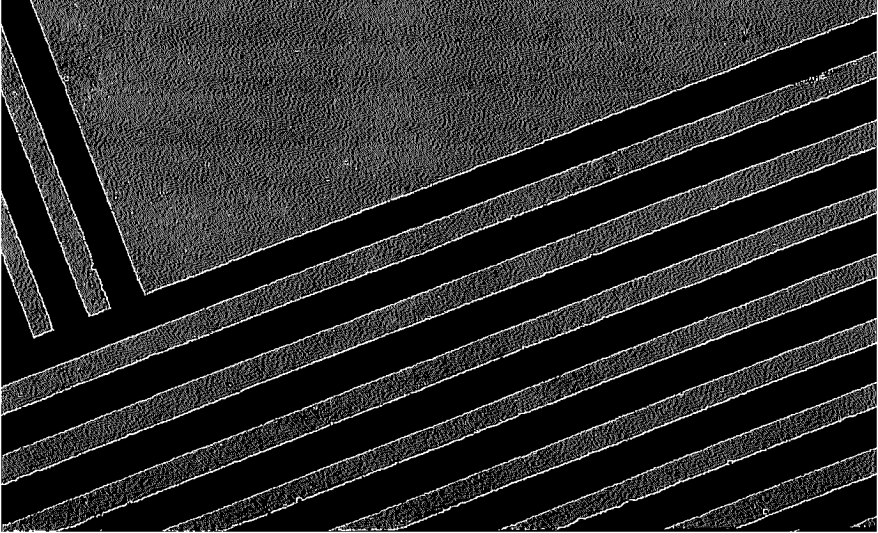


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Scriptural Language

The Apostle Peter tells us that we should speak as the oracles of God. (1 Peter 4:11). We have often said that we speak where the Bible speaks and we are silent where the Bible is silent. This is good and right. But we should not only encourage our religious friends to practice this, but we as the Lord's people should also practice it.

We may adhere to Bible doctrine when it comes to the church, the name it wears and the name that we wear, the organization of the church, its worship, and other such matters. At the same time, it is easy for us to become careless and pick up words and expressions that our denominational friends use but which cannot be supported by God's word.

For instance, some of us talk about "going to church." But we don't go to church, rather we go to worship. Going to church has grown out of the idea that the meeting house is the church. Such people then are saying, "Let us go to the meeting house" or "to the church building." We should keep in mind

that God's word teaches that the saved make up the church. Acts 2:47 tells us that Christ adds the saved to the church. Another way of putting it is that the church is made up of saved people. That is why we read in Ephesians 5:23 that Christ is the Saviour of the body or the church.

We may also talk about "my church" or "our church" when in reality the church is not mine or yours or ours, but it belongs to Christ. Jesus said that he would build his church. (Matthew 16-18). In Acts 20:28 Paul said that Christ shed his blood to purchase the church. There is therefore a big difference in the church being ours and the church belonging to Christ. If it is ours then it is not Christ's church, but if it is the church of Christ then it does not belong to us. Of course we are talking about the church that we are members of when we talk about the church being our church, and so on, but still it is very misleading to others and therefore we should not use such an expression or similar expressions.

All of this might seem to be little and insignificant. Some might even think that it is blowing up something and picking at it. But as already pointed out, besides being misleading, it can also lead to other things. This is the way people get away from God's teaching on various things. It is not done immediately, but little by little. Once you accept one then it is easier to accept something else. For instance, one then might begin to think of the church as being just another denomination, which of course, is false. The Lord's church is not a denomination and therefore is not a partner in division. But the church is to be kept pure and free from the teachings of men so that it will remain the Lord's church.

So, let me encourage all of us who belong to the Lord and his church that we watch our speech, our technology, or our references to the church, to worship, and other such things, and that we speak of them only in the sense that the scriptures speak of them. When we do that then it means that we have a full grasp of what the Bible teaches on these subjects and also it means that in using scriptural language that we are teaching the truth to those who are hearing the things that we have to say.



**associate
editorial**

The Godhead

No. 1

The Bible speaks of a God. Although we can learn about God through what we see around us, as the psalmist declared, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." (Psalm 19:1). But to know God, who He is and what is His nature, His attributes, one must study the Bible. Through the Bible God has not only revealed man and man's nature and his needs, but He has also revealed Himself to man so that man might know His Creator and Saviour. The very first words of the Bible are: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1). Here God is introduced to man as the Creator, who made the heaven and the earth and all things therein. The first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, was originally written in the Hebrew language. The english word "God" is derived from an Indo-European root found in the Germanic languages; the basic meaning is to call or invoke, and indicates a superhuman person who is the object of worship. But in Hebrew, the language in which the first part of the Bible was originally written, it is Elohim for God. Thus it would, in Hebrew, read, "In the beginning Elohim created heavens and the earth." Elohim is a plural masculine noun, a name which is a plural majesty. This plural name of God, in Hebrew, which speaks of Him as many, though He is one, is found throughout the Old Testament.

