

# The Mountain Messenger

A CHRISTIAN VOICE FROM THE MOUNTAIN STATE AND BEYOND

**OPINION VERSUS  
LOVE**

**IS THERE A  
LEADERSHIP CRISIS  
IN THE CHURCH?**

**REMARKABLE WOMEN**

Along with other great articles by...  
Andy Robison, Deborah Amos, Joshua Hall, and  
more...

New **EVENTS** page!

“...The churches of Christ greet you” (Romans 16:16).

# Editor's Note

The whole world seems to be concerned about profit or personal gain. Actually, I am also concerned with profit, and so should you. "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mark 8:36 NKJV). Jesus is helping us with this statement to understand what we should actually be considering to be profitable. Sure, