

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## Editorial

### **What Does the Bible Teach?**

**UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT  
SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

THERE ARE THOSE WHO EMPHASIZE having an “experience of a new birth”, because Jesus taught, “unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3). Jesus, however, didn’t say, one must have an experience of a new birth, such as coming through a dream or a vision as some believe today, but rather He taught, one must be born of the water and the Spirit. That means after believing in Christ one must be baptized in water, as the Spirit of God directs through God’s word. In Mark 16:16, Christ so plainly taught, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Some think, since Christ said, “he who does not believe will be condemned,” this means one must believe not to be condemned, but there is no need to be baptized to be saved. This is not what Christ taught. He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.” To be saved from sin, according to Christ, one must both believe in Him to be the Savior and be baptized or immersed in water, (Acts 8:35,36), for the remission of sins, as the apostle Peter said in Acts 2: 38. Also, therein, he said, one must repent of sins before baptism for the forgiveness of sins.



Nowhere in the entire Bible you will ever read that people were saved from their sins as a result of their good feelings. Salvation from sins is not an experience that is “felt better than told”, as they say. But one can surely know that he is saved from sins when one believes with whole heart in Christ and obeys His commands to be saved. (Hebrews 5:8,9).

One's feeling cannot be the assurance of salvation. But God's written word is. Man can know that he is saved from his sins and that he hopes to enter God's heaven on the basis of what God's word teaches. Someone may feel all his life that he is a good Christian, that God is listening and answering his prayers; that when he will die he will surely go to heaven. Jesus said, on the day of judgment there will be many such people before Him with such false belief and assumption. Listen to Him what He said, "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them" said Jesus, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:21-23). They had thought Christ will surely accept them in heaven, because they had done many things in His name when they were on earth. But Christ rejected them and told them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." According to 1 John 3:4, lawlessness is sin. They had done many things in the name of Christ, when they were on earth, thinking that they were doing God's will. But they were entirely wrong. They did things they had thought were right, but they didn't do what God had specifically commanded in His Book. They didn't follow what the Scripture say, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5).

The Bible, God's written word, is very plain in telling us how we can surely know that we are following God's will, in any religious matter, Just as we know that Christ died on the cross for our sins, and that He rose again the third day, (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 5:8); that He will come back one day to judge the world (Acts 17:30, 31), and many other things, by reading the Scriptures. The Bible was written by men whom God's Holy Spirit had inspired to write God's will for men. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:21).

As already observed, Christ the author of salvation, requires all who want to be saved, to believe in Him, and repent of their sins, and be baptized in water for the remission of their sins after confessing Him to be the Son of God. (Acts 8:36-38). Thus the assurance of salvation from sins, as promised and provided by Christ comes to an individual on the basis of one's faith in Christ and obedience to His commands, and not by feelings or a supposed supernatural experience, or even by faith alone. (James 2:24-26). All those religiously inclined people who experience some kind of emotional phenomena, as conversion experiences, ecstatic utterances, and mystical trances, are mere human

feelings. The Christianity of the Bible is not based on anything so changing and contradictory human experiences, but it is grounded in the faith that comes from the reading or hearing God's written word of the Bible. (Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7). The Bible is an absolute, objective standard of truth that never changes or contradicts itself. Whatever we need to know in spiritual matters, we should ask, What does the Bible teach?

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## THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

**J.C. Choate**



THE WORD GOSPEL MEANS GOOD news or glad tidings of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:15). It was first preached in promise and then as fact. Christ was the giver and it has power to save all who will believe and obey it. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

Lest another gospel be preached, the apostle Paul warned, "... which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:7-9). But it might be reasoned, "Surely a person would not dare preach another gospel." Well, many have and many continue to do so. There is the gospel of "faith only," the gospel of "many churches," the gospel of "worship as you please," the gospel of "grace only," the gospel of "sprinkling and pouring," etc. But all of these are false gospels. There is but one true gospel (Mark 16:15, 16).

Later Paul warned that the Lord will eventually come and take vengeance on all of those who obey not the gospel. He said, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9). But how can one obey the gospel? That is something we are going to be finding out.

First, let us consider the facts of the gospel. They are the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We read, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have

received, and wherein ye stand: by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Now everything else is based on these facts. This is the foundation of Christianity, of the church, and of hope. Naturally these facts must be believed.

Second, there are commands of the gospel that must be obeyed. The Bible teaches that one must hear the truth. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). On hearing the word as also suggested in Romans 10:17, one must believe it or have faith in it. We read further, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). After faith, one must repent of his sins, or turn away from them. Christ said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Again, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Then what? The confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is necessary. Christ himself said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). The eunuch of Acts 8 said that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and straightway Philip baptized him (Acts 8: 37, 38). The last command to be obeyed is the act of baptism. Peter told the people on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). And Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). By obeying these simple commands, one obeys the gospel of Christ, is thereby saved, and added to the church (Acts 2:47). But to some people this is too simple. They think the plan of salvation should be very difficult and so they write up a group of rules and regulations. Consequently, they would have people doing this and doing that and going through a long process before they can, supposedly, be saved. The Lord is displeased with this. There is just one way to be saved and that is the way Christ has ordained it in his word (John 14:6; James 1:22).