When God, for instance, in the beginning created man, the Bible says, "And God said, Let Us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Genesis 1:26). Here the Deity is speaking and He referred to Himself as US. Then again, we read, when man

sinned and was separated from God's presence, the Bible records these words, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil." Notice the word *US*. And yet again, after the floods of Noah's time when the people contrary to God's command of "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genes's 9:1), began to build a high city and a tower for their abode, whose top may reach upto heaven, the Bible record says that God spoke and said, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand their speech." (Genesis 11:7). The word *US* here is used for the one God. God, the Deity, said, let us make man; man has become one of us; and let us go down. To whom was the Deity speaking? Certainly not to angels, because He doesn't need their agreement or their advice. He then must be speaking to someone His co-equal. Now, in *US* were there two, or five or ten? We are not told there. But certainly there was more than one person in the Godhead when God spoke these words. This fact of many in the God-head is also confirmed by another Old Testament passage which is found in Ecclesiastes 12:1. Here the writer says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." The interesting fact is this, however, that in the Hebrew language the word is not Creator but Creators, plural, again. The same is also true of Job 35:10 where speaking about God the writer says, "Where is God my maker." In Hebrew maker is Makers, plural. Thus throughout the Old Testament we are introduced to a God, to one God, who is many, a God of plurality.

This plural idea of God, in Hebrew, which speaks of Him as many, though is one, is darkly intimated in the Old Testament, but clearly revealed to us in the New Testament, as God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit or the Holy Ghost. This does not mean, however, that there are three Gods, for the Bible declares that there is but only one God. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44 : 6; I Corinthians 8:4). There is only one Deity, one Being, one essence, but three distinct personalities in that one essence. In substance He is one. God is a Spirit. (John 4:24). The Deity is the Spirit, one Being. When the Bible speaks of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, this does not means

that there are three Beings or three substances, but three personalities in one substance, each being co-equal. The co-equality of the three person of the Godhead is seen in the fact that the Father sent the Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the world, and the Son when he returned to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, sent the Spirit to apply His redemption to men. Therefore as we go further in our study of the Godhead we must bear this fact in our mind that there is only one God, He is a plural God, in essence one, but in personalities three.

At John 1:1, 2 we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." So the Word, who was God, was with God. He was God, but yet He was with God. Does not this show that Godhead is made up of more than one personalities? Then notice verse fourteen of the same chapter, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." So it was the Word, the Word who was God, who was with God, who became flesh or a man. Speaking of Jesus, the apostle Paul write, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus was and is God, He was in the form of God, but he thought it not robbery to be equal with God to save you and me and all the world. The Word, God, became flesh and lived among men as a humble servant.

Notice also, in the scripture we have just read, it says that all things were made by him. But at Genesis 1:1 we read that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Does not this shows the oneness that exist between the Father and the Son? Notice again, Isaiah 44:6. it says, "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." But at Revelation 1:17 we hear Jesus saying, "Fear not; I am the first and

the last.” What do we have here? Here we have Deity claiming that He is the first and the last and then Jesus claiming that he is the first and the last. Is this a contradiction? No. Because they are one. The Father is eternal and the Son is eternal and the same is true of the Holy Spirit, the third personality of the Godhead, concerning whom we read, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the ETERNAL SPIRIT offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” (Hebrews 9:14). The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct personalities of the Godhead, but together are one Deity, one essence.

Unbelief

J.P. White

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life.”—John 3:16. This scripture has been called the “golden text” of the Bible. It is a simple statement, easy to understand, but there are many people that fail to grasp its meaning. One of the conditions of obtaining eternal life is believing on the Son. To believe on the Son means much more than the average person thinks it does. The world is filled with many false and erroneous doctrines that are man-made, and the people connected with these organizations loudly claim that they believe on the Son.

If you accept all of the teaching of the Son you are a true believer. If you reject any of his teaching you are an unbeliever. If all the people who desire eternal life, would accept all the teaching of God’s Son the unity that he prayed for would prevail in the world. (John 17:21). Some say we can’t all see alike. Do you know the reason why we can’t see alike? Some false teacher has added to or taken from the word of God and confused the minds of people.

The New Testament commands people to repent. Can we all see that? Of course we can, and I had yet to hear any one

claim that repentance is not essential. Everyone will agree that it is a commandment and we can all see it alike. Well, all the commandments are the same.

How about faith? Must one have faith? We all agree that faith is essential. We can all see it just alike. So then, I contend that all the commandments of the Lord are given to be obeyed, and they are recorded plainly and we can all see them alike if we see them at all. I have been called narrow many times when I refuse to accept man-made creeds, and doctrines. Some will say, I like your teaching, except that you think you are right and every one else is wrong. I know I am right when I obey the commandments of the Lord, and I know that every one that refuses to obey them is, of course, wrong. The Saviour just built one church. (Mat. 16:18), and there is just one way to enter or become a member of that church.

