him and he obeyed it. There is no evidence that he knew, when Philip was taken from him, that the angel and the Spirit had spoken to Philip. He “went on his way rejoicing.” He had learned the truth, the facts about Jesus, the gospel. He had learned and accepted new truths, and in so doing he did not have to give up any truth that he already had. It is significant that his rejoicing came after his baptism.

Such is the rule in the New Testament. See the case of the jailer (Acts 16:34), and that of Saul, who fasted until he was baptized (Acts 9:9), but after he was baptized took food and was strengthened. This order is not the result of chance. There is design in it. It is the natural result. Baptism is inductive (Gal. 3:27) and marks the completion of one's obedience, as an alien, to the gospel (Rom. 6:17-18; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21; John 3:5; Titus 3:5).

Of what church was the eunuch a member?

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## Are You Prepared To Die?

**Jerry C. Brewer**

Every one of you reading this right now is going to die someday. So will I. It might be in 30 years, it might be in 10 years, or it might be today. We don't know exactly when it will be, but we know it's going to happen. It's not a matter of “if,” but “when?”

The question is, are you prepared to die? The moment you take your last breath, what will happen to your soul? Talking about death isn't the most pleasant thing to do, which is probably why so few of us give it much thought. But ignoring death and failing to prepare for eternity is the biggest mistake that anybody can make.

The first 13 verses of Matthew 25 tell us about 10 women going to a wedding feast. Five of them were wise and made preparations, but the other five were foolish and failed to get ready for the party. The five foolish women were turned away from the feast when they knocked on the door. The point of this illustration is given in verse 13—“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Jesus teaches us in that passage that we don't know when Judgment Day is going to be, so we have to be prepared at all times. Those five foolish women knew that the feast was coming. They expected to get to go to the party. But they didn't prepare for the party and were refused entrance. If Judgment comes and we're not ready, we won't be allowed into heaven. So what does this have to do with dying? Simple: Once we die, it will be too late to prepare for Judgment Day. It's in this life, while we're still alive, that we've got to prepare for eternity. And that means preparing to die.

Those of you reading this, who don't want to think about death and don't want to prepare for eternity need to learn from the account of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. Lazarus was a poor beggar whose body was full of sores. The rich man lived in luxury. Both of them died. The angels carried Lazarus to a place called Abraham's bosom.



It was a place of rest, peace and joy. The rich man was taken to a place of torment. This time the rich man begged—he begged for mercy. He begged for Lazarus to bring him just a drop of water. But it was too late for the rich man to do anything about his condition. He spent his earthly life gratifying his own desires and ignoring God’s will. He died unprepared. And he was consigned to spend eternity in anguish.

**Eternity in anguish!** Imagine the worst pain you’ve ever suffered physically, then add to that the worst you’ve ever felt emotionally, and you start to get a tiny inkling of an iota of what eternity will be like if you’re unprepared. So how do you prepare for death? First, you become a follower of Christ by obeying His will for salvation. You repent of your sins. You confess your faith in Jesus as God’s Son and the resurrected Savior. Then you’re baptized in water for the remission of sins, just like Peter instructed those believing Jews in Acts 2:38. Then you live right for the rest of your life. You remain morally pure. You meet with other saints in Christ’s church to study God’s word and to worship Him the way He wants to be worshiped, and study your Bible at home to become more like Jesus every day. Jesus summed it all up in Matthew 6:33 when He told his audience to seek first the kingdom of God. That means to make Christ and His church the most important thing in your life.

You can continue to ignore death, but ignoring it won’t make it go away. It might be years from now or it might be tomorrow, but you will die. Are you ready? If we sound serious, that’s because this is serious business. Jesus wants you to be with Him in eternity, but if you don’t prepare now you’ll be with the rich man in eternal torment.

The choice is yours. Don’t wait until it’s too late. Do something about it now. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23) and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Eternal death (separation from God and all good) awaits those who die in sin, and the **only remedy for sin** is the blood of Christ. But to be cleansed by His blood, you must be in Him (Eph. 1:7). Believe the gospel (Mark 16:16), repent of your sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38), confess faith in Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37), and be **baptized into Him** for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27). Baptism puts one into Christ and **in Him** is where His blood cleanses from sin (Eph. 1:7).

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## Do You Believe, Truly Believe?

**Roelf L. Ruffner**

“And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:38-39).

Dear reader, we live in world filled with unbelief. It glories in skepticism and cynicism. Many have replaced their faith in the God of the Bible with the false god of pseudoscience or philosophy. What about you, do you truly believe? Are you prepared to be tortured for that faith, chained to a stake and burned alive because you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Will you endure years of ostracism and human friendlessness for making Him your Lord and Master?

Perhaps you honestly don’t know and have doubts. Why do many today scoff and ridicule New Testament Christianity? I challenge you to examine the evidence for yourself. You may begin by answering a few questions.

Do you believe that Jesus’ tomb was empty on that Sunday morning in A.D. 30? He had been murdered by the Jews and the Romans three days before. His mutilated body was placed in another’s tomb wrapped in a linen cloth with 100 lbs. of aromatic spices in its folds (John 19:38-40). No wounded man who suffered a tremendous loss of blood could have recovered and moved the stone that covered His sepulcher (Mark 16:3-4). Yet even the Roman military guards found it empty after witnessing an angel removed the stone (Mat. 28:2-15). If you admit the tomb was empty you must come to the logical conclusion that Jesus rose from the dead as the Bible affirms.

Do you believe the eye witnesses’ testimony recorded in the New Testament that Jesus

appeared in the flesh on this earth to many people for forty days after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-9)? Those witnesses included His own brother James who may have doubted His divinity during His earthy ministry (John 7:5). There were a total of over 500 eye witnesses to His eleven recorded appearances; including the Apostle Paul whom He appeared to later. This was not a case of mass hysteria. Jesus appeared at various places and at different times during that period. All witnesses stood by their accounts, no report was ever retracted.

Do you believe Jesus appeared to others in bodily form (Not a spirit or a phantom.) after He arose from the dead and that He could have been touched and felt of? Jesus went so far as to eat broiled fish before His apostles at one of His Sunday evening appearances to prove to them that He was flesh and blood (Luke 24:41-43). A vision, dream, hallucination or even an optical illusion does not do this.

Have you tried to understand the Scriptures concerning Jesus and His resurrection?

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” (Luke 24:44-45).

We need not believe that this was done miraculously. One does not need a miracle to understand the Bible or a special enlightenment, only an open mind, an open Bible (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Acts 17:11) and a thirst for the Truth. Is the Bible’s account true or not?

Do you believe that there is life after death? “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19:25,26). Jesus proved it! He came back to this world after being dead for three days. If this is not true the Gospel is but a lie and there is nothing after this life (1 Cor. 15:12-17). We will all be like Rover when we die - dead all over. If it is true then someday all shall be resurrected and knell before Him on that great and terrible Judgment Day confessing Him as Lord (Phil. 2:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15).

How do you answer these questions, dear reader? Please consider the evidence and come to the undeniable conclusion that Jesus is the Son of God Then believe Him enough to obey Him (John 14:15) and obtain the remission of sins that only God can give (Luke 24:46-48; Acts 2:37-38). Believe the word of God, be saved and gain eternity (John 3:3-5; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 1:23). “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:26).

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## Adventism and Sabbath Keeping

F.B. Srygley

A good brother sent me a tract on the above subject, written by Evangelist W. W. White, who preached in and around Nashville for some time. While he is known as an Adventist, he has, it seems, lost sight of that fact and is more of a “Sabbath Keeper.” He does not seem to care but little, if anything, about their original theory of Adventism, but is now giving all of his time as a teacher of Adventism to the one question of the old Jewish Sabbath.

Adventism originally sprang from the teachings of William Miller of New York. Miller began preaching on the second coming of Christ in the year 1831. He set the time for Christ to come in October, 1843. A big to-do was made of his teaching that Christ was coming in 1843 to set up an earthly reign here upon the earth for 1,000 years. Many

people, dressed in white and went out to meet the Lord on that day; but, of course, they were disappointed.

