

Rom. 14:19  
So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32  
And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

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## "I Believe in God"

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Often, when conversing with people I have just met, such as one who serves my table in a restaurant, in the course of the conversation I will ask "Do you believe in God?" Nearly 100% of the time the response will be in the affirmative. Now, my question is, "What does it mean to believe in God?" There may be a marked difference in "I believe in God," and "I believe God." I then may ask "Where do you go to church?" And the reply may be, "Oh, I don't go to church. I have my own faith." Here is where the difference begins to appear. They believe that God exists, but evidently, they don't believe what he says through the inspired writer in **Hebrews 10:25**, which says, *"Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the habit of some is."* And similarly, the apostle Paul, in writing about the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, quoted Christ in these words: *"This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me'" (1 Cor. 11:24-25).*

Clear evidence shows that the early church, guided by the inspired apostles, partook of the Supper every first day of the week. But today, many denominations, claiming they believe in the Lord, do not believe what he taught. Some groups take the Supper once a month, once every three months, once a year, or some do not observe it at all. Why? Evidently, they do not believe the teaching of Christ, though they claim to believe in Him. Do you see the inconsistency? This calls to mind the words of Christ in **Matthew 7:21-23**: *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'"*

What was the problem? They believed in the Lord, but they did not believe him, inasmuch as they wanted

to do what seemed good to them, rather than do what the Lord had authorized. They were practicing *"lawlessness,"* that which was without authority.

Consider **Colossians 3:17**: *"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."* What is the message in this passage? What we do in word (our teaching) or deed (our actions) must be *"in the name of the Lord Jesus"* (by his authority). And where do we go to find what God has authorized? Isaiah dealt with a wayward people who were looking for answers in the wrong places. His response? *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn" (Isaiah 8:20).* What is *"the law and testimony?"* It's the Bible, God's revelation to us!

Consider what Paul wrote about this matter. *"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with **spiritual words**" (1 Corinthians 2:12-13).* This is in keeping with the promise Christ made to the apostles: *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come" (John 16:13).*

Consider the implications of what Christ told his disciples after his resurrection. *"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" (Matthew 28:18)* In the end, what does it matter if we choose just to believe in Christ as opposed to believing him? We will let Christ explain this in His own words. *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." (John 12:48)* What will judge us? God's Word!

Jesus emphasized this in his conversation with

Satan: *"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'"* (Matthew 4:4). Dear reader, it is not up to us to determine what part of the Bible is believable, or which is not to be believed. God has not given us that liberty. How can our finite minds determine which parts of God's revelation are true and which are false? We do not have that liberty, or that ability. It is either all true, or it is all false. And while it is not the purpose of this writing to prove the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible, there is abundant and absolute evidence that the Bible is true!

Let me illustrate a perfect example of "belief" vs. "believe in." In a conversation with a friend some time ago, we were discussing a Bible teaching, and I mentioned a Bible verse that was contrary to his views on a certain matter. As soon as I mentioned the passage, he said, "I don't believe that." What was it he didn't believe? It wasn't what I said, but what the Bible said. Does he believe in God? Yes, as he is a faithful member of a denomination. But he didn't believe what God said. The words I quoted were not literally spoken by God, but were written by the apostle Paul, one of God's spokesmen to whom the mind of God was revealed. Paul further emphasizes this in his letter to the church at Thessalonica. *"For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe"* (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

This is a problem I see in many in the denominational world, as they choose which parts of the Bible they like, and are willing to follow, and which parts they don't like, and thus refuse to follow. I'm afraid there will be a rude awakening at the Judgment Day. *"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

*"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book"* (Revelation 22:18-19).

On that final Judgment Day, when you stand before the Judge of all the earth, and you are asked to defend yourself, are you willing to risk eternity by saying, "I'm sorry, Lord. I didn't believe what you said through your inspired apostles and prophets"?

***Taken from Meditate On These Things***

## SAINTS IN A STRANGE SETTING

Because of hard circumstances in life, some Christians grow tired of living the kind of life God desires; their despair leads them to give up all together. Because of persecution, peer pressure, lack of faith, opposition of family, etc., some Christians think it is impossible to fight the good fight and remain faithful to the end. This problem is not new. Christians of the 1st century were plagued with the same obstacles that Christians of the 20th century face.

Paul says the Christians at Philippi present a good example of this. In Philippians, Paul says that you can be a Christian regardless of the circumstances in life. He said: *"Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren that are with me salute you. All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar's household. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit"* (4:21-23). Paul addresses this letter to the "saints" at Philippi—people who had been set apart to the Lord. All who have obeyed the gospel have been set apart in Christ. With faith in Christ and His word, the Christians at Philippi demonstrated this. The Caesars were not known for their spirituality. Nero and other Roman kings were avowed enemies of Christ and His church. Still, the Christians in Caesar's household were able to remain faithful; they even demonstrated love and concern for those in other places.