God made the plan and it is the same to all people in every generation, since the death of Christ. Each person who is accountable is required to do the same thing; no more, no less. No man has the right to add anything to or take anything away from the plan God has given. Unbelief is the cause of the divided condition of the religious world. If all believed the Bible there would be no controversy about the simple plan of salvation. To say that all are right and that all roads lead to the heavenly land is an insult to the God of heaven, and a reflection on the mission of Christ.

Why do I say that? Because the Bible tells us that the Scripture "completely furnishes us unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16). If we believed that, we would not have creeds, manuals, confessions of faith, and so on.

Look at your Saturday newspapers for the church services announced for Sunday. Note the different names and look in your Bible and compare the order of worship and see the difference. Let me give you a sample. The "pastor" will preach twice tomorrow. The "Apostle Paul" will be the morning subject, and "The Gladsomeness of Jesus" in the evening. The organist director has chosen as a prelude Beethovens 'Adiago,' as postlude

Frysingers "Allegretto," followed by a solo "Turn Ye Even To Me." This is not all of the announcement but is enough to illustrate what I mean. All unscriptural names and practices are manifestations of unbelief. I hope the time will soon come when all people will be glad to take just the plain teaching of God's word without addition or subtraction, and thus bring to pass the unity for which our Saviour prayed and what Paul taught was the will of the Lord.

I think there are a number of people that are bound by man-made creeds that are seeing the harm that is caused by them. I have recently read an article in one of our papers from Dr. John W. Inzer of Sylacauga, Alabama, a noted evangelist of the Baptist Church. He was guest speaker at a Methodist Assembly. He has this to say: Too much "Churchanity" and not enough "Christianity" is hindering the coming of the Kingdom of God on Earth. In my church we seem to think the only thing the Lord is interested in is, White Southern Baptist democrats. He urged greater freedom from denominationalism (AMEN). There should not be more than 4 denominations, and no great difference between them. He used the great commission for a text and stressed the later part. Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you. He says further if Christianity is the true religion of the true God, it should have taken the world long ago. Something is wrong somewhere! (You are telling me—J.P.W.).

"The Doctor" is 100 per cent correct in his indictment of the failures of denominationalism, but is wrong having four nearly alike. (He did not say which four), and all the others have as much divine authority for existence as the four which he might select. The best method is for all denominations to subtract all that they have added to the word of the Lord, and add all that they have left off that the word says and then we would have the unity for which our Saviour prayed, and the divisions Paul condemned would be banished forever. For example, "Once in Christ, Always in Christ." Leave that off, the Bible doesn't say it nor teach it. Many honest people think it says so. One more "praying through" is a favourite expression with a lot of preachers. It is not found in the New Testament.

The Saviour said that every plant that My Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. If we believe that it will be wise to investigate the foundation of the organization and see if it was planted by our Heavenly Father. Not a few people will say, my lodge is founded on the Bible, I can live up to its teachings, and be as good as any church members and a lot better than some. Christ established his church, bought and paid for it with His blood, and there is positively no organization that can take its place. The Salvation Army does a lot of elief work and a lot of people think in making donations to it, that it puts them in good standing sp ritually. The question arises, did the Father plant it? You don't read of Colonel Paul, or General Peter, or Lieutenant Timothy in the New Testament, hence I conclude that it is man-made.

Space will not allow a list of all the "plants" that have not been planted by our Heavenly Father, but you can take your New Testament and compare the teaching. "By their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them." (Matthew 7:20). If Joe Smith has all power in heaven and on earth he would be safe to follow. If Mary B. Eddy or Ellen G. W. ite are the way the truth and the life, follow them. If Judge Rutherford or Martin Luther was crucified for you, accept them. Now I think you can see that all the confusion, false doctrine and blasphemy are the fruits of unbelief. The scripture is complete, completely furnishing us unto every good work. The onc e mentioned are teaching things that the Bible does not teach so there is just one conclusion and that is that they are false teachers. A very loud "false teacher" just recently had this to say before the "Mike", that some people teach that baptism is essential to salvation, but thank God I am depending on the blood of Christ. We, the church of Christ, teach that all of the commandments are essential to bring us in contact with the blood of Christ. He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. How can one claim to be obedient to him and teach people that his commandments are not essential? The cleansing power of the blood will never reach any one that is in unbelief. The Saviour said he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. This preacher (so called) says no need of baptism, the blood will do. Peter said baptism saves. This

preacher says Peter was mistaken, just the blood. Let us believe all the scriptures.

IS THERE AN OLDEST CHURCH ?

Delton Haun

Sometimes we are told this church or that church is the oldest. Two or more churches claiming to be the oldest presents a difficulty. We hear others say the age of the church is unimportant which is somewhat confusing since others believe it is.

How may the age of a church be determined ? Is the tracing of a church's historical background necessary ? Is it possible to learn the age of a church ? What is implied by an investigation of this subject on the importance of the church ?

That the church of the Bible is important is seen by the fact that Jesus gave His life for it. (Acts 20:28). He loved it and adds the saved to it. (Eph. 5:25; Acts 2:47). A church Jesus loves, died for and saves should be considered important by all. Those who already feel they must be members of His church have an interest in establishing a connection with the church of the first century. One way to do this is thought to be through history. Were one convinced he could trace the history of the church of which he is a member to the first century he would undoubtedly concluded he is a member of a very old church—perhaps the oldest.

- We must remember too that churches built on a later revelation—one, we are told, that came after the close of the New Testament, would not feel it necessary to trace their history back farther than to the revelation that called them into being. But those who say the church of which they are members is the one Christ established will be concerned. If possible, many of them would like to show an historical connection with the original church of the New Testament.

Churches choosing the historical route and claiming to have had their beginning in the first century must be ready to deal

with two problems—changes in teaching and practice, and the silences of history. They must locate the church of which they are members in all of the intervening years or must resort to tracing their ancestry through churches that differed in name and practice. If one cannot locate the same church through the years, yet seeks to establish the connection historically, he must acknowledge some parent organization differed structurally and doctrinally from the present organization.

Those who locate their name or names back several centuries also have trouble for more than a name is involved. Teachings and practices must also be included. An attempt may be made to rationalize differences in teaching by suggesting the church of the Bible was the church in its infancy while the church of today is the church in its maturity and we should not expect them to be the same. This really doesn't deal with the problem, for the church, like Adam, was created full grown. In addition, God's word forbids changing the gospel preached by inspired men of the first century. (Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19).

It may also be suggested that while doctrines and practices differ between the present and the past the one thing that has remained unchanged is the authority Christ gave the apostles that has been passed forward through representatives. But Christ didn't give authority to the apostles to change His word. No man has anything to pass on except the word of God which is available to us all.

A third approach regarding the age of the church is held by members of the churches of Christ. Since the oldest church began on Pentecost in the first century why not learn about it and duplicate it in name, doctrine and practice? This would not be the creating of a new church or of another denomination. It would be the duplicating of the original. It would not be necessary to learn what happened during the intervening years. Why is it not possible to believe the same teachings (since these are in the Bible), meet the same terms of pardon (faith, repentance, confession and immersion), and become Christians only? With the Bible as our guide why not organize ourselves as the

church was organized in the first century (elders, deacons), worship as the early Christians worshipped and be nothing more or less than what they were—just Christians? Could such a group not lay claim to antiquity?

How can a church that differs in name, doctrine and practice be as old as Christ's church even if one were to be able to trace its history for hundreds of years? Can any be as old as the church Jesus established and not be a reproduction of that original church? Is this not all any church could attain? Should not every church seek to be the same as the church of the first century?

This approach by members of the churches of Christ sweeps aside over nineteen hundred years of studied connections between one religious group and another. It carries us back to the first century and brings us squarely to the question—is the church of which we are members the church Jesus built?

Revelation And Confirmation

Curtis R. Dowdy

In 'old time' God made known his will to specially chosen men who were responsible for making it known to others through speaking and/or writing. (Hebrews 1:1; Ephesians 3:3,4). The revelation came directly to the minds of those chosen, by means of the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (II Peter 1:21).

The Old Testament period of revelation came to a close with the completion of Malachi and for about 400 years no additional revelation was given. It is interesting to read some of the things which were written during this so called "silent" period; they are recorded in the Apocrypha. Now, upon what did Israel depend during this so called silent period? The answer is obvious, the mind of God was available in the Old Testament scriptures.

However, revelation had not reached its end because Christ had not yet come.

John, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, opened a new era of revelation, as he prepared a people for the Lord. (Luke 1:17). But revelation during the New Testament period was dependent on apostles and New Testament prophets. "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (Ephesians 3:5).

Confirmation was miraculous under both Testaments. The miraculous testified to the authority of the message, as Moses and Aaron's confronting Pharaoh. "And I will . . . multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 7:3). So it was with Jesus and those whom he sent "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Hebrews 2:3, 4).

Nevertheless, there would be a time when new revelation and new confirmation would cease. When all that God wished to reveal had been revealed and thus confirmed there would be no longer need for either. This principle is unequivocally stated at John 20:30, 31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Note then:

1. Jesus revealed himself to one generation.
2. Jesus was confirmed as the Christ the Son of God to that generation.
3. His coming and his confirmation have been written and those who read can believe.
4. Therefore, as long as the record stands there will be no need for Jesus to come to reconfirm himself to succeeding generations.

5. What is true of Jesus is true of all the rest of revelation and confirmation.

Paul, having given I Corinthians chapter 12 to the identification of spiritual gifts, discusses the duration of the gifts in chapter 13. He tells us that the gifts belonged to that period when revelation was in part, i.e., not completed (v. 9). He further states that when revelation is completed (which he identifies as the perfect) then that which belongs to the part (the gifts) would no longer remain (vs. 8, 10).

What does this mean, then, when men and women claim to be speaking under the direct influence of the Holy Ghost today and by his power are able to confirm it by signs, wonders and miracles?

The answer to that question has already been supplied, but confirmation comes from a rather unexpected source. In the book, *Give Me That Prime-Time Religion*, author Jerry Sholes, who was an insider in the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association for three years, states: "Usually, during a seminar, there were participants who were in wheelchairs. I never saw anyone healed of ANYTHING and that bothered me. I saw people who had come expecting a healing and I saw the raw hope and desire in their eyes. If faith COULD have brought them up out of those wheelchairs, they would have come OUT and been ready to run a 50-yard dash, on the spot! It NEVER happened.

"Oh, once in a while someone would get up out of a wheelchair and limp off the stage. But, I'd seen them a day or two before get out of their wheelchairs to get into cars or go into the restroom. They weren't total and incurable wheelchair cases. They merely needed the wheelchairs for comfort because of the particular illness they had. They COULD, however, get up and walk short distances if they HAD to, or if they REALLY WANTED TO. They really wanted to for Oral, so they'd do it and then return to their wheelchairs backstage. It was a dog and pony show!" (*Give Me That Prime-Time Religion*, Jerry Sholes, page 34).

Let it, therefore, be understood that we have confirmed revelation today and in the very same way we have apostles and witnesses today. All are available and still perform their duties in and through the word of God; the scriptures are sufficient. (II Timothy 3:16, 17). It makes as much sense to expect Jesus to make a return trip as a babe, grow up, preach and confirm it by signs, wonders and miracles, and then die on a cross as to expect new revelation and confirmation. Neither will happen. (Jude 3)!

Divine Discipline

Hoyt Bailey

The primitive rigor of the Book of Proverbs is repudiated by the modern manners. People reject the old harsh methods, and endeavour to substitute milder means of correction. No doubt there was much that was more than rough, even brutal, in the discipline of our forefathers. The relation between father and child was too often lacking in sympathy through the undue exercise of parental authority. But now the question is whether we are not erring toward the opposite extreme in showing more tenderness to the criminal than to his victim, and failing to let our children feel the need of some painful discipline. We idolize comfort, and we are in danger of thinking pain to worse than sin. It may be well, therefore, to consider some of the disadvantages of neglecting the old-fashioned methods of chastisement.

It is a mistake to suppose the rod to be cruel because it hurts. This mistake is made quite as much by the hand that should hold the rod as by the back that should feel it. Pain may be most wholesome. The highest form of punishment has as its aim to cure the offender. To think more of the sufferings of the offender than of his sin is to show a failure of conscience, a lack of appreciation of the really evil condition of the sinner. We should learn that it is worse to sin than to suffer.

There are certain special conditions under which painful chastisement is the most wholesome form of correction. Some

natures are redeemed by a process of punishment which will only crush others. A low and cruel nature especially needs painful punishment. Sins of the morally degrading class are best punished with sharp pains.

It is a sign of weakness or selfishness to withhold needful chastisement. The lawful authority may not have the energy to proceed to an extremity. So serious an action requires strength of purpose. It must be simply agonizing for a kind-hearted father to have to bring pain and disgrace to his son. But to hold back from the exercise of wholesome discipline on this account is really to give way to sinful self-indulgence. The true father will hurt himself in punishing his child.

God's chastisement of his children is for their good. He does not hate his sons; therefore, at times, he does not spare his rod. "For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth". (Prov. 3:12). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. . . But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, than are ye bastards, and not sons". (Heb 12:6-8).

It is in harmony with scripture to grieve over the disorderly. Saul in disobedience to the command of God, spares Agag and the best of the spoil. God declares to Samuel that he can endure with Saul as king no longer. Samuel in his grief, cries to God all night. "Samuel came no more to see Saul." Saul was no longer the representative of Jehovah, and consequently Samuel no more came to him, bearing messages and commands, and giving him counsel and guidance from God. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul."

Ezra "did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away". (Ezra 10:6). Moses mourned for Israel's sins forty days and forty nights. "And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger". (Deut. 9:18). "Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses

his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them". (Psa. 106:23).

Paul wrote that in the Corinthian church there was one guilty of "fornication." Such immorality was regarded with the utmost abhorrence, even through the whole Roman empire. Paul says that such a case was not "so much as named among the Gentiles." It is said of the church in Corinth, "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned." It may be that some in the church were proud of the membership of this incestuous man.

The exclusion by the church of such members from within its midst is an urgent duty. A true church is a community of Christ-like men, and the presence of such characters in it is an outrage. The verses teach that their expulsion should be practiced with the utmost zeal. It would seem that no sooner did Paul hear of this abomination than he determined to put an end to it. "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done] this [deed." As if he had said, "Though absent from you, as soon as I heard it I determined to get such a vile character expelled forthwith from the community;" and to do it when they were gathered together "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," that is, by the authority and power of Christ.

The expulsion should be practiced with the utmost zeal, not to destroy, but to save the offender. "Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The passage before us furnishes an example of fornication, which was scarcely thought to be a vice, and indeed was a religious observance among the society of Corinth. But the case was one of aggravated adultery and incest.

We regret to note the laxity of church members in tolerating such offenses against morality. The church at Corinth allowed the offender to remain unrepented in their midst, as though nothing had happened, which called for special notice and vigorous and immediate action. They did not even mourn, did not distress themselves, did not make the event an occasion of

humiliation and mourning; this showed a sad insensibility to the evil. So far from this, at the very time when their fellowship was so disgraced, they were "puffed up," boasting themselves of their spiritual gifts and intellectual distinction !

Leaven furnishes an illustration of the diffusive, contagious, corrupting power of sin. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. A sin tolerated, a sinner countenanced, in a Christian society, may imperil the general purity. "One sickly sheep infects the flock:" "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth !" Each heart is aware of the secret temptations to evil to which it is most exposed; and perhaps every one's experience can show how evil habit grows when unchecked and indulged.

The Divine summons requires that the leaven of sin be removed that the mass may be preserved in purity. The case of the Corinthians reminds us that the putting away of an offending member is necessary in order to vindicate Christian purity and to protest against the encroachments of sin. The old leaven must, in this sense, be "purged out."

Those whose company is forbidden are such as, by manifest and flagrant violation of the moral law, prove the utter insincerity of their profession to be followers of Christ. The reasons for this prohibition are obvious. It could scarcely be other than injurious to our own moral nature to be intimate with those whose life belies their creed, whose hypocrisy is unmistakable. Such intimacy would be interpreted by the world as meaning that in our esteem it is of little consequence what a man is, if he only professes to be Christ's.

Jesus Didn't Speak In Footnotes

Eddie Miller

A footnote is defined by Webster as an "explanation or comment below the text on a printed page." Usually footnotes

are included in scholarly writings or research papers to cite authorities from whom an author has borrowed ideas or information. One who uses a footnote says in effect, "I am not an authority on this point, but I can refer you to one. This point is not original with me." Under most circumstances foot-notes are helpful to the reader, and for the author who admits his own limitations they are necessary.

Jesus, however, did not speak in footnotes!! Instead of *relying* on "authorities" or "sources" for his teaching, Jesus *was* and is the authority!

As an example of his authoritative teaching, immediately following the sermon on the mountain, Matthew reports: "When Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as *one having authority*, and not as their scribes". (7:28, 29). Earlier he told this audience, "You have heard it said, Thou shalt not kill...but *I say unto you*, that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment". (5:21, 22). Jesus, in this great sermon, as in all his teaching, did not need to quote authorities for his position; in fact he repudiated the Jewish rabbis for being "psuedo-authorities"

On another occasion Jesus said, "*All authority* hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things *whatsoever I commanded you*" his *authority* is from the Father. This is further clarified by the statement of Luke 10:22. "And all things have been delivered unto me of the Father." Since Jesus and the Father were "one" and Jesus had a unique relationship with the Father (Matt. 11:27), he was given complete authority.

Notice also that the gospel accounts are sprinkled generously with statements like: "And the disciples went, and did as *Jesus commanded* them" (Matt. 21:6), "and *he charged* them that they should take nothing for their journey..." (Mark 6:8). "And *he commanded* the multitude to sit down on the ground..."

(Mark 8:6). "For *he was commanding* the unclean spirit to come out of the man." (Lk. 8:29).

Prior to his death, resurrection, and ascension Jesus made a promise to the apostles that they would know his will through divine revelation. Specifically, he promised that his authority would be with them as they taught and wrote. (Matt. 16:18, 19; Jno. 14:26; 16:12, 13). Consequently, when we read from the apostles and prophets we know we are reading the *will of Christ*, nothing more, nothing less !

I believe a few inferences can be drawn from realizing that Jesus had all authority :

First, the matter of having a "Thus saith the Lord" for what we do, say and believe is of paramount importance ! Putting every belief alongside Jesus' teaching will at once allow a decision about whether it is true or false. Our words and actions, as individuals and congregations should be put through the "sieve" of the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. This is precisely what I Thessalonians 5:21 demands : "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." This clearly implies rejecting what is not good, i.e., not in harmony with the will of Christ.

Second, we should be especially cautious in making use of the writings and viewpoints of others. Appreciative and thankful use of human commentaries, books and articles is almost always helpful, but the only final and authoritative answers will be found in the New Testament of Jesus Christ.

Third, our dealings with others should be characterized by conscientiously and constantly teaching them the will of Christ. A confused neighbour, friend or relative deserves to be directed to the answers found in God's word. No amount of human empathy, counselling or advice will compare with the solid instructions of the Bible. As Peter expressed it : "Sanctify Christ in your hearts as Lord, Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear." (I Pet. 3:15).

On one occasion when large numbers of people were turning their backs on Jesus, he asked the disciples, "Would ye also go

away?" Peter replied, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of life". (John 6:67, 68). May we have the same confidence in the words of Jesus!

"Let The Bible Speak About Speaking In Tongues"

W.C. Johnson

Much confusion exists in the religious world today relative to what the Bible teaches about the miraculous gifts of the early church. These gifts are found recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:4-12 and Romans 12:6-8. Concerning the various gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Bible perhaps the greatest controversy rests in the subject SPEAKING IN TONGUES. I have had the opportunity of discussing this particular gift with people from nearly every walk of life. Thus, it is my desire to set forth in the most simple manner possible the Bible's teaching on this subject. It is very difficult to remove from our minds emotional arguments, but I ask that you let the World of God be the final authority for any conclusion that we may draw.

STATEMENT ONE

The Bible Defines Speaking In Tongues

"Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, *because that every man heard them speak in his own language.* And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? *And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? . . . Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God*". (Acts 2:6-11).

This is the first time we read about the gift of tongues. We can conclude from these passages that when the Bible speaks of speaking in tongues it is making reference to languages not estatic utterances. Observation proves that the "tongue speaking" of today is not even closely related to that miraculous gift of the first century. (1 Corinthians 14:1-33; Acts 19:1-6; Acts 10:44-48).

STATEMENT TWO

The Bible Teaches What The Purposes Of Speaking In Tongues Were

"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not : but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe". (1 Corinthians 14:22).

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following". (Mark 16:17-20).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders: and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will ?" (Hebrews 2:3, 4).

We can conclude from these passages what God intended to accomplish with the gift of speaking in tongues. It was to be used as a sign to the unbeliever, to magnify God and to be used as an instrument to CONFIRM THE WORD. The people in Acts 2 were not believers in Christ. (Acts 2:36-41). so the tongues were a sign to them. In Acts 10; we must consider the background and conclude that these were the first uncircumcised

Gentiles to be brought to Christ. Thus, the six Jewish brethren accompanying Peter were unbelievers in the sense of Gentile salvation. (Acts 15:7-11; Acts 11:12; Acts 10:44-48). The Bible tells us that Cornelius, his household, near friends, Peter and the six brethren were present. Peter addresses the six Jewish brethren in verse 47.

The Bible *nowhere* teaches that the gift of speaking in tongues was to signify salvation, and it is unscriptural to so state. In 1 Corinthians 12:29-31, Paul states that some at Corinth could not speak in tongues, yet he writes the letter to the church of God at Corinth to them that are sanctified. (1 Corinthians 1:1, 2). So this false doctrine has been found wanting in light of the teachings of the Bible. Note verse 31 states that he will show a more excellent way. He does so in chapter 13.

STATEMENT THREE

The Bible Teaches About The Conduct Of The One Who Possessed The Gift Of Speaking In Tongues

"If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. *But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God*". (1 Corinthians 14:27, 28).

Paul stated that those who possessed the gift of speaking in tongues were to control it. They were to exercise the gift in the assembly only if there was an interpreter. All things were to be done decently and in order, for God is not the author of confusion. (1 Corinthians 14:33 and 40). The Bible teaching on the subject of speaking in tongues is so opposite of what we hear today it is pitiful. (Men today have changed God's desire, design, and intent concerning this gift and are leading some astray with their teaching).

When one says, "I couldn't help myself; I just had to speak." You can conclude from the Bible that they do not have the Bible gift of speaking in tongues but in fact are promoting something

foreign to the Bible. Please keep your heart open to what the BIBLE TEACHES ON THIS SUBJECT.

STATEMENT FOUR

The Bible Teaches About Women And This Gift

"Let your women keep silence in the churches : for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home : for it is a shame for women to speak in the church". (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35).

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence". (1 Timothy 2:11, 12).

We can conclude from these passages that women in the first century were commanded to be silent in the assembly. Of course, we must interpret this in light of other plain passages. She was commanded to sing. (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) and she could confess Jesus Christ as her Lord and as the Son of God in her response to the first principles of the faith. (Romans 10:9, 10). These are plain passages that cannot be misunderstood. Nevertheless, she was commanded to remain silent indicating she could not use this gift in the assembly. Today's so-called use of this gift is directly opposed to what the Bible teaches it should be. For a woman to speak out in the assembly today or have authority over the man is in complete disagreement with the Bible. In spite of this, it has been my experience and observation that women are the main leaders in this modern day tongue movement.

STATEMENT FIVE

The Bible Teaches That This Gift Ceased

Charity never faileth : but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; *whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there*

be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we known in part, and we prophesy en part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

“But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:25).

“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, throughly furnished unto all good works”. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the peace of Christ unto another gospel: 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 which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed”. (Galatians 1:6-9).

The above passage plainly teach that the gift of speaking in tongues was to cease when that which is perfect came. We can also conclude that the purpose of the gift was to confirm the WORD; therefore when the WORD was confirmed the need for the gifts ceased. The above passages plainly teach that we have this confirmed WORD today. (Hebrews 2:1, 4; 2 John 9; 2 Peter 1:3). Please search the Bible and note that God's Word is complete and was given to man in its entirety in the first century. According to the Scriptures modern day use of the miraculous gift must be rejected as false. **TONGUES HAVE SERVED THEIR PURPOSE IN CONFIRMING THE WORD; THEREFORE WE NEED NOTHING MORE THAN THAT CONFIRMED WORD TODAY.**

When we preach the gospel of Christ today, God is calling People to Him that they might be His worshippers. (Mark 16:15, 16; 2 Thessalonians 2:14). Anyone who hears the gospel (Romans 10:17), believes the facts [of the gospel—the death, burial and

resurrection of Jesus (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4), repents of sins (Acts 17:30, 31), confess Jesus Christ as Lord and the Son of God (Romans 10:9, 10) and is baptized in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36) is a son of God (Galatians 3:26, 27) and thus seeks to worship God in spirit and truth. (John 4:23, 24). When we obey Christ we are added to the church. (Acts 2:47). We must then continue to walk by faith. (2 Corinthians 5:7).

It is God's desire that you be saved. (1 Timothy 2:4). You have read what the Bible teaches concerning "speaking in tongues". Please consider the previously mentioned statements on this subject.

Churches of Christ are humbly seeking to restore the teaching of God's Word and serve Him as He would have us in this day and age.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord". (Acts 22:16).

The Love Of Money

Bob Duncan

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows". (I Timothy 6:10). Look at this statement from the pen of the inspired apostle! Have we really been impressed with the truth contained therein? Do we really believe the love of money can be so dangerous?

True, this passage does not say that money is evil. It is neither evil nor good; it can be used for either. It can be used to buy whiskey or to preach the gospel, to hire a murderer or to feed the hungry. Money itself has no moral or spiritual character, but is powerful for good or evil, according to the moral and spiritual character of those who possess it.

The Greek word here rendered "love of money" is used just here once in the New Testament, but the adjective form of the word occurs twice, and in each occurrence is translated by the word *covetous*. Hence we would do not injustice to the passage to paraphrase it like this: "Covetousness is the root of all evil . . ."

One of the reasons the love of money is "a root of all kinds of evil" (ASV) is the fact that it is so hard to recognize in oneself. People come down the aisles and confess every sin imaginable, but how often have you known of someone's coming forward to confess the sin of covetousness? It is simply a hard sin to see in ourselves, though we may see it without difficulty in others.

It is not uncommon for one who is a lover of money to refuse to recognize this characteristic in himself, for it is easy for him to "cop out" by saying he cares nothing for money, but is interested only in what it will buy. For example, the man who sells whiskey may have a legitimate need for a larger than average income. He may have a large family, with several children he wants to send to college. No amount of need, however, and no motive, regardless of how noble, can justify the sin of covetousness—the love of money.

We can see the love of money as the root of evil in the man who steals, cheats, peddles drugs, sells whiskey, or lies on his tax return. What about the man, regardless of the reason, who fails to contribute as he should? What about the preacher or the eldership which tends to overlook the sins of the rich, while taking a firm stand against those of the poor? What about the brethren who are partial in their dealings with people? I have seen preachers and others who go out of their way to be cordial with the rich, but who will hardly greet the poor at all.

What about the college administrator who caters to the whims and fancies of the rich, even at the sacrifice of moral and spiritual principles?

When the desire for money, regardless of the motive or reason for wanting the money, causes one to sacrifice principles of truth or righteousness, that desire is a damning sin.

How Big A Fool Are You ?

Ancil Jenkins

A king once gave his court jester his staff to carry. He said the jester was a fool and when he found a bigger fool, he was to give him the staff. A few months later, the king was on his death bed. The jester visited him and asked the king if he was prepared to die. Sadly, the king said that he did not believe he was. The jester said, "Here is your staff."

How much we believe in preparation. We prepare for professions by going to school. We prepare for retirement by insurance or other programs. Why do people fail to prepare to die ?

Some refuse to face the reality of death. They think it will not come to them. They may say they know they will die, but deep down, they feel somehow they will escape it.

Others think it will not come soon. The great delusion is, "there is plenty of time." Most people plan to prepare to die but not soon.

There are others who have adopted a religion or philosophy that makes life after death pleasant without any preparation in this life. As the child said who had studied the rich man and Lazarus, "I want to live like the rich man and die like Lazarus." It is impossible to do this. To think otherwise is a fool.

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