Miller figured on it again, and set the time for 1844; but there was not so much enthusiasm over the matter at that time. In 1845 the Millerites, or Adventists, met in New York and decided that Christ would come soon, but they did not set the exact day. They left it then upon our Adventist friends to prove that His second coming is imminent. The Adventists went down very fast until Mrs. Ellen G. White, who was a Seventh-Day Baptist, joined herself to the dwindling movement and added the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath.

Mr. White seems to be more of a Seventh-Day Baptist than he is a Millerite, or an Adventist. If he claims to be a Christian, I have never heard him make the claim. He spends his time trying to teach the Jewish Sabbath and opposing the legal Sunday laws. I grant that some of our lawmakers may not know the difference between the Lord's day and the Sabbath. I believe, however, that most of these laws are called, "Sunday Laws," and if I am right about this, our lawmakers know more about it than Mr. White, for he seems to think that Christians keep the first day of the week as a Sabbath. Christians observe it as the Lord's day, when we are to keep in memory the resurrection of Christ.

Mr. White says in his tract, "God has forever settled the matter of what day we should keep (Ex. 20:1, 8-11)." The first verse of Exodus 20 reads, "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." God did not lead W.W. White out of Egypt. He never was in bondage in Egypt. Can he not see, then, that the Sabbath was given to the Jews, and the Jews only?

That is a plain perversion of that Scripture to apply it to any except the Jews. But White would say that the Ten Commandments immediately followed this introduction. It is true that nine of the ten are found in substance in the New Testament, but he cannot find where the fourth command is repeated as a law in the New Testament, for the reason that it was **not** repeated there as a law to be observed by Christians.

But the Jews observed this fourth commandment until it was taken out of the way at the cross. I quote from the Revision: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day" (Col. 2:16 ASV). But what went with the Sabbath day? "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14).

"But these were the sabbaths that the Jews had added to the law." Who said that? Mr. White. Why? Because he needed it. But again, he says, "The Sabbath was the Lord's day." John said, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10). Mr. White assumes that was the Sabbath. John did not say that it was, but he said it was the Lord's day.

But what day is the Lord's day? I quote, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes" (Matt. 21:42). This is the day the Lord hath made. I would think that the day the Lord made was the Lord's day. The Lord Jesus Christ made one day, and that was a significant day. It was the day He arose from the dead, the day that He brought life and immortality to light. It was the day immediately followed by the establishment of the church, when He became the Chief Cornerstone of the church. No wonder David said, "It is marvellous in our eyes" (Psa. 118:23). Jesus slept in Joseph's new tomb on the last Sabbath He kept on earth, and awoke on the first day of the week, not to establish a new Sabbath, but to make the Lord's day.

This day is not a Sabbath, but it is the day of the week for the disciples to remember the resurrection of Christ. Now, the Sabbath that Christians enjoy is not a day, but a condition of rest from our sins, which were forgiven when we became Christians. In Hebrews, Paul said that there remaineth a Sabbath rest for the people of God (Heb. 4:9). The word *sabbath* means *rest*, but the rest for the Christian is not a rest for one day only, but a rest from sins, both here and eternally.

“Come unto me,” said Jesus, “and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28ff)—not for one day or for one year, but one's sins are washed away, forgiven, forgotten, never to appear against him. Here is rest for the weary in this life and eternal rest is promised to those who remain faithful. **That** is the Sabbath for the Christian.

The old Jewish Sabbath had an end. The record of this is found in Amos 8:5: “When will the new moon be gone that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?” This question was asked by these trading Jews. The prophet answers their question in verse 9, in these words: “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.”

Such a thing as this never happened but once. That was the day Jesus died on the cross. There was darkness on a clear day from the 6th to the 9th hour—from noon until the middle of the afternoon. That was when the law of Moses was “blotted out,” “nailed to the cross,” “abolished, taken out of the way.” These are the words the New Testament uses concerning the removal of the law. That was the day the Sabbath had an end.

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## Jesus Is The Answer

**Charles Pogue**

Man's life is short and full of trouble (Job 14:1). There are disappointments, grievances, and out and out heartaches in this life. How does one deal with such difficulties? People attempt many different man made resolutions. Some drown their troubles in drugs, some consume themselves with pleasure, or the pursuit of wealth and possessions. Some seek the assistance of humanly trained individuals who do not have the answer to their own problems, much less those of anyone else.

There is only one answer to life's troubles and that is Jesus Christ. If an individual has the assurance of eternal life in the grandeur of heaven and in the presence of God, why should he be destroyed by the difficulties and sorrows of the here and now? Jesus said in just a few words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). If the answer to this life's problems is to take care of the concerns about the next one—and it is—then Jesus is the answer.

Jesus stated, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). When, in that passage, Jesus says that He lays down His life for the sheep, we know that the life He refers to is primarily eternal life. If, however, one does not enter in by Him, Who stated in verse 7 that He is the door of the sheep, there is no resolution for the eternal punishment in hell, and certainly none for the difficulties in this world.

The child of God has a blessed privilege that the world does not have. With wonderful words of life, Peter describes that privilege: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7-8). The Lord Jesus took our sins upon Himself when He went to the cross, and He will bear our anxieties of this life if we are just willing to let Him do it His way.

Again, the Christ said, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). This promise takes us back to the 11th chapter of Matthew's gospel account. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (11:28-30). There is no way the yoke and burden of the Lord compares to the weight that the burdens of this life present to us. Why not,



then, exchange the heavy load of this life for the light one He has, and accept the rest that He alone can give?

To receive the answer to this life's problems, and to avoid those that will come to the lost in the next one is not complicated. Believing on Him, repenting of sins, confessing His name, being baptized for the remission of sins, and living faithfully to Him (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Rev. 2:10) is much easier than bearing alone the problems in this world and being tormented in the next. Jesus is the answer!

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## Why I Left the Lutheran Church

**Claude A. Guild**

**Editor's Note:** Please take the time to read and closely consider the following account posted and appearing after these remarks. It helps to tell why many today are not being reached with the gospel and why those who need it do not learn, believe, and obey it. Notice the conviction, zeal, and determination on the part of the Gospel preacher to teach the truth. Then focus on the strong desire and willingness on the part of the hearer to make any sacrifice in order to know and abide only in the truth of the Bible. Specifically notice that they knew the Bible is the Word of God, that it must be honestly studied and understood if one is to learn the Gospel, that it must be obeyed regardless of the opposition if salvation from past sins is for them to be a reality. Further, those obedient to the Gospel knew when they were baptized that the Lord added them to His church and no denomination.

That fall, there was a call that came on the old country telephone that there was going to be preaching down in the schoolhouse. They didn't know just what stripe or color or kind it was, but it was different to anything we had been hearing, and they were sending the invitation around. Mother and father would not let us children go the first night, for they wanted to see and hear for themselves. The first night my parents heard something that they had never heard before. They heard the gospel preached in an unadulterated way, just as it is written in the word of God. And, at the end of the first service, my mother went to Brother J. C. Bailey, and asked him about infant baptism, and said she'd like to know if there is any passage in the Bible that would authorize it. He said, "Good woman, you go home tonight, and you search your Bible. If you can find infant baptism in your Bible and show me just one passage, one will satisfy me, I'll be sprinkled and be a Lutheran preacher the rest of my life. If you can't find it in your Bible, I'll show it to you in the catechism; and in turn, I'll want you then, when it is not found in the Bible, to be immersed for the remission of sins and become a Christian."

My folks had searched the Bible, not only that night, but many nights before that, and months before that, but this was the first time that it had ever dawned upon us that there were contradictions between these two books, the Bible and the Lutheran Catechism. We had been taught to believe that this book simply made the Bible plain, that you had to understand the Bible through reading of this volume. To memorize the articles of the Catechism was essential to the understanding of the word of God. This was the first time that it had dawned on us that the two might conflict, or contradict each other. At the close of the second service, Brother Bailey showed the conflict between the two volumes, and with which contrast tonight, I hope I can satisfy your minds, too.