Third, the gospel has promise. We receive salvation from our past sins (Acts 2:38), the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 3:19), the privilege to worship the Lord (John 4:23, 24), all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), and the hope of eternal life if we are faithful to him

unto death (Revelation 2:10; Matthew 25:46). Truly, without obedience and faithfulness, man has nothing.

So this is the gospel of Christ with facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, and promises to be received. The Lord is gracious to those who love his will and who strive to obey it. He has invited all to come and obey him. It is now man's responsibility to take advantage of what the Lord has to offer.

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## HOW MUCH EVIDENCE DO WE NEED?

**Ancil Jenkins**

*THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD; And the firmament shows His handiwork (Psalm 19:1). For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — and eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse (Romans 1:20). "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." (John 7:17).*

Someone once asked Bertrand Russell, a noted atheist, "Suppose you are wrong and God exists. What are you going to say to Him at the Judgment?" He replied, "Not enough evidence, God! Not enough evidence."

In reality, "not enough evidence" is the cry of the agnostic, not of the atheist. The agnostic is one who does not believe there is an adequate reason to believe in God. In many ways, he has less moral courage than an atheist. If there is not enough evidence to believe in God, it is because God is either unwilling or unable to provide it. If either case were true, such a God would be unworthy of belief. The atheist is at least willing to make a decision and take a public stand. The agnostic is not.

Is there enough evidence? To some it may seem like circular reasoning to quote God's book to show the existence of God. Yet, this timeless book claims nature makes the first and most evident argument for His existence. Nature's claim is powerful. Isn't there a lesson in the fact that science, even from its beginning, has made no discovery that disproves God's existence? On the contrary, time after time it has given credibility to man's belief in Him.

The question of the origin of the earth has puzzled man for centuries. Only when men denied the truth of God's creation did man become frustrated. Discoveries have repeatedly refuted man's false claims. Although the "Big Bang" theory of the earth's origin does not completely

harmonize with the Genesis account, it is a discovery that admits that the earth had a beginning. This Beginning powerfully indicates that a Force caused it.

The problem with belief is the heart of man. If a person is willing to believe in a Creator, there is a great weight of credible evidence. Jesus said that the one willing to believe will find evidence for this belief (John 7:17). The world's materialistic approach to our creation and existence has no place for the spiritual. It, on the other hand, has not proven that the spiritual has not or cannot exist.

The problem is that when one comes to accepting the evidence of God's existence, man must repent and commit himself. Belief in God requires humility. Man must acknowledge there is something greater than himself. Man must admit his inability to understand or control his life. The lack of evidence is not the problem. Man's unwillingness to submit to God may be the greatest barrier to belief.

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## MYTHS OF EVOLUTION

Bobby Dockery

MANY SCIENTISTS LIKE TO DESCRIBE the Biblical account of Creation as a "myth." Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines the word "myth" as: "an ill-founded belief held uncritically, especially by an interested group." In other words, a myth is something which is not true, but is accepted as truth without question.

It may come as a surprise to many, but modern science often believes in myths. Scientists, especially when explaining the origin of life on Earth, hold ill-founded beliefs which they do not question. Consider some common myths of evolution.

**MYTH #1 — The Assumption that evolution is Science.** Though evolutionists frequently claim otherwise, both evolution and Creation are faith systems. Each is a matter of belief. Paul Erlich and L.C. Birch wrote in *Nature*, April 22, 1967: "Our theory of evolution ... is thus 'outside of empirical science' ... No one can think of ways in which to test it... [evolutionary ideas] have become part of an evolutionary dogma accepted by most of us as part of our training." In 1971, Dr. L.H. Matthews wrote in an "Introduction" to a new edition of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, published in London: "Belief in the theory of evolution is thus exactly parallel to belief in special creation — both are concepts which believers know to be true, but neither, up to the present, has been capable of proof." Evolution is clearly a matter outside the realm of science. Those who choose to accept evolution

do so as a matter of faith, not because evolution has been demonstrated to be fact.

**MYTH #2 — The Assumption that evolution is the Result of Beneficial Mutations.** For evolution to be plausible, it must have a mechanism by which it operates. Many scientists argue that it is through mutations that one organism changes itself into another. But it is inconceivable that mutations can be responsible for all of the 1.7 million forms of life on our earth. Mutations are very rare. Most are produced by abnormal conditions such as exposure to atomic radiation or drugs. It is estimated that a mutation will occur once in every 100,000 to 1-million instances. Dr. H. Douglas Dean, Chairman of the Biology Department at Pepperdine University, points out that it would take 100,000 favorable mutations for the tiny ancestral horse, Eohippus, to evolve into a modern horse! In light of the relative infrequency of mutations and the negligible percentage of them which are helpful, evolution is clearly impossible! Even Julian Huxley, the noted defender of evolution, admits that the odds of evolution having occurred through beneficial mutations are 1 in 1000<sup>1,000,000</sup> — 1 followed by 3 million zeroes (it would take 3 large 500-page books just to print this number!). No mutation has ever been shown to have produced a new species, or even a new organ in a species! Only minor changes have occurred, such as wing-shape or color. Mutations do not result in adding a wing to a cow or a backbone to a worm!

