

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.

October
20
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THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST (2)

by Jim Stauffer

“ *“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”*” (Acts 4:12)

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,” (Hebrews 5:8–9)

Once we recognize Jesus as the One Who provides the instruction for our salvation, we can then give ear to the things He has said and obey Him as the author, yes even the name under heaven whereby we must be saved.

The major problem with this is getting the attention of mankind to listen to the instruction of Jesus. As we mentioned in last week’s article, Jesus authorized the Scriptures. He is the One who directed the Holy Spirit to reveal the mind of God to the apostles who then preached and wrote it for us to learn (John 16:13,14; 1 Cor. 2:10-13).

Jesus said of Himself after His resurrection from the dead, “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* (Matthew 28:18) Paul then said of God regarding Jesus, *“And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”* (Ephesians 1:22–23)

Therefore it must be acknowledged that the instruction provided by Christ and His chosen apostles as revealers of His word, is sufficient to lead us to salvation.

Jesus told His apostles, *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”* (Mark 16:15–16) But just immersing someone in water is not considered biblical baptism. There are changes in man’s heart that must occur prior to his request to be baptized. His request to be baptized must come as a result of his having heard the word of

God (Rom. 10:17), just as the Ethiopian did in Acts 8:36-38 after Philip preached Jesus to him (see vs. 34). A major part of his conversion was confessing his faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

In the first recorded gospel sermon the apostle Peter taught the Jews who had been complicit in the crucifixion of the Lord, they needed to repent prior to being baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38).

As we consider each of these incidents in Scripture we are able to put together the change Jesus called for when He taught Nicodemus about the need to be *born again* (John 3:3-5). When a man hears the gospel that Paul says is the *....power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek* (Rom. 1:16), he must have a change in heart in order to repent of his sins (Acts 2:38). He must have a change of heart in order to submit himself to the authority of Jesus Christ as his Lord (Rom. 10:9,10). And he must have a change of heart in order to obey that same Christ Who is the author of his salvation by being baptized into Christ thus putting Him on and becoming a son of God through faith (Gal. 3:26,27).

All of this we learn by a simple reading and study of God’s word, His revealed will. We did not learn this from man. It was not man that taught us one needs to hear, believe, repent and confess in order to be a candidate for the new birth that is consummated in baptism. It was Jesus Christ Who revealed it unto us in His word, the Scriptures.

Therefore, when someone says we should simply baptize babies when they are born and then all is taken care of, we know they learned that from a man and not from God through His will. When someone says we should just pray the sinner’s prayer and God will do the rest and save us, we know he has learned that from some man. When someone says all we have to do is believe in our hearts to be saved and baptism is unnecessary for salvation, we know he learned that from some man. It is to those people Jesus speaks

when he says, *“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 will enter. 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.”* (Matthew 7:21–23) These are people who have chosen to go with the majority of men and defend what they say and do by pointing to the large numbers that agree with them. To those people Jesus had this message, *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* (Matthew 7:14)

We must each realize our future with the Lord is in our own hands. We cannot rely on men who make a living out of telling others what they think they should do. The gospel preacher teaches men what God says in His word they should do.

What are you obeying? Is it from man or from God?

Strange Things I Keep Hearing

During Jesus’ day, the people were amazed at His power. In fact, we are told in **Luke 5:26** *“And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today.”* They had just witnessed Jesus heal a man who was suffering from palsy. His friends lowered him down through the roof, Jesus healed him, and he walked out on his own. This amazed everyone and they proclaimed *“We have seen strange things today.”*

We all can relate to how they felt because we too have seen strange things in our lives. Unfortunately, it is not what I am seeing, but what I am hearing that disturbs me now. Over the years I have heard strange things coming from the mouths of so-called mature Christians. The problem is I continue to hear them in various places.

Let me share some strange things I keep hearing.

First, The way we establish authority is man-made! Now I know that whenever this is said, someone is usually trying to advocate some new thing concerning the work and worship of the Lord’s church. They will say, “Nowhere in the Bible will you find Jesus or an apostle saying, ‘You establish authority by direct command, approved example, or necessary inference.’ This means that it must be man-made or just church of Christ doctrine!” I might point out there is no such critter as church of Christ doctrine, but there is the doctrine of Christ, and there is a big difference! These folks want a new hermeneutic, and if the old hermeneutic was man-

made, then there would be no reason not to change it. D.R. Dungan defined hermeneutics several years ago, stating. “Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. Sacred hermeneutics is the science of interpreting the Scriptures.”