Other examples of those who stood alone would include Joseph. He, at the hand of ungodly brothers, was sold into Egyptian slavery where he was forced to serve a man who had contempt for the God of heaven. An ungodly woman sought to lead Joseph into sin. He suffered doing right. But remember that Joseph did not lose God's respect!

What about the three Hebrew boys who were thrown into the fiery furnace? Surely they had the right to say: "Well, everybody else is doing it!" Remember Daniel who faced certain death in the lion's den. He stood and faced the crowd with "open windows."

There are saints in Caesar's household today. In the home relationship only one mate is faithful to God and faces an uphill battle to remain faithful. Often ungodly companions present strong pressure to give up. Paul believed that women could be faithful in spite of their unfavorable circumstances (1 Cor. 7:12-14). Peter says that a godly wife can use her life to convert her husband (1 Pet. 3:1-3). Christians have to work with those who curse, swear, etc. Sometimes the pressure to drink alcoholic beverages is strong. But many withstand this type of pressure. Men and women in military service are exposed to many temptations. Cornelius was a military man and who could deny that he was dedicated to God? Young people are tempted with pressure to conform. Pressure of peers to dance, engage in drug abuse, and elicit sex is strong. Remember: *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou*



*an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).*

We can do right if the determination is strong enough. *"I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me."*

**Randy Harshbarger**

## **The Destruction of Jerusalem Foretold**

History tells us that the City of Jerusalem was destroyed by the armies of Titus Vespasian during the year 70 AD. Josephus records the horrors of the final days before the fall of the city and the slaughters of the Jews wrought by the Romans. He says so many Jews were sold into slavery at the market in Alexandria that the price cratered and many were just slaughtered rather than continuing to keep them as prisoners. This was certainly a terrible time.

When Jesus foretold of the Destruction of Jerusalem in **Matthew 24** he referred back to the words of Daniel, *"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, etc." (Matt. 24:15 & Luke 21:20)* It is obvious that this event took place long after the 70<sup>th</sup> week and that's OK! It wasn't supposed to! Only the six purposes of the prophecy needed to happen during that time frame, and they did. The destruction of Jerusalem, while spoken of in the prophecy, is incidental to the purpose of the message. The desolation, however, WAS DETERMINED DURING THE SEVENTIETH WEEK as language of **Daniel 9** indicates. *"And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined." (vs. 26 and vs. 27)*

When the unbelieving Jews asked for Barabbas instead of Jesus, Pilate asked what to do with their King. The reply was they had no King but Caesar (**John 19:15**). The fate of THE NATION was sealed when they said, *"His blood shall be on us and on our children!"*  
**Matthew 27:25**

**Cleveland Reddinger**

## **God's Way**

The problem of disinterested people is not new. It existed in some places even in the first century. Paul said it existed in Corinth. *"For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness" (I Corinthians 1:22-23).*

Paul had the power to offer signs to the Jews and the knowledge to compete with the Greeks in worldly

wisdom. The philosophy described above would have suggested advertisement of a lecture on "The Judaistic Philosophy in the Roman World." Obtaining his audience with this, he could then slip in a little about Jesus and the cross. But this was not Paul's approach, as he told us: *"For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2).* Human philosophy and human wisdom had no place in Paul's plan for saving the lost in Corinth.

Preaching only the gospel, of course, Paul could have announced himself as "Dr. Paul, graduate of the University of Gamaliel, noted author, world traveler, inspired and dynamic lecturer." Rather, he says, *"And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God ... I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:1, 3-5).*

Worldly appeals simply cannot save lost men. And to attach them to the gospel is to cheapen the good news of Jesus Christ. By such appeals we may increase numbers and even "make waves," but such individuals in the local church are liabilities rather than assets. As materials in God's building they are classified as *"wood, hay, and straw."* Paul warns against building such material into the church: *"According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it .... Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work" (I Corinthians 3:10, 12, 13).*

**by Sewell Hall; Taken from the Beacon Electronic Edition, Columbia, Tn.**

**Heb. 11:1** *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

**James 2:21** *Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.*

**Psa. 1:1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

## HOURS OF WORSHIP

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship  
Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship  
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

### **Visitors welcome**

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PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK,  
STEPHEN KIMKER, STEVE AND  
SUZANNE WIMP, ALMA  
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CHRISTIAN SAPITULA.

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GOVERNMENT  
JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: PAUL'S FINAL  
WORDS TO ELDERS



## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10