**MYTH #3 — The Belief in Spontaneous Generation.** Life comes only from life. Yet evolution teaches that at some time in the distant past, non-living matter suddenly came to life. Drs. Fuller and Tippo, both evolutionists, in their text on *College Botany* admit: "... if one subscribes to this theory, he admits that the first protoplasm to appear on earth was a product of spontaneous generation ... In other words ... spontaneous generation worked when the first living substance was formed, but probably hasn't worked since." Question: Is it conceivable that blind chance accidentally did in the "primeval soup" what the best scientific minds of the 20th Century have been unable to duplicate in the laboratory — create life from non-life?

Which is harder to believe: the Biblical account of an all-wise, all-powerful Creator, or evolution's faith in blind, blundering chance? Is the evidence for evolution credible ... reliable ... believable? Or, is it merely evidence that men have exchanged the truths of God for a lie, and that professing to be wise they became fools (Romans 1:22)?



# ***Behold The Man***

**Ron Bryant**

PILATE IS THE MAN IN CHARGE, but he is on the spot. He has been pained and embarrassed by the Jews again and again, and now they demand that he release a known insurrectionist and murderer named Barabbas, and put to death one in whom he can find no crime. His dilemma? He is duty-bound to keep the peace, and he is charged with the dispensing of justice. Sending an innocent man to execution would make him a participant in a judicial murder, but he does not want to face the wrath of Rome if the peace is not kept. He realizes that the right political move to make is to find Jesus guilty, but the evidence forces him to declare that he can find nothing in the man deserving of death. That should have settled the matter. Pilate said of Jesus, *"He is not guilty"* Then he hesitates.

Pilate cannot change the mind of those who cry out for the death of Jesus, and while not agreeing in sentiment with their demand, he moves to have Jesus scourged. The act of scourging was a brutal, life-threatening ordeal and was a major part of the pain to be brought upon a condemned man. Pilate gives the order and the soldiers carry out this judicial beating. They then proceed to plait a crown of thorns and place it upon Jesus' head. Additionally, they put on Him a purple robe (verse 2). According to the record, this is the second beating at the hands of the soldiers — the first being at the behest of Herod. Pilate then set Jesus forth, doing so, according to the narrative, that the accusers of Jesus would know that Pilate could find no fault in him (verse 3).

Then there is a statement from Pilate that is unusual and yet capable of magnificent application. One can discern in this statement a number of things. For instance, it evidences a pity for Jesus, whom Pilate regards to be innocent. In His character He is innocent, but His position is one of tragedy and sadness. Yet, in his pity for Jesus there is also a contempt. For this man, who claims to be a king, who claims to bear witness to the truth, stands in chains, beaten — but unyielding. Jesus gave Pilate no way out. The Jews gave him no way out. And so, in addition to being frustrated by the answers of Jesus, in Pilate's statement there is the suggestion of disgust for these accusers of this innocent man. Pilate could read their motives and he despised their hatred toward Jesus. He says "look at this man ... look at him with some degree of humanity and sympathy." But the accusers were untouched by the misery or anguish of Jesus. They felt no sympathy for this person, nor cared for His desperate condition. They dismissed any thought of innocence, of nobility



of character, any dignity of person. They dismissed any thought of consequence for their actions of hatred and injustice. They had no kindness toward their despised victim.

This same Jesus who stood on exhibition before Pilate and before the people of Jerusalem almost 2,000 years ago stands before all who hear the Gospel. The words of Pilate re-echo the powerful invitation to all to whom the Word is preached: **“Behold the Man!”**

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## ***GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO MANKIND***

**Don L. Norwood**

GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO mankind through the creation of the universe (Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-4) and through the agency of heavenly angels as His messengers (Judges 13:2-4; Galatians 3:19). In this last dispensation He has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ. Christ became human flesh and lived among mankind for about thirty years. His teaching, miracles, and His death and resurrection proved Him to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4; Hebrews 2:1-4). The Scripture says of Him that He was the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14). To see Christ is to see the Father (John 14:9). Christ has revealed the Father’s will to the whole world through the New Testament Scriptures (John 14:26; 16:13; Hebrews 1:1,2; 2 Peter 1:3; 2 Peter 1:20,21). Not only does the New Testament have within its pages all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), but these Scriptures reveal the character of God and His Holy Will for all mankind today (Colossians 1:15; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 1:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:19).

The Holy Spirit inspired the Psalmist to write about the Lord and His grace and watchcare over all human beings who will love Him and have faith in Him without doubt and wavering (Psalm 33:4-22; 34:1-10). Christ promised mankind that He and the Father would spiritually dwell with the Christians if they would faithfully obey His teachings (John 14:21,23). Remember, for a person to be righteous in God’s sight that person must obey the Gospel of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Romans 1:16,17; Romans 8:1,14; Galatians 3:26,27). Then consider what the Psalmist said about a righteous person’s relationship with God (Psalm 37:25).

Remember, we humans must study the Scriptures to be approved of God (2 Timothy 2:15). Christ will save only those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:8,9).

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# WHY BLAME THE PREACHER?

J.C. Choate

THE PREACHER'S GOD-GIVEN responsibility is to proclaim the Word (1 Timothy 2:7). In his chosen role he is called, sent, and commanded to *preach the gospel* (Mark 16:15). "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*" (2 Timothy 4:2). The message he proclaims does not originate with himself but with God. If, therefore, the preacher declares the word of God, and you are not happy with what you hear, *don't blame the preacher*.