The next night, after my mother heard the third gospel sermon, she came forward and made the good confession. A man living in the community by the name of C.V. Barnhart took a triple-bed wagon box and dammed up the creek so there could be water for immersion. While the water was rising, and during the time she was being baptized, my mother's father—my own grandfather—her own brothers and neighbors, who had religious affiliation with the same institution, rode on horses around the baptismal

scene and cursed and swore. But my mother continued in the baptismal, was baptized by Brother Bailey in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins, and has never given up the faith to this good day. She is strong and living to this good night. Thank God for that.

After that, Brother Bailey wanted to see my father become a Christian too, He said, “Listen, I didn't get to make up my mind the first time. She led me before the minister and I had to read before him eighteen months to become a Lutheran, and this time I'm going to make up my own mind.” I may be a little of the disposition of my father, but, anyhow my father was going to make up his own mind in this thing. He was running coal mines. Brother J. C. Bailey took off his white collar, went into the coal mines with my father and mined coal for six weeks. But he had other things in mind beside mining coal by tonnage and making a wage. While he mined, he preached to my father; and after six weeks he baptized him; and along with baptizing my father, he baptized my oldest brother and sister and myself. Since that good day, including my baby brother who was baptized into Christ just about ten days ago, my entire family—father and mother and the ten children—all have been baptized into Christ. And there, if you please, is just a little historical background to the reasons why we left the Lutheran Church.

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## Why Wasn't Jesus a Woman?

**Jerry C. Brewer**

Ask that question of a feminist and he would say it's because the Bible is the product of male chauvinists. But the true answer indicates a profound and logical chain of authority that emanates from God the Creator. The human race (collectively known as **man**) was created male and female for purposes of an earthly existence. This is seen in Jesus' answer when the Sadducees, arguing against the resurrection, presented a hypothetical case of a woman who had seven husbands, (Matt. 22:23-30). He pointed out that male and female constitute an earthly arrangement. The whole is comprehended in the two genders which serve to procreate the race. But that need passes with the passing of things temporal.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it..., (Gen. 1:26-28).

God said “let us make man” and then proceeded to create two genders in His image. God “created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” Now, which is it? Did God create him or them in his image? Man in this passage is the antecedent of both him and them. The female is comprehended in both terms. Man is dual. As he is body and soul, so he is male and female and God intended for authority and leadership to reside in the male. The existence of two sexes is for a purpose and that's the same purpose Jesus expressed in his answer to the Sadducees. The relationship of male and female ceases at death. In the resurrection there will be neither. We will be as the angels of heaven.

There is a Biblical chain of authority which explains why Jesus wasn't a woman. That chain of authority is expressed by the apostle Paul in his first letter to Corinth. “But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3).

God, in whom authority inheres and resides, has given all authority to Christ, (Matt. 28:18). Man is under Christ and woman is under the authority of man. Male and female are subdivisions which complete the whole of man. While Christ entered the world through the agency of a woman, he came as a man because of his authority. Paul says the male was created first, and by virtue of this, has authority over the female in the earthly arrangement of things, (1 Tim. 2:8-13). Deity tabernacled in the flesh of **man**, which is a synecdoche for both male and female, but lived as a male in whom



human authority resides.

Feminist rantings notwithstanding, this is the Biblical chain of authority. Male and female are comprehended in the term **man** in Genesis 1 and the apostle Paul offers an inspired commentary on the Genesis record his first Corinthian letter.

For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man...Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God (1 Cor. 11:8-12).

While the woman was created for the man, he enters the world through the woman and **both** were created in Adam. Male and female characteristics inhere in both men and women. Sharing both estrogen and testosterone, men and women constitute the physical whole of man. But the male is the one in whom God has reposed authority and while Christ was on earth he had authority over the demonic world (Matt. 12:22), disease (Matt. 15:30-31), the elements (Mark 4:38-41) and death (John 11:43-44). As the firstborn son of Mary he also held and exercised authority and responsibility in committing the care of his mother to John, (John 19:26-27)

Christ's authority precluded his advent as a woman. Women were given no authority as apostles in the transmission of truth (John 14:26; 16:13; c.f. Acts 1:2, 13), nor were they given authority to preach the gospel, (1 Tim. 2:8-15). While they were and are called to be His disciples, they have no authority to lead or speak in the public assemblies of the church, nor to serve as elders, (1 Tim. 3:1-2). When Paul issued his apostolic injunction against women usurping authority over men, (1 Tim. 2:12), he was inspired to select the word *aner*. That word was used to specify a **male only** as opposed to *anthropos* which means **mankind**—inclusive of both genders, male and female.

Christ entered the world and dwelt in the flesh as a **man** in order to exercise the authority he was given as the only begotten Son of God. To have come otherwise would have violated the precepts of God concerning the chain of authority.

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## Neither Catholic, Protestant, Nor Jew

### Dub Mowery

When I was inducted into the U.S. Coast Guard in 1956, I was asked in Boot Camp at Cape May, New Jersey whether I was Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish? They wanted this information to be included on my "dog tag." My response was that I was neither Catholic, Protestant, nor of the Jewish faith. The one seeking this information insisted that I had to be one or the other of the three

I explained to him that I was in the church of Christ. It was established nearly 600 years before the Roman Catholic Church fully came into existence, and since the Protestant churches broke off of the Catholic Church, I certainly was not a member of one of those denominations. Also, the Mosaic Law which was given only to the Jews was nailed to Christ's cross when He died upon it, so I certainly was not of the Jewish faith. Guess what. They went ahead and embossed "Protestant" upon my "dog tag" because most people think in denominational terms.

While the Son of God was incarnate upon earth, there was much confusion among many as to who He was. The following passage of scripture brings this matter out as follows:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in

heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. 16:13-18).

From that passage we see that there was much misunderstanding in the general public as to Jesus' identity. Simon Peter correctly acknowledged: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

Even during the first century, while the apostles were still living, there was much misunderstanding pertaining to the Lord's church. After the Apostle Paul was taken as a prisoner to Rome, he had opportunity to invite Jewish leaders to meet with him. They said unto him,

...We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against (Acts 28:21-22)

The fact that they referred to the Lord's church as a sect proves that those Jewish leaders did not understand the nature or purpose of Christ's church and that which pertained to the new covenant. The Greek word *hairesis*, translated as either sect or heresy, carries the meaning of "disensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims; that which is broken off of the main body." Those Jewish leaders who referred to the church of our Lord as a "sect" looked upon it as a splinter group of the Jewish religion.

### **We Are Not Of The Jewish Religion**

There are many basic beliefs that we hold in common with those of the Jewish religion. We believe that the one true and living God is the One worshipped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We also recognize the Old Testament as being inspired of God. Of the Ten Commandments given unto Moses on Mount Sinai, nine of them, in principle, have been incorporated in the new covenant. The Sabbath day was the only one left out of the new covenant.

On the other hand, there are some major differences between the church of Christ and those who profess the Jewish religion. The Mosaic Law is no longer in effect, it was nailed to the cross when Jesus died upon it (Col. 2:14). The New Testament is also an inspired part of God's revelation. The offering of animal sacrifices is no longer required because the Son of God was offered once and for all (Heb. 9:27-28).

Since the Mosaic Law is no longer in effect, we are under the new covenant. At Col. 2:14, the Apostle Paul pointed out that when Jesus died on the cross, He "[Blotted] out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." This same truth is revealed at Heb. 10:9-10. "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

### **We Are Not Of The Catholic Church**

The church of Christ was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord and Savior; whereas, the Roman Catholic Church was not fully developed until 606 A. D. when Boniface became its first universal pope.

We do hold some basic truths in common with the Catholic Church. We both believe that the Old Testament and the New Testament are the inspired Word of God. Both the Catholic Church and the church of Christ recognize the church as being universal in scope. After all, Jesus Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

In contrast, there are some major differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the church of Christ. Whereas, we believe the Bible is the complete and only revelation from God, the Roman Catholic Church upholds its traditions as being equivalent with the Bible. At Second Timothy 3:16-17, the Apostle Paul declared: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

And at Matthew 15:9, are the following Words of Jesus Christ: “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

We reject the concept that a person has to have a priest of the Catholic Church to intercede on his behalf. Jesus Christ is the one mediator between God and man. First Timothy 2:5: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Also, every Christian is a priest in the Lord's spiritual house. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 2:5).

Since the church of Christ was established before the Roman Catholic Church came into existence, it did not break off from the Catholic Church and is no part of it.

### **Nor Are We Protestants**

We certainly believe many of the same truths that most Protestant churches believe. They profess belief in the God revealed in the Bible. Most of them recognize Jesus as the Christ. Many of them acknowledge that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We believe and uphold these same truths.

Faithful churches of Christ recognize the New Testament as the pattern for us today pertaining to the church, salvation, and morality. But Protestant churches do not use the same standard for doctrine and practice. Many who profess that the Bible is the Word of God actually give allegiance unto catechisms, prayer books, creed books, their own subjective feelings as well as other standards instead of or in addition to the Bible. They have church governments which are foreign to that which the Lord established for His church and they add innovations to their worship that are not authorized by the New Testament.

### **But There's A Sense In Which We Are All Three**

Although we are not of the Jewish religion, we **are** spiritual Jews and, as a people, spiritual Israel. This truth is plainly taught in the following passages of scripture:

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Rom. 2:28-29).

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Rom. 9:6-8).

Even though we are not members of the Roman Catholic Church, we are catholic in the sense that the Lord's church is universal. The word “catholic” simply means “universal.” The following scripture speaks of the New Testament church in a universal sense: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body” (Eph. 5:23). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25).

We are not members of any Protestant denomination, but we **are** protestants in the sense of protesting and speaking out against that which is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament (Jude 3; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

### **We Who Obey The Gospel Are Added To The Church By Christ**

One who has been scripturally baptized does not have to join any denomination. The Lord adds that precious soul to His church. “Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). Metaphors of the church reveal that all obedient believers are baptized into the church. This truth is revealed when the church is depicted as the spiritual body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). It is also true when the church is presented as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord (John 3:5; Col. 1:13).

Obedient believers are **Christians only** (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). There are no hyphenated Christians. In the first century, there were **not different kinds** of Christians, nor did they recognize different brotherhoods.

Man made churches are not authorized in the New Testament. Most will agree that no one has to be a member of a denomination to be saved. However, the church of the New Testament **is the saved**. It is the family of God upon earth (Acts 2:47; 1 Tim. 3:15) and God has no children outside of His family.

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## Preaching Travels

The Editor continues to travel “everywhere preaching the word.” On Sunday, April 28, we taught the adult Bible class and preached in morning and evening worship at Coalgate, Okla., to begin their three-day lectureship. May 19 found us in Lexington, Okla. where we taught the adult Bible class and preached at both worship assemblies.

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## On Miracles and Revelation

Dub McClish

### Introduction

The word *miracle* is one of several Biblical words that have been “wordnapped,” redefined, and misused. *Miracle* is popularly used to describe a spectacular game-winning catch of a football in the end zone, a person who somehow escaped the wrath of a tornado, or the providential answer to a prayer. The “religious” con men on TV have amassed fortunes by confusing a gullible public with their pseudo claims of miraculous powers.

### The Meaning of *Miracle* in the Bible

What is the Bible definition of a “miracle”? The Greek word *dunamis* (ability, power—the origin of our word *dynamite*) is used in reference to actions and results beyond mere natural means in several passages, and is thus frequently translated “miracles” (e.g., Acts 8:13; 19:11; 1 Cor. 12, 10, 28–29; Gal. 3:5; et al.). Another Greek word, *semeion* (a sign, mark, indication, or token) is often rendered *sign*, indicating supernatural phenomena that are demonstrations of Divine authority and power (e.g., Mat. 12:38–39; John 2:11; 3:2; 20:30; et al.). However, this word is also translated “miracles” in some passages (e.g., Luke 23:8; Acts 4:16, 22). Peter used both of these Greek words on Pentecost: Jesus was “...a man approved of God...by mighty works [*dunamis*] and wonders and signs [*semeiois*] which God did...” (Acts 2:22).

Therefore, a miracle is not merely something unusual, amazing, extraordinary, or remarkable. It refers to the power God has exercised and demonstrated, either immediately or through agents (human or otherwise), which transcends that which men alone can do or which can occur by natural law (cf. John 3:2). The Bible teaches that God no longer thus demonstrates His power. To say that He once did, but no longer does, is not to deny His power, but to affirm His plan. It is not a question of what He **could/can** do, but of what He **is doing**. Upon what evidence can we positively affirm that miracles have ceased?

### Explicit New Testament Teaching

Paul gives us the most concentrated treatment of first century miraculous gifts in 1 Corinthians 12–14. He lists the diverse gifts and appointments that God “set in the church” originally (12:8–11, 28–30). He then states that there is one thing (at least) that is superior to them (v. 31). That “most excellent way” is Biblically-defined love, apart from which miraculous powers and great sacrifices are as worthless as noise and are vain and unprofitable (13:1–3). Paul then defines love by personifying it with a long list of beautiful behaviors (vv. 4–7).

Paul’s exaltation of the beauty and meaning of *love* leads him to contrast its duration with that of the miraculous gifts (vv. 8–13). He first affirms that “love never faileth” (lit., “not even at any time falls”) thus declaring its unending nature (v. 8a). He immediately states antithetically that there are some things that will not last so long:

prophecies, tongues, and knowledge (representative of all of the miraculous attributes of chapter 12) (v. 8b).

Paul uses three lines of argument to declare the cessation of the gifts:

1. He **explicitly states** that the gifts will end. Prophecies would be “done away” (“fail,” KJV), tongues would “cease,” and knowledge would be “done away” (“vanish away,” KJV) (v. 8). Paul used the same word (*katargeo*) twice (in reference to prophecies and knowledge), a powerful word that means to render useless, unproductive, or of no effect (the same word he used to describe what happened to the authority of the law of Moses upon the death of Christ, Eph. 2:15). Of tongues, he used another very strong word (*pauo*) that means to cease, stop, or come to an end (cf. Luke 5:4; Acts 21:32; Heb. 10:2; et al.). Although verse 8 does not tell us when these gifts will cease or what will signal their end, Paul undeniably affirms that they will end.
2. He tells us **why** and **when** the gifts must disappear, explicitly stating twice that the gifts were only “in part” (*meros*, meaning a fragment, partial, part of a whole, imperfect, incomplete), this time using *know* and *prophecy* as representatives of all of the gifts (vv. 9–10). These “in part” abilities are in contrast to “that which is perfect” (*telios*, brought to completion, entire, complete as opposed to partial or limited). “That which is perfect,” the coming of which would mark the end of the things “in part,” was yet to come (i.e., it was still in the future **at the time Paul wrote**, but no longer so).
3. He employs **illustrations** and **figures** to emphasize the termination of the gifts. He first uses his own childhood behavior (speech, feelings, thoughts) and growth into mature behavior to illustrate the normalcy of the cessation of the miraculous gifts (v. 11). Paul’s childhood represents the “infant” (i.e., incomplete, imperfect) state of revelation, and his behavior as a child represents the spiritual gifts common to and appropriate (yea necessary) for that incomplete stage of revelation. However, Paul did not remain a perpetual child—he grew up and “became a man.” His attainment of maturity and his consequent (and appropriate) change of behavior represent the development of revelation to its “mature” (i.e., complete, perfect) state. Paul’s arrival at maturity therefore symbolizes the arrival of “that which is perfect” (v. 10a), whereupon and when the infantile behavior (“that which is in part”—the miraculous gifts) would be discarded (*katargeo*, same word as for “done away,” v. 8) (v. 10b).

Paul then employs the figure of looking into a mirror to further explain the foregoing illustration (v. 12). *See in a mirror* is a figure for receiving revelation, not then complete in the “childhood” state at the time Paul wrote, but still in the process of being given. These limitations made the “image” in the “mirror” hazy (lit., an enigma) because they did not have the full revelation of God’s will. *But then face to face* is a figure for seeing a clear image in the “mirror.” That is, when the “mature” state of revelation would arrive—when “that which is perfect” came (still future at the time Paul wrote these words)—the image would be clear. They had knowledge only “in part” because of the incompleteness of the revelation at that time. With the completion of revelation they would be able to see clearly because they would know God’s will fully.

Some contend that *that which is perfect* (v. 10) refers either to the Lord’s return or to Heaven, but they are wrong for numerous reasons, the discussion of which is not in the purview of this treatise. In this context Paul is plainly referring to the completed revelation of God’s will through the apostles (John 16:13) and the cessation of the miraculous element at the time of that completion. Just as he closed chapter 12 by declaring that love is superior to the non-abiding spiritual gifts, so he closes chapter 13 by declaring that it is superior even to its abiding companions of faith and hope (v. 13).

### **The Purposes of Miracles Have Ceased**

God has used miraculous activity for four purposes, not one of which any longer exists:

1. **He has used miracles to establish and create.** He brought the material universe into existence by the mighty creation miracles, thereupon enacting His natural laws by which the physical universe has operated to this day. All living things since

then have come about by procreation rather than by creation (with the notable exception of our Lord's conception). The Mosaic Age began amidst many mighty miracles, but with the last utterance of its last prophet the Old Testament was complete and miraculous activity disappeared (perhaps partly explaining the 400 year intertestamental silence). The Christian Age began with momentous miraculous activity (viz., the angelic announcements to Zacharias and Mary, the Virgin Birth, Jesus' mighty signs, His resurrection and ascension, the wonders on Pentecost, the impartation of powers to the apostles, et al.). It is no mere coincidence that miraculous activity ceased soon after the completion of the New Testament revelation. Unless God decides to establish or create something new, this purpose of miraculous activity no longer exists.

2. **God used miracles (particularly the gift of prophecy) to edify the infant church** (1 Cor. 14:3–6). However, this was one of the gifts of which Paul specifically said it was “in part” and would be “done away” with the coming of “that which is perfect” (13:8–10). When the fullness of the revelation was theirs, it would contain, in a preserved and permanent written form, all that any who would live thereafter would ever need for edification (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:16–17; et al.). Those who faithfully preach the message of the inspired New Testament prophets now edify the church, so this purpose of miracles no longer exists.
3. **God used miracles to reveal His Divine Will and Truth.** Jesus promised the apostles that He would send upon them the Holy Spirit, Who would teach them all things and guide them into all of the Truth (John 14:26; 16:13). Paul declared that God revealed the words he and the other apostles spoke and wrote (1 Cor. 2:10–13). He did not learn the message he preached from men, but “through revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11–12; cf. Eph. 3:3–5; 2 Pet. 1:21). By this means his words were the “commandment of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37). By the end of the first century “the faith [was] once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Therefore, this revelatory purpose of miraculous activity no longer exists.
4. **God used miracles to confirm the Truth and its proclaimers AS IT WAS BEING REVEALED.** John stated this as the great aim of Jesus' miraculous activity (John 20:30–31). The Lord gave first century believers miraculous powers to confirm their preaching (Mark 16:17–20). God confirmed and bore witness to the “great salvation” the apostles preached by “signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will” (Heb. 2:4). Since the revelation of God's will was complete by the end of the first century, and since the purpose of New Testament era miracles was to confirm the Word, with the completion of the revelation, the confirmatory purpose of the gifts no longer existed.

Even so, some allege that God's Word still needs confirming. However, note the following:

1. The first century saints confirmed **their own words**, not those of Moses or the prophets, just as Moses and the prophets confirmed their own words, rather than those of Job or Abraham.
2. Once confirmed (as it was while being revealed) the New Testament needs no additional confirmation. Just as it was “once for all delivered” (Jude 3) it was also once for all confirmed. John's statement concerning Jesus' signs remarkably attests to this fact. Although John could work the “signs of an apostle” and lived through the age of miracles, he stated that the **written record** of the signs which Jesus did was sufficient confirmation of Who He was so that one might believe on Him unto salvation:

Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name (John 20:30–31).

3. **Confirmation and revelation are inseparable.** If we have miraculous confirmation today, we should have new, continuing revelation. If we have no new revelation, there is no miraculous confirmation today. Those who insist upon the continu-



ation of miraculous gifts beyond the New Testament era are unwittingly seeking to impose a perpetual “childhood” state upon revelation and the church. They are implicitly arguing that we do not have a perfected, completed Bible, but one that is only “in part.”

### Conclusion

New Testament miracles are like scaffolding on a building, temporary and necessary only during construction. When the building is finished, the builder removes the scaffolding, as indeed God did the miraculous gifts when His revelation was completed. That revelation is all sufficient to save us (Rom. 1:16), to make us complete unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16–17), and to take us home to heavenly glory at last (Acts 20:32). No alien sinner needs either any (1) miraculous direct operation of the Holy Spirit or (2) “non-miraculous” direct operation of the Holy Spirit in order to be saved from the guilt or his sins or to be saved in Heaven at last. Likewise, no saint needs either any (1) miraculous direct operation of the Holy Spirit or (2) “non-miraculous” direct operation of the Holy Spirit in order so to live as to be saved in Heaven at last. We have the inspired, revealed, and confirmed-by-miracles message of Truth, the all-sufficient Scriptures.

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## “What Saith The Scriptures?”

Harrell Davidson

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We have two questions to consider this month.

**Question 1: Should a congregation governed by the men (no elders) be concerned if their part time minister also manages a tobacco outlet store?**

This is indeed a good question, but not so easy to answer. We are reasonably sure that most would appeal to First Corinthians 6:20 where the apostle Paul said, “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.”

In the very early 1960s we preached many sermons against smoking cigarettes. We were told that it was bad for our health. We were told that we ought to smoke cigars or pipes and that chewing tobacco did not hurt the body whatsoever. The late brother James D. Bales said to this writer that, “If you are not careful you will make this a hobby and ride it.” He said that he had violated his own body by the loss of sleep in order to write more books and do more of the Lord's work so that his health was at great risk.

We did not know that much about tobacco in those years. Today, the scientific community has proof that all kinds of tobacco are not good for our health. It is a nasty, awful smelling, and expensive habit that is also addictive. Being addictive indicates that we are not in control of our own bodies or we cave in to the habit, but I have never known of a person having a wreck and killing innocent individuals because of nicotine. Tobacco today has warning labels, but the alcohol industry has a free reign. Surely the legs of the lame are not equal.

What kind of work should the part time preacher do? If he pumps gasoline he sells tobacco and many in my home state of Tennessee sell alcohol of various kinds. We thought that when the lottery came to our state that we would try to trade where the lottery was not offered. First thing we recognized is that many of the service stations or convenience stores participated in the lottery.

The medical community a few weeks ago said that the biggest health risk in America is obesity—eating too much. Could the part time preacher work at a fast food store? You see, the same passage that covers tobacco covers a multitude of other things. The difference is that one is accepted by mankind and the other is not so well accepted.

A deacon in a congregation that we once worked with contracted a strange kind of diabetes. It was a kind that was self induced. The doctor asked him to monitor what it was that he was doing every day and make a list of what he ingested. He ran a grocery store. The first thing on his agenda was drinking a soft drink upon his arrival at the

store. He made note of it. By day's end he had consumed 36 soft drinks! Habit? Yes! Wrong? Yes! Good example? No!

Perhaps the part time preacher is not setting the best example, but he cannot run from the vices of others. Our experience has been that regardless of what he did some would have concerns because a preacher is many times the target of fast talk and little sympathy. One preacher took the position that if a postman delivered a manila envelope that may have a piece of pornographic material enclosed that the postman was contributing to the sin of the person receiving the mail. His elders asked him to come in for a meeting on this matter. They asked him if the postman delivered a Sears and Roebuck catalog was he endorsing all that the catalog advertised?

There not being elders in the congregation in question really has nothing to do with the problem.

**Question 2: “What did Jesus mean when he told Mary, 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father...' in John 20:17?”**

No doubt, this question has given rise to much misunderstanding and speculation because Jesus permitted or required “doubting Thomas” to touch Him as recorded in John 20: 27, but not Mary. What is the difference between Mary and Thomas? This strikes at the heart of the question asked. Mary did not doubt that this was Jesus. Thomas, on the other hand, was not even with the other apostles on the first Lord's Day after the resurrection. It is rather obvious that Thomas needed something that Mary did not need.

If we may factor in Matthew 28:9 we have a better understanding due to the fact that other women were, according to Matthew's record, prostrating themselves at the feet of Jesus clinging to Him and worshipping Him. Apparently Mary would have done the same as the other women, but Jesus forbade it in her case. She could not touch Him.

Next, “Touch me not” may not be the best translation. Touch me not comes from a Greek phrase that means essentially “cease clinging to me.” This helps us understand the statement in Matthew 28:9 better. It is also a fact that when Jesus said, “for I am not yet ascended to my Father” there were many days left that Jesus would be on this earth. Mary was needed (commanded) to convey a message of faith to the disciples that “I ascend.”

It has always been interesting to me that Mary Magdalene was chosen to convey this message and was first at the tomb. Jesus had cast “seven devils” (cf. Mark 16:9) out of her previously. Obviously, she was now an ardent believer in Jesus. The writer suspects that we would have never had the problem with this passage had it not have been for Thomas. Two different people! Two different things! One was filled with joy and gratitude. The other was not sure that Jesus had risen.

**Brother Davidson answers readers' questions in this column each month. If you have Bible questions, you may email them to him at [harrelld@charter.net](mailto:harrelld@charter.net)**

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## “WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?”

**Lee Moses**

When Jesus Christ asked the above question of His twelve apostles, it seemed the tide had turned against Him and His message. The very same day, a large multitude had traveled across the Sea of Galilee to find Jesus. One day prior, five thousand men had been ready to crown Him king. But after Jesus preached to the throngs, “many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?” (John 6:66-67). The Lord's church presently seems to be facing a similar crisis. Large numbers of once faithful congregations have clearly turned away from the faith. As such, the Lord's question looms even larger. What valuable lessons can Christians take from His timely query?

The Lord never forces followers. When the throngs of Jesus' disciples turned away from Him, He did not run after them. He did not instruct His remaining followers to

stop them. He did not use the miraculous powers He had recently demonstrated to block their exit, to threaten them, or otherwise coerce them into following Him. He had already set before them all the evidence they needed. He had preached the word to them. They chose to reject it. As Jesus' question to His apostles demonstrates, they were likewise free to leave if they so chose.

Many denominationalists believe that the Holy Spirit directly compels people to obey God against their will. However, the Bible teaches no such thing. God sent the Holy Spirit, who inspired the apostles and four other men to complete God's written revelation to man (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:12-13). Once a man hears or reads that Divine message, he then has the choice whether or not to follow the Lord. A choice not to follow certainly grieves the Lord and will ultimately bring judgment (cf. Gen. 6:5-7; Matt. 24:34-39), but the Lord never forces followers.

**The Lord will not compromise His message to amass or maintain numbers.** The reason the large number of disciples gave for turning away from Christ was, as they put it, the message Christ was preaching "is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). Did Jesus then offer them a message more palatable to them? No; rather, "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you ['cause you to stumble,' ASV]?" (John 6:61). And when they left apparently never to return, Jesus did not run after them, saying, "Wait! Let me offer you an easier version of Christianity!"

Many churches today are not only willing but eager to compromise the Gospel if it means having larger numbers. Christ did not do such, and neither did the apostle Paul: "And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles" (Acts 18:5-6). Whether many or few join us in the Lord's Cause, with the apostle Paul let us never be "ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). Christians aspire to a higher calling than being numbered among the fickle majority.

**Turning away from Christ means going backward.** When the disciples "walked no more" with Jesus, the Scripture also states that they "went back." They had exerted significant efforts to find Jesus and come to Him, but whatever progress they made had been forfeited. Oftentimes preachers and church leaders will remark at the "progress" they have made by studying psychology, denominational church growth tactics, and other such tripe while abandoning God's word. Their churches view themselves as far more "contemporary, hip," and "relevant" than "old mossbacks" who still demand Bible, chapter, and verse preaching and a "thus saith the Lord" for what they practice." To the Galatians Paul wrote, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. 5:7). If a church or a child of God is no longer obeying the truth, it is impossible for him to "run well." Peter wrote of some who had "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ," yet became "again entangled therein, and overcome" (2 Pet. 2:20). No cause of celebration exists when new trends or "discoveries" lead to the abandonment of the Lord and His word.

Turning away from Christ obliterates one's hope of eternal life. As one reads Jesus' question to His apostles, one is filled with sadness. "Will ye also go away?" Many once faithful Christians have certainly turned away from Christ; the apostles certainly could have. Yet Peter's prompt and unwavering response reassures the Christian reader: "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69). While one might be tempted to follow the crowd that has turned away from Christ, the alternative is terrible to contemplate—the forfeiture of the eternal life laid up for each Christian. Friend, nothing is worth this. Let us determine never to turn away from following Jesus that Christ, the Son of God Who has the words of eternal life.

# The Characteristics of the Gospel

**P.D. Wilmeth**

Almost 2,000 years have come and gone since the gospel was first preached. Since that time many changes have been wrought and much that is styled “the gospel” is not the gospel. Many are the adulterations pawned off on the human family as that which was first delivered to the world. Many people have very vague ideas about what the gospel is and what it is not. In order to consider some of the earmarks of the gospel, I direct your attention to the following passage:

I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel: which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ. For I make known to you (“certify to you” KJV), brethren as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:6-12 ASV).

This passage contains some interesting marks which identify the gospel for us, and it is those to which we direct our attention.

## **It Is The Original Gospel**

One of the most powerful motives playing upon us in this age is the desire to be “up to date.” Advertisers understand the secret of this persuasive appeal and present their goods as “the latest thing.” The “latest model” always has a ready sale. We dislike being considered “back numbers” and to be “up-to-date” is one of men's most dominant desires.

With many, the question is not, “Is it true?” but, “Is it new?” Paul said, “I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel, which is not another gospel” (v. 6). Even in Paul's day, there were those who were leaving the original gospel for another, which was not another gospel.

Anything which had its origin this side of the New Testament or outside of the New Testament is a human product and is not the gospel preached by Paul and the other apostles. Every creed written by man falls under this grave indictment.

Let us ask for the original gospel. No longer do the masses ask, “Is it true,” but, “Is it new?” But the original gospel has its unmistakable trademark. Let us heed the warning, “Accept no substitutes.”

## **It Is The Pure Gospel**

Galatians 1:7 says, “Which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” A perverted gospel is an adulterated gospel. It cannot save. The gospel that Paul preached was pure, and was not an admixture of doctrines and commandments of men.

Power can be perverted. For example, bread is God's power to satisfy hunger. It is the “staff of life,” but a measure of poison intermixed with it will destroy its saving, life-giving power, and turn it into a power of destruction. The bread still retains all its qualities, but the poison makes it unfit for human consumption. Water has power to quench thirst. But, take a glass of sparkling, pure water and add a handful of salt to it and what happens? Instead of quenching thirst, it will create thirst. Before the salt was added, it was pure water with the power to satisfy thirst. But with addition of foreign matter it became a creator of thirst.

So it is with the gospel. It is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16-17), but mixed with human philosophies, doctrines and tenets of men it becomes a destroying agent. Mere belief is

not sufficient to save anyone. Just believing whatever one wants to believe does not save. Neither is mere eating sufficient to nourish one physically. It is **what** one eats. So it is with the gospel. The gospel preached, believed and obeyed makes a Christian.

The man who adulterates the gospel is a greater enemy to my soul than the man who pollutes a drinking fountain or poisons my food. Paul said, “Let him be anathema.”

### **It Is The Adequate Gospel**

Jude said, “Beloved while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3 ASV). In Galatians 1:23, we learn what this “Faith” was and that Paul preached the same thing. “But they only heard say, he that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc.”

These passages teach us that the gospel—just as it was delivered “once for all unto the saints”—is adequate for all time. It is for universal diffusion, for every land, tongue, and clime. This gospel was not made subject to alteration or change. The die was cast perfectly. The cloth out of which it was made was divine and divinity cut it. Human hands dare not change it. The man who does so is under the “anathema” of high heaven.

Many men—and not a few women—have claimed direct revelations from God since those words were written. But granted that is so—which, of course, it is not—none of us could accept their testimony if they told us to do one thing which we cannot read in the inspired word of God. Thus we see that the gospel of Christ, as it was given 2,000 years ago, is **still** adequate for the needs of man in our day.

### **It Is The Certified Gospel**

Paul wrote,

For I make known to you, brethren, (The King James Version says, “I certify you brethren”) as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11 ASV).

A “certified” gospel is one that has Christ back of it.

We today believe in purchasing “certified” goods. We demand certified food, milk, meat and clothing. We demand those things be guaranteed and that they are genuine. Yet, in religion man believes **anything** will do. He is not concerned so much with the genuine gospel as he is in what he “feels” in his heart or what his Mama taught him. Look for the trademark in religion. Has it ever occurred to you that to be genuine, it must be certified?

### **What The Certified Gospel Includes**

First, in becoming a Christian, you will follow a certified plan. You will be led to believe in Christ with all your heart, which is demanded of every saved person. Jesus said, “Except ye believe I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24 ASV). We are also told they that, “cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6 KJV).

The certified gospel will then lead you to repent of your sins as it commands. “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3 KJV). And Paul said, “The times of this ignorance, God winked at, but now commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent” (Acts 17:30 KJV).

From Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:8-10 and Acts 8:37, we learn that this certified gospel requires us to confess the sweet name of Jesus as God's Son.

Then we are commanded by this certified gospel to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). We also learn that we are buried with Christ in baptism (immersed in water) that like as He was raised up from the dead, we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4). When you do those things, you have obeyed a certified plan of salvation—certified by Christ Himself.



### A Member Of The Certified Church

When you do those things listed above, you are made a member of the certified church of which you read in the New Testament, for the Lord adds the saved to His church (Acts 2:47). No one has the right to “vote” on your membership. **Voting** members in is **no part** of the certified gospel.

When you become a member of the certified church of Christ, you become a Christian—nothing more and nothing less. The name “Christian” is found but three times in the New Testament and has God's certification behind it (Acts 11:26, 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).

Having obeyed the certified gospel, you become a member of the certified church, wear the only certified name for Christ's followers—Christian—and, as such, engage in worship acceptable to God and certified by Him in the New Testament.

Do you believe and follow the “certified” gospel? Can you read in the New Testament what you did in becoming what you are religiously? Is your religious activity certified by the New Testament?

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## Emotion and Religion

David Ray

Emotion and religion seem to go hand in hand. But there can be disagreements, even amongst faithful Christians, as to the proper place of emotion in worship and in the life of the Christian. Is emotion wrong? If so, should the alternative be cold, meaningless stoicism? There are extremes to which one can go in either direction, but what is right in God's sight?

### Emotion God Forbids

**Emotion that results in disorder** (i.e., in worship). God equips us for every good work through the Word. This obviously includes worship. Everything God wants the church to do in worship will be found in the New Testament (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; John 4:24 with John 17:17).

But emotionalism has resulted in many things that are **not** found in Scripture: instrumental music, rolling in the aisles, clapping, lifting hands, dancing, jumping, swaying, etc. These are things that please men, but not God; nowhere has God indicated that He wants His church to engage in these actions in worship. They are results of emotion. They may also be the results of zeal and sincerity (we don't doubt the sincerity of these folks). But zeal without knowledge is not good (Rom. 10:2); neither does sincerity necessarily mean one is right with God. And **none** of these actions referenced above is ever commanded by God.

“Lifting hands” is commanded in 1 Tim. 2:8 (“I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting”). But notice first that this is to be done by men only (in the Greek, “men” is the masculine gender, not “mankind”). Second, this is not about *literally* lifting up your hands. It's about an appropriate offering to God in prayer. The figurative *hands* to be lifted up are to be “holy” (pure, undefiled by sin). Emotionalism tends to ignore this requirement.

“Let all things be done decently (properly) and in order (arrangement, succession)” (1 Cor. 14:40). Worship must be according to spirit and truth (John 4:24). This is foundational for true worship, but emotionalism replaces this foundation with feelings and entertainment!

**Emotion that results in false doctrine** (e.g., in the plan of salvation). So many have been taught to simply say a prayer to be saved. So they do this, feel emotional about it, then stop there. When taught the truth, they say, “I know I'm saved because I **feel** saved” (i.e., “I feel saved, therefore I am saved”)!

Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, indeed does elicit emotion! Certainly, we should experience the emotion of happiness when our sins are forgiven. But salvation is not the only source of this emotion. If we simply **believe** we're saved, even when we're not, then the emotion will be no different. In other words, emotion is a **result** of salvation, **but it is not the evidence** of it.

It can be difficult to teach people this, because it requires logic and reasoning, things they abandoned for their feelings! They never had facts (biblical) to support their feelings of being saved, so why hear them now? Emotion is all this person has because he doesn't have scripture to show he's saved. So, he relies on this emotion, and it results in continued disobedience to God's simple plan of salvation.

### **Emotion that results in willful ignorance**

Too often in religion, emotion trumps facts and logic. Even if the emotion isn't sinful, these feelings can become a person's source of authority. When we try to present the Scripture on any particular point with which the person disagrees, we find out that he doesn't respect the authority of Scripture at all, particularly if it contradicts his preconceived beliefs. He demonstrates that his authority in religion is his own feelings, which naturally results in his further willful ignorance of the all-authoritative Word of God.

### **Emotion that results in nothing at all**

Young men and women "fall in love at first sight" based on looks alone, then shortly thereafter realize there's no real substance there! It's the same in religion. Folks allow a smooth-talking speaker to get them emotionally fired up in order to accept Jesus as their Savior, while never really providing them with anything biblically substantial. They'll claim to have great love and emotion for Jesus, but there's no evidence of this in their lives: no Bible knowledge, no pursuit of righteousness, no sorrow for sin, no removal of sin from their lives, no focusing on others (cf. the seed sown on the stones, Matt. 13:20-21). These are all consequences of emotionalism in religion.

### **Emotion God Expects**

Emotion is a natural result of knowing that someone has done something good for you, particularly if someone gave His own **life** for you. But this is different than the emotionalism we've been discussing. Emotion doesn't have to be expressed in these ways. What are some **biblical** expressions?

#### **Love**

1 Peter 1:22 says to "love one another with a pure heart fervently." This is agape love and is an action that seeks the best interest of another. These actions don't **require** an emotion (certainly not an emotional display). However, in this verse we also see that our obeying of the truth is "unto unfeigned love of the brethren." This *love* is from the Greek word *philadelphia* and is defined by Strong's Greek Dictionary as "fraternal affection." The first part, *phileo*, means "to have affection for (denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling...)". This is a feeling/emotion we should have, but must be manifested only in ways God has authorized.

#### **Joy**

Joy is "cheerfulness...calm delight, gladness" and is commanded as part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The verb form is "rejoice" (Phil. 4:4—"Rejoice in the Lord always"); also 2 Cor. 7:4: "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." This emotion is much greater than mere momentary happiness that comes and goes. It's based on the forgiveness of sins we have and the home in Heaven that awaits us. Like love, it is to be displayed only how God has instructed.

#### **Hate**

Proverbs 8:13 says "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil." We hate sin, and this emotion causes us to stop sinning.

#### **Sorrow**

Biblical sorrow is sadness, grief, and heaviness, and is a highly appropriate emotion when it comes to sin. 2 Corinthians 7:10 teaches that godly sorrow is a required emotion that will result in proper repentance.

#### **Fear**

Matthew 10:28 says to "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Also, Hebrews 4:1 teaches us to "fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The fear of God will result in appropriate actions (cf. 2 Cor. 7:1).

## Hope

Romans 12:2 commands “rejoicing in hope” and Hebrews 3:6 calls us to “hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.”

With all of these emotions, we notice that having or feeling the emotion is not the same thing as displaying it. This is the real issue with emotionalism, which tends to display emotions in unauthorized ways. The emotions God expects will produce the proper (biblical) results. *Phileo* love (fondness, affection) results in action, doing for others. Joy results in giving of yourself (2 Cor. 8:2, “the abundance of their joy...abounded unto the riches of their liberality”). Hatred for sin results in ceasing it in your own life and disapproval of it in the lives of others (Rev. 2:6, to the church in Ephesus, “But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate”). Sorrow for sin results in repentance (i.e., changing one’s mind about sin) as well as the desire to help correct it in others (Gal. 6:1; Eph. 5:11). Fear results in obedience (2 Cor. 5:11) and hope results in patience (Rom. 8:24-25).

Notice that the result we don’t see is emotionalism – a public display of emotions (usually in worship) that are **not** decent and orderly (actions God has **not** authorized). We need to understand that emotion can be felt without being displayed outwardly.

2 Corinthians 13:5 says to “examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith” not “just go by your feelings.” 1 John 5:13 says “these things have I written...that ye may know you have eternal life”—not “you’ll know by how you feel in your heart!” But this doesn’t mean emotions are inappropriate. Having our sins forgiven ought to elicit emotion! When we recognize how much we’ve been forgiven, we are extremely thankful and we love more. This is appropriate manifestation of emotion – that which results in proper, biblical actions.

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## Truth Makes Christians

Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

A perverted gospel cannot save. Jesus declared that it is the knowledge of truth, not the belief of error, that makes men free (John 8:32). Though a perverted gospel may have in it all the elements of the true gospel, its power to save is lost in perversion. Bread is God's power to quell the hunger, but the admixture of a poisonous element—a spoonful of arsenic, for instance, in a loaf of bread—would destroy its power. Water is God's power to quench the thirst, but the admixture of salt will destroy the quenching power of water.

The gospel is God's power to save the soul, but its admixture with error—the doctrines and commandments of men, when heard and believed—destroys its saving power. Hence, Paul's alarm concerning the perverters at Galatia: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6-7).

Error preached, error heard, and error believed cannot result in the truth obeyed. No man can accidentally obey God. The truth preached, the truth believed, and the truth obeyed makes a Christian. Nothing else does. How careful then men should be in their handling of it!

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## The Conversion of a Harsh Inquisitor

Ron Cosby

Everyone knew him. Christians feared him. In his zeal for God, the man championed the old ways of the Law of Moses. How do you stop a zealous, religious persecutor? You certainly cannot convert him. Or can you? Paul summarizes his change in his letter to the Galatians. “And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc; and they glorified God in me” (Gal. 1:22-24 ASV).

The conversion of Saul is one of two conversions in the Bible that God recorded three times. In Acts 9, Luke records the conversion as an historical event. Later, Paul rehearses his conversion as a defense before the Jewish court in Jerusalem (Acts 22), and then before the Gentile court in Caesarea (Acts 26). “Conversion” means change. Saul changed from the persecutor to the preacher. Before we hear Paul describe his own conversion, note the ungodliness of Saul of Tarsus.

### **Saul's Crime Against Man and God**

The first time we see Saul, he is wreaking havoc on the church. At the stoning of Stephen, the witnesses laid their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul (Acts 7:57-60). This same Saul “...laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison” (Acts 8:1-3 ASV). In the United States of America, only a firefighter can enter your home without a search warrant. Not so with Saul. He invaded many homes without justifiable cause.

In describing Saul's persecution, Luke paints a picture of a man who is pawing at the ground and snorting out hatred like a mad bull, saying, “But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord...” (Acts 9:1 ASV). Paul describes himself as one who “persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women” (Acts 22:4). How is it possible to get close enough to even start the process of conversion with someone who will take your life at the very mention of salvation or the name Jesus? Man cannot. God could.

His fame was widespread. Even rulers in high places knew of “these things” because they were not done “in a corner” (Acts 26:26). The nearest analogy, and one that I think captures the point, is the many instances in the 20th century in which secret police forces such as the Gestapo or the KGB targeted people for arrest, imprisonment, or even death. Saul was such an agent.

### **Saul's Conversion In His Own Words**

Turn to Acts 22 and Acts 26. Read Saul's conversion in his own words. He introduces the event by telling his audience of the time and circumstances. He was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 22:1-5). Although he saw and heard the Lord, the Lord did not tell him what to do to be saved. Here is what was said on the road:

And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do (Acts 22:6-10 ASV).

Obedying to the heavenly voice, Saul went into the city, but he was still lost. The Lord chose a devout man, Ananias, to teach Saul what he had to do to receive remission of sins (Acts 22:12-16). Ananias came unto Saul, letting him know that he had been chosen of God to bear witness to the world of the things he had seen and heard. Then Ananias did what only an earthen vessel had the right to do. He told Saul what to do to be saved. He said, “...now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.” Since Saul needed his sins washed away, he was obviously still guilty in the eyes of God. He was guilty because no one had told him what to do until Ananias spoke the wonderful words of forgiveness.

Later, drawing upon his own conversion in a letter to the brethren at Rome, Saul — now called Paul—taught the Roman brethren that he, as were they, was baptized into Christ by a burial in water (Rom. 6:3-4). This obedience changed his state before God. He was no longer a sinner, guilty of causing others to lose their souls. He was a servant of righteousness, having obeyed “that form of doctrine”—the doctrine and instructions of deliverance from sin (Rom. 6:16-18). He was free.

Paul believed and taught people to believe in the Lord (Acts 9; Rom. 10:9-10). He confessed publicly what he believed and taught people the need for them to confess with

their mouths the faith that was in their hearts (Acts 9; Rom. 10:9-10). He repented and taught that all men everywhere were commanded to repent (Acts 17:30; 26:20). He was baptized and taught people to be baptized in the name of the Lord (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27). He believed and taught God's salvation was for all.

### **Conclusion**

The sins that you and I have committed cannot be greater than the sins of Saul of Tarsus (1 Tim. 1:12-16). God forgave him and God will forgive us, no matter how horrible we might think our sins are.

You cannot be more sincere than Paul, but in his sincerity, he was still wrong and lost. Cartoonist Charles M. Schulz said, "The way I see it, it doesn't matter what you believe just so you're sincere." This ungodly philosophy permeates society, costing millions their souls. Saul had a clear conscience as he sincerely served God according to the Law of Moses and as he persecuted Christians (Act 23:1; 26:9). But a clear conscience is obviously not a safe guide since Saul recognized he was lost in his sincerity.

Instead of following the philosophy of Schulz, hear Saul of Tarsus who obeyed God and then lived a life in service to the King of Kings.

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