Such brethren fail to remember that authority is inherent with God for He created everything (**Gen.1:1**). God the Father gave authority to Christ (**Heb.1:1-4**). Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles in writing the New Testament (**John 14:26**). The Bible was written so every person could understand it (**Eph. 3:4**). God expects people to study and meditate upon His divine word (**2 Tim.2:15**). When I open my Bible, I find Jesus using all three ways to establish authority. In John, we read *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”* (**John 13:34-35**).

1. We have a Direct Command or Statement given: *“That ye Love one another”* (**v. 34**)

2. We have an Approved Example given: *“As I have loved you”* (**v. 34**)

3. We have a Necessary Inference given: *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”* (**v. 35**)

The inspired apostles established authority the same way in **Acts 15**.

1. Necessary Inference was used by Peter (**vv. 7-11**).

2. Approved Example was used by Paul and Barnabas (**v. 12**).

3. Direct Command or Statement was used by James (**vv.13-19**). Logically if Jesus and the apostles taught in this manner, then the way of establishing Biblical authority came from God, not man.

Another strange thing I keep hearing.

The Steps of salvation are man-made! I continue to hear this from brethren in several places. I had one man bring me an article that he found on the internet, concerning Walter Scott, where someone claimed that he was the one who came up with the five steps of salvation. Scott was part of the Restoration Movement and was not born until 1796, which was long after Jesus and the apostles lived and taught on this earth. However, when I open my Bible, I find Jesus and the apostles teaching five steps in order to be saved:

1. Jesus taught that one must hear (**John 6:45-46**).

The apostles taught one must hear (**Rom. 10:17**).

2. Jesus taught that one must believe (**John 8:24**).

The apostles taught one must believe (**Acts 16:30-31**).

3. Jesus taught that one must repent (**Luke 13:3**).

The apostles taught one must repent (**Acts 2:38**).

4. Jesus taught that one must confess (**Matt. 10:32-33**).

The apostles taught the need to confess Christ (**Rom. 10:9-10**).

5. Jesus taught one must be baptized (**Mark 16:16**).

The apostles taught one must be baptized into Christ (**Gal. 3:26-27**).

Such brethren should realize if Jesus and the apostles taught the five steps of salvation then it came from God, not man. The Bible says it, and I believe it. I pray that all would believe it and then perhaps that would stop the strange things I keep hearing!

Rufus Clifford III

THE MAYONNAISE JAR AND COFFEE

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar...and the coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else in the jar. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - God, family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car.

The sand is everything else - the small stuff. "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls.

The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Maintain a close relationship with God.

Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take someone out to dinner. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter

how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.

Anonymous

submitted to Facebook by Whit Sasser

Remember: Stick With What is Written

The Apostle Paul admonished the Corinthian brethren long ago, *"Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written"* (**1 Cor. 4:6**.) He even warned them a second time in **2 Cor. 1:13**, *"For we write nothing else to you than what you read and understand"*. To put it another way there is no hidden message in the scriptures; it's all right there in front of you in the plain meaning of the words. There is no "Da Vinci Code" message.

Since that is the case a cardinal rule for understanding scripture is to: Stick with what is actually written! There is no need to go further! What God said is right there in the words so there is no need to go further. When we think about it a little we realize this goes a long way toward preventing the divisions plaguing the world of Christianity. "How so?" you may ask. Well, all the different churches are not divided over what the Bible says, but over what it DOESN'T SAY. You and I can get together and both read out of our Bibles (assuming, of course, that we both use standard translations) and read the same message. It may be worded somewhat differently but the content will be the same. We can both walk away in 100% agreement because we stuck with what we both read out of the Scriptures, which we both accept. If I start adding my ideas and you start adding your ideas and insisting on them then unity goes right out the window as does Jesus' prayer in **John 17:20f**. The ONLY PATH to unity is: Sticking With What is Written!

Cleveland Reddinger

SELF-INTEREST

A lady answered the knock on her door to find a man with a sad expression. "I'm sorry to disturb you," he said, "but I'm collecting money for an unfortunate family in the neighborhood. The husband is out of work, the kids are hungry, the utilities will soon be cut off, and worse, they're going to be kicked out of their apartment if they don't pay the rent by this afternoon." "I'll be happy to help," said the woman with great concern. "But who are you?" "I'm the landlord," he replied.

Jon H. Allen.

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

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

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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BIBLE CLASSES

SUNDAY MORNING

STUDY OF AUTHORITY

TEACHER - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY EVENING

THE BOOK OF JOB

TEACHER - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: THE SOLUTION TO

THE UNITY PROBLEM



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