As a young man, before marriage and a family, I remember that whenever I spoke on the subject of children, and on the duties of parents in rearing them, various ones in the congregation would remark, "Just wait until you have children of your own!" It was as though I would change my preaching at that point, because of discovering as a parent that I was unable to practice what I was telling others. Well, I have children, even grandchildren, but I still have not changed what I preach about rearing children. Even if I had, that would not have changed the truth. God's Word remains the truth on that subject — or any other subject — whether I practice it or not.

When the work of women is being taught in Bible classes, often there will be a discussion concerning whether or not Paul was "down on women." Evidently even Christians don't stop to think that *Paul was being guided by the Holy Spirit in his writing*. What he said was not his *own opinion* or idea, but the *Word of the Lord*. No, Paul was not "down on women." Hearers might not like what Paul said, but they shouldn't blame Paul. He was only saying what the Lord told him to say.

Today when a preacher speaks about baptism [... *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3,4], or about the one church [... *upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:5], or that the Christian must give as God has prospered him [*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come*; 1 Corinthians 16:2], there are those who will get angry at him.

If he preaches that one should marry only a Christian [*Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ... and ... if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord* 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 7:39], and that the Christian should

dress modestly (1 Timothy 3:15; 2:9), or that if one is unfaithful to his or her companion, he or she cannot marry again without committing adultery (Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:3), then those guilty of such things generally blame the preacher and have bad things to say about him. They may even move to another congregation, looking for a preacher who is more sympathetic to their lifestyle.

My question in all of this is, “Why blame the preacher?” If he is not teaching the truth, one should not pay any attention to him anyway. On the other hand, if he is preaching the Word, then that truth should be accepted as coming from God and not from man. So, don’t blame the preacher. If you’re going to blame anyone, blame God. In dealing with the truth — God’s will — you have a choice: you can either believe it and obey it, or you can reject it and refuse to comply with it. In this life you can make the choice and you can live with it. But remember, when you stand before the Lord at the judgment, you will not be answering to a preacher but to God. You will then be judged by what the Word says, not by what some man says or by what your personal preference “re-wrote” it to say (John 12:48).

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## *DISCIPLESHIP*

**Byron Nichols**

BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT the church is made up of human beings, the church has its imperfections. This does not mean at all that God intended for the church to be imperfect. If we succeeded in being exactly like God and Christ wants us to be, the church would not have any weaknesses, any imperfections. From almost the very birth of the church in the first century, of which we read in Acts chapter two, problems have arisen. The human element has always been very apparent. For example, in the church there has always been a problem of apathy, indifference, lethargy, laziness — but actually these terms do not designate the problem — they are the result of the problem. The real problem is a lack of understanding of what is involved in discipleship and the failure to be truly committed to that.

The word “disciple” means literally “a learner.” It comes from another word meaning “to learn,” indicating the involvement of thought accompanied by endeavor. Thus, it denotes one who follows someone’s teachings. A disciple was not only a pupil, he was an adherent. Disciples are thus spoken of in the New Testament as imitators of their teacher.

I like F.W. Farrar’s definition of a disciple. He described the disciple of Christ as “one who believes His doctrines, rests upon His sacrifice,

imbibes His spirit, and imitates His example.”

With this brief background regarding the word “disciple” before us, let’s now look at the terms of discipleship which were laid down by Jesus Himself. (1) In Matthew 16:24 Jesus said that it is necessary that His disciples deny themselves, take up their own crosses, and follow Him. Surely self-denial must be the most difficult aspect of being a disciple of Jesus. . The follower of Jesus is also told that he/she must also be willing to follow the example of Jesus in bearing his/her own cross of burdens and trials. (2) In addition, in Luke 14:26ff Jesus states that one who would be His disciple must hate his own family. The Lord certainly did not intend for us to think that we must hate in the way that the word is usually used. “Hate” here has reference to the relative preference for one thing over another. Our love for Him is to be so great that, by comparison, our love for our family is as if it were hatred. (3) Then in Luke 14:33 Jesus declares that the disciple must forsake or renounce all. Christ accepts only those who are willing to place serving Him above everything else in this life. These terms of discipleship are certainly demanding. Apparently discipleship is not something which is to be taken lightly.

Becoming a disciple (or Christian) is one thing; being a disciple is another. In Luke 14:27 we learn that Jesus requires His disciples to follow Him. What is involved in following Jesus?

**A. Counting the cost** (Luke 14:28-35; 2 Peter 2:20-22).

**B. Sacrifice.** Jesus demands first place. In Luke 5:11 they left all. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus says to seek Him first.

**C. Continuing in Christ’s word.** In John 8:31,32 Jesus said, *“If you continue in My word, then you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* It should be obvious to all that in order to **continue** in Christ’s word we must first of all **know** His word. It should be no wonder then that the Holy Spirit led Paul to instruct Timothy and us, *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Timothy 2:15).

**D. Following in Christ’s footsteps.** Being a disciple of Jesus necessitates our following in His footsteps as they lead us to:

1. The wilderness of temptation.
2. The house of worship.
3. Fields of service.
4. The mountain of prayer.
5. The garden of despair.
6. The cross of suffering.
7. The valley of death.

## 8. The throne of God.

All who would be disciples of Jesus need to be assured that the steps of Jesus do not end in the dark valley of suffering and death, but rather they proceed into Heaven and to the very throne of God (Revelation 3:21).

There are many different kinds of disciples in our world. Some are disciples of Christ, but many are disciples of false ways, and of mere men. It is hoped that each one who calls himself/herself a disciple of Jesus will take more care to follow in His footsteps. True discipleship will change the world.

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# THE COMMON SALVATION

Clarence DeLoach, Jr.

*"...I GAVE ALL DILIGENCE TO write unto you of the common salvation" (Jude 3).*

Jude identified himself with those to whom he wrote as a recipient of the *"common salvation."*

It is our common salvation for these reasons:

**(1) It deals with a common sickness.** It delivers from sin, and *"all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). Like sheep, we have all gone astray. Our relationship with God is severed (Isaiah 59:1,2). This is the common experience of all humanity.

Many false diagnoses have been given by erroneous teachers. They are physicians with no cure. One says the patient is suffering from a lack of education. Another says his environment needs to be changed — give him better living conditions. But these suggestions fail to deal with the basic need. **The root of human misery lies within the heart.** The king's robe, the pauper's rags, the soldier's uniform — all cover a heart that is evil and needs cleansing.

**(2) It presents a common remedy.** There is only one Gospel, and one Savior. All men are saved alike. There is one *"great physician."*

That common story is presented in the book of Acts — stirring, arousing, and leading people of all backgrounds to the Savior.

Only Christ can impart *"abundant life"* (John 10:10). Salvation is in *"no other name"* (Acts 4:12).

Society is sick. The world lies in darkness. But, there is light. *"...Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Colossians 1:27).

**(3) It is brought about by a common faith,** Paul spoke of the *"common faith"* that produces the common salvation.

Faith, as often used in the New Testament, includes the sum of man's response to God. It is produced by "*hearing the word*" (Romans 10:17). It is demonstrated through obedience. Faith brings about the grace of God in us (Ephesians 2:8).

Christians all over the world possess a "*like precious faith*" and are partakers of the "*common salvation*."

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## *Elders As Leaders*

**Jimmy Jividen**

ELDERS ARE LEADERS, WHOSE leadership is to be quite different from most leaders. Their leadership model is not that of a business executive, a military officer, or a politician, but that of a servant, exemplified by Jesus Himself. Jesus taught, "*Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve*" (Matthew 20:26-28).

An elder's leadership is not that of a democracy in which the leaders are elected to do the will of the people. The elder's allegiance is to the Lord, not man. The will of the people is not always the will of God.

Like a shepherd who protects his sheep from wolves, elders protect those they shepherd from teachers who would lead them astray. Blessed are those who have shepherds they can follow even through the valley of the "*shadow of death*" without being afraid.

An elder's leadership is not modeled after the Gentile rulers of whom Jesus spoke. They sought to "*lord it over*" and "*exercise authority over*" those under their charge (Matthew 20:25). He is not like Diotrophes who loves "*to be first*" but like Jesus, who took upon Himself "*the form of a bondservant*" (2 John 9; Philippians 2:7).

An elder *compromises* his leadership role if he only reflects the will of the people. He *abuses* his leader role if he becomes a dogmatic boss who strives to control by political power and force. He *neglects* his leadership role if he refuses to be "out front" leading the way. He must live a life that can be imitated.

Elders are spiritual leaders who should show the way to others. They should be respected and honored for their work's sake. Two passages emphasize this: "*Remember those who lead you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the outcome of their way of life, imitate their faith*" (Hebrews 13:7). "*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor*" (1 Timothy 6:17).

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# THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

Harvey Porter

THE SCRIPTURES USE MANY illustrations to describe the church. It is sometimes called a building, with each Christian as a stone in the whole structure. It is pictured as an army with Jesus as the commander and all of us as soldiers. It is a vine with Jesus as the core and His followers as the branches which should bear fruit. One of the most beautiful and easiest to be understood is the picture of the church as the family of God.

Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus and said, *“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone”* (Ephesians 2:19).

Paul again used this figure when he wrote Timothy, *“Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth”* (1 Timothy 3:15).

All of us have had a father and a mother. They are necessary for us to come into existence. God had and still has a wonderful plan for what the home ought to be. Unfortunately many homes have not been as He directed, and many parents and children have had misery. But those who have had good parents learned love, comfort, and being wanted and cared for. They have learned responsibility. They are a part of the family. There is unity and each is a vital part. There are no unimportant parts.

The church is a family. It follows the same basic principles of those who love each other and live in unity and harmony, helping and caring for each one, and laughing and crying together. In a spiritual way they all have been born into the same family, they have the same Father, they have the same spiritual blood line (cleansed by the blood of Jesus, their elder brother). They are all in line for the inheritance of the Father, so rich and wonderful that it defies description.

This family has responsibilities like any good family on earth. Everyone has to work and share the load. This world abhors “freeloaders,” and so does heaven’s family. A family ought to love and trust each other. In fact, we all know that the earthly family cannot last long without these two necessary ingredients. Love is at the heart of all we do — every relationship. The God of love not only expects it of His



children, He demands it. He disowns us if we do not practice it.

These truths need to be emphasized. We all need to be aware of the great joys and benefits of knowing and acting like the family of God. Our earthly families may have been broken and unhappy, but God has given the whole world a family that should and can have all that we all are seeking in a family. It will demand a lot of all of us. It is easier to love those that are close to us, but we can have an attitude of love toward those we may not yet know. It will require some effort on the part of all of us.

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## CHURCH AND KINGDOM: ARE THEY THE SAME?

William Woodson

NO SMALL AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE is attached to the question above concerning the church and the kingdom of God. This is especially true in what is termed Dispensational Premillennialism: that the kingdom of God was promised in Jesus' day, but the promise was withdrawn; that the church was given instead, and now in the age of the church believers wait for the coming of the kingdom of God — the supposed one-thousand-year reign of Christ on earth. What is one to make of this view, especially the relation of the church and kingdom?

There can be no doubt that the kingdom was announced as "at hand" (Matthew 3:1,2; Mark 1:14,15). Was this promise/provision kept? Indeed so. We are translated into the kingdom (Colossians 1:13); we are called into it (1 Thessalonians 2:12); John was "*in the kingdom*" just as clearly as he was "*in tribulation*" and "*in the isle called Patmos*" (Revelation 1:9). The "kingdom of God" was not and is not identified in Scripture as the supposed thousand-years reign of Christ on earth.

How, though, does the kingdom relate to the church? The answer is: The kingdom relates to the church in the same way that the church relates to the body of Christ, the temple of the Lord, the family of God, etc. That is, each term (church, kingdom, body, temple, family, etc.), designates the same group of people from different viewpoints as they relate to each other, and especially to God. Those believers who are in the body are not different from those who are in the church, the temple, the family; and in the same way those in the church are not different from those who are in the kingdom. The church designation indicates the fact of being called by the Gospel to come to God and serve Him; the kingdom designation indicates the fact of being completely

submissive and loyal to the rule of God over His people by Christ and the Gospel.

Jesus indicated He would partake of the bread and fruit of the vine with His followers *"in my Father's kingdom"* (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16-18). We know, further, that the Lord's supper was/is to be observed when brethren *"come together in the church"* when God's people have *"come together in one place"* (1 Corinthians 11:18,20). The same people who partake the Lord's supper with Christ in the kingdom do so in the church when they are assembled to do so. Hence, the church and kingdom are the same people viewed from different standpoints; and in no way are those words to be distinguished so as to mean we are in the church now but not in the kingdom.

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## WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH?

**Jerry Jenkins**

IN A WORLD WHERE THERE are so many things wrong, it is marvelous to find something that is right. When we focus on the faults, we cannot see the good. We can become so obsessed with the negative that it blinds us to many things that are good and right.

### **THE PLAN IS RIGHT**

The church originally existed in the mind of God. It is not accidental nor an afterthought. Paul affirmed: *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Ephesians 3:10,11). After sin entered into the world, God's answer was the powerful message of the Gospel. This message was communicated by His family — the church. The time was right (Galatians 4:4), the method was right, and the mission was right.

### **THE PRICE IS RIGHT**

God gave His only begotten Son for the church, and Jesus gave His life's blood for it.

### **THE PEOPLE ARE RIGHT**

Because you know some who do not properly represent the Lord's work does not mean that all the people are wrong. God's people are right because they are saved (Acts 2:47). The church is as a hospital which extends help to those who need it. The finest people anywhere are in the church.

## THE PLEA IS RIGHT

We are not the only people who are honest and sincere in our beliefs and practices, nor are we smarter, richer, or better-looking. That which distinguishes us is our plea to follow Christ and His Way to the very best of our abilities. To propagate the church in its purity as it was built is our goal.

## THE PURPOSE IS RIGHT

The mission of the church is to glorify God and to make known His message to a lost world.

## THE PROMISES ARE RIGHT

The promises to God's family include the promise of Pardon, the promise of Prayer, the promise to extend all Scriptural Blessings.

Indeed there are many things right with the church. We urge you to come and help us in the greatest work known to mankind.

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# MAKE YOUR LIFE COUNT!

**Maxie B. Boren**

WITH THIS SIMPLISTIC STATEMENT, the Bible tells us of a man: "...and all the days of Methuselah were 969 years; and he died" (Genesis 5:27). Other than that, we know very little about him. He was the son of Enoch and the grandfather of Noah; that's all. The reason we remember him is because he lived longer on the earth than any other man — 969 years — and he died. Like a bird which passes through the air leaving no trace, so also was Methuselah.

Contrast that with the life of Jesus. He lived only 33 years, but did He ever make them count! Look at (1) His teachings, and (2) what He did: He gave to the world the greatest teachings it had ever heard, or ever will hear. His words impacted the minds of the people who lived in that day as if they had been hit by a sledge hammer ... *"No man ever spoke like this man!"* (John 7:46). And His words have continued to impact the minds of every generation since then, worldwide! And His deeds ... "simply amazing" would best describe what He did. We have four accounts of His life that open the New Testament, and they are full of what He did. And yet, the last of these writers ends his narrative with these words: *"And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written"* (John 21:25).

Make your life count! Tell people about Jesus ... what He taught and what He did. And follow His example of love, kindness, and gentleness.

# ***The Church That Jesus Built***

**Clem Thurman**

*“JESUS ASKED HIS DISCIPLES, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who 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 Bar Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:13-18).*

Great confusion exists in the religious world, with so many denominational churches found in the world today — all claiming to follow Jesus Christ. Is it possible to know which one, or if any one, is “the church that Jesus built?” It is impossible for each person to investigate every religious group, to see if it is right. But such is not necessary. Let us start at the right place, let us investigate “the church that Jesus built”, as it is in the Bible, to find what it is.

## **IT WAS FORETOLD BY THE PROPHETS AND JESUS**

Hundreds of years before Christ, prophets wrote of the church that Jesus would build. In Isa. 2:2-3, *“It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains... and all nations shall flow unto it... for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”* Notice these things about the beginning of “the house of God” (the church, 1 Tim. 3:15): it was to be established *“in the last days,”* it was to be composed of *“all nations,”* and it was to go forth *“from Jerusalem.”* In a similar prophecy (Zech. 1:16) God said, *“I will return to Jerusalem with mercies, my house shall be built in it.”* The Lord Jesus also told of the beginning of that church. *“I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom”* (Matt. 16:18-19). When was that church, that kingdom, to begin? Gathered with His disciples, He told them, *“Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power”* (Mark 9:1). Afterward He told them, *“Tarry ye in the city [Jerusalem] until ye be clothed with power from on high”* (Luke 24:49).

From the prophets, and from Jesus Christ, comes this picture of “the church that Jesus built.” It was to be built in Jerusalem, in “the last days,”

during the lifetime of the apostles, and it was to be composed of people from all nations. Reading Acts 2:1-47, we find the fulfillment of all these. Peter calls this period *"the last days"* (v. 16-17), the promise preached was for *"all nations"* (v. 39), they were in the city of Jerusalem and the apostles were alive and doing the preaching. That was the beginning of *"the church that Jesus built,"* for people became members of the church that day (Acts 2:41,47).

### IT IS REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

When Jesus told the parable of the sower, He explained it to the disciples. Telling them that it depicted the kingdom (church), He said, *"The seed is the word of God"* (Luke 8:11). There is no other source for the church than Jesus Christ, and no other channel through which it is revealed than His word. Peter wrote, *"Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth... And this is the word of the gospel which was preached unto you"* (1 Pet. 1:23-25). Some look to history, and seem to think that reveals the church. Others look to "man's need in the current century" for their concept of what the church ought to be. But neither history nor contemporary society can reveal *"the church that Jesus built."* Only the Scriptures can do that.

The apostle Paul wrote in Eph. 3:1-6 of the message God gave him to reveal. He stated that the message was revealed to him by God (v. 2-3), that the Gentiles (all nations - Isa. 2:2) should be *"fellow-heirs and fellow-members"* (v. 6). Lest some say the message of the church is not clear, he wrote, *"Whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ"* (v. 4). He then stated that there is made known *"through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (v. 10-11). We can read, and understand, that church which God reveals and which is according to His *"eternal purpose."* And that is *"the church that Jesus built."*

### IT IS NOT DENOMINATIONAL IN ANY SENSE

Modern religious division has so conditioned religious thought that most people cannot even imagine a church that is not a denomination. But Jesus never built a denomination! Not one, and not four hundred! But He built His church. Therefore, *"the church that Jesus built"* is NOT a denomination. Look at the prayer of Jesus in Jno. 17:20-21, *"Neither pray I for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may*

*believe that thou hast sent me.*" The prayer of our Lord was that all believers would be ONE, but denominationalism divides believers, and thus stands opposed to Jesus Christ.

We are exhorted *"to contend earnestly for the faith, once for all delivered unto the saints"* (Jude 3). This is not a choice of faiths, but the one faith God delivers for all. After identifying the body as the church (Eph. 1:22-23), Paul wrote in Eph. 4:4-6, *"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."* Should we have a choice as to which God we shall serve? Or which Lord? Friend, there is no more authority for the "church of your choice" than for "God of your choice." When believers were divided into various denominations in the city of Corinth, God wrote to them by the apostle Paul: *"That ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you ... Is Christ divided?"* (1 Cor. 1:10-13). The *"church that Jesus built"* is not a denomination, nor is it a collection of all of them. As 1 Cor. 1:10-13 and other passages show: denominationalism is SIN. Jesus never authorized such a system, and He prayed it would never be.

#### **ITS ONLY ORGANIZATION IS A LOCAL CONGREGATION**

In our time, when everything from retail stores to government is organized in such a way as to centralize authority and control, the simple organization of *"the church that Jesus built"* astounds many. Jesus never designed any kind of "central authority" except Himself! He said, *"All authority is given unto me"* (Matt. 28:18). He never delegated any man, nor group of men, to exercise authority over His body of people, the church. When Paul wrote, *"The churches of Christ salute you"* (Rom. 16:16), he never made mention of a "diocese" or "parish" or "synod" or other kind of grouping. Each *"church of Christ"* stood on equal footing with every other church of Christ in the world. They were united by a common faith, but not tied together by any organizational structure. The *"churches of Christ"* of 2000 years ago were autonomous, with each congregation directing its own work for the Lord.

The organization of the local congregations of *"the church that Jesus built"* is simple. There were appointed *"elders in every church"* (Acts 14:23) who were also called *"bishops"* and *"pastors"* (Eph. 4:11). Their qualifications are found in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. A partial description of their work is in 1 Pet. 5:1-2, *"The elders therefore among you I exhort ... Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight."* These were spiritual shepherds who were to *"watch for your souls"* (Heb. 13:17).

In a local congregation there were also deacons (or *"servants"* of the

church, Phil. 1:1) whose qualities are listed in 1 Tim. 3:8-13. There were also evangelists (ministers, preachers) and teachers in the congregations. Scripture reveals, however, that only the elders (bishops, shepherds) were given authority to “oversee” (supervise) the activities of the local congregation. And their oversight was limited to *“the flock of God which is among you”* (1 Pet. 5:2). They were not given authority to oversee other congregations than the one in which they were appointed.

### **ITS WORSHIP IS SIMPLE, SINCERE AND SCRIPTURAL**

The prophet reveals much about worship in Micah 6:8, *“What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”* Why should worship be either a meaningless ritual or the artificial hype of emotionalism? Jesus put it this way in Jno. 4:24, *“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”* Our worship, to be acceptable to Him, must be as He directs: *“In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”* (Matt. 15:9).

Scripture reveals the simplicity of worship in *“the church that Jesus built.”* We read in Acts 2:42, *“They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.”* As the Lord directed, *“Upon the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread”* (Acts 20:7), thus commemorated His death in the Lord’s Supper (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-28). In assemblies for worship, they sang: *“Speaking one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:19). Without the showboating of jazz bands or other instruments, they offered *“a sacrifice of praise to God... that is, the fruit of the lips”* (Heb. 13:15). And on the first day of the week, they gave *“as they were prospered”* and as they *“purposed in their hearts”* (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7).

### **IT TEACHES SALVATION BY FAITH IN CHRIST**

Paul wrote of the gospel, *“It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth”* (Rom. 1:16). And in Rom. 5:1, *“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* When Peter recounted the time he preached first to Gentiles, he said of God, *“He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith”* (Acts 15:9).

The Scriptures reveal that saving faith is *“faith which works by love”* (Gal. 5:6). Many teach the idea that “we are saved by faith only.” But the Scriptures do not teach that. In fact, the only time the expression, “faith only,” is used in the Bible is in Jas. 2:24. From verse 14, the inspired writer has shown that faith must be accompanied by obedience, or it is dead. Then, *“Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith*



only.” It is still true that Jesus is *“the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”* (Heb. 5:9), and *“Ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth”* (1 Pet. 1:22). It is obedient faith that makes us free from sin (Rom. 6:17-18).

### **IT IS COMPOSED OF THOSE SAVED BY THE LORD**

The membership of *“the church that Jesus built”* is determined by Him, not by man. He built the church, He determines who shall be members of it. After His resurrection, He told the apostles, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned”* (Mark 16:15-16). When the apostles preached the gospel in Jerusalem, that was their message: *“God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.. . They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls... And the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved”* (Acts 2:36-47).

That is how people became members of the church of Christ 2000 years ago. That is how they become members today. The same Lord that saves people, adds those saved people to the church (Acts 2:47). That is the reason Paul wrote in Eph. 5:23, *“He is the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body.”*

### **IT EXISTS EVERYWHERE**

You do not have to be in a denomination. You can be a Christian, just as those folk were 2000 years ago, without ever being a member of anything except *“the church that Jesus built.”* The *“seed is the word of God”* (Luke 8:11), and *“the word of the Lord abideth forever, and this is the word of the gospel that was preached to you”* (1 Pet. 1:23-25). The gospel is unchanged, it still reveals *“the church that Jesus built.”* And, thus, that church is also unchanged.

Wouldn't you like to be a member of that church? You can. There are folk who have done just what we have read in the Scriptures above, and the Lord has added them to His church. If you will obey the same teaching, the same Lord will add you to the same church today. We pray that you want to be a member of the church that Jesus built. And it is with that prayer we close with the words of Rom. 16:16, *“The churches of Christ salute you.”*

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# DECISIONS

## Dalton Key

WE ARE CONSTANTLY FACED WITH the task of making decisions, the outcome of which may affect our quality of life here, and determine our eternal destiny “over there.” Decisions which have to do with right and wrong are of great importance.

We cannot be free from the responsibility of decision-making. The following are a few guidelines which may be of help to you in your decision-making.

**Does the Bible specifically mention this thing? If so, is it condemned or condoned?** Two examples of sins specifically forbidden would be (1) sexual relations outside marriage (Hebrews 13:4) and (2) lying (Colossians 3:9; Revelation 21:8).

**Does this fit within the framework of the Bible’s perfect principles?** For instance, one of the more basic principles of the Bible teaches that man is to work for what he has (Genesis 3:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:10). One who expects to live off the wealth of others, or receive “something for nothing,” would be in violation of this principle.

**Will this harm my body?** According to inspiration, we are not our own; we are the Lord’s (1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Romans 14:7,8).

**Will this help (or hurt) my Christian influence?** In all that we do and say, we must be “*an example of the believers*” (1 Timothy 4:12; Philippians 2:15; Matthew 5:15).

**Will this strengthen (or weaken) my fellow Christians?** “*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another*” (Romans 14:19).

**Will this be injurious to anyone’s health or reputation?** Paul tells us that “*Love worketh no ill to his neighbor*” (Romans 13:10).

**Are my motives pure?** In Christianity, not only are actions important, but the motives behind the actions are important as well (1 Corinthians 13:1-3; Galatians 5:26; Matthew 6:1-18).

**Will this make me a stronger Christian?** Anything which would discourage from spiritual growth should certainly be avoided.

**Ten years from now will I look back on having done this with sorrow or rejoicing?** “The memory of the just is blessed” (Proverbs 10:7).

**Would Christ do this?** This provides the acid test. The mind of Christ is to be our mind (Philippians 2:5); He is to be our example in all things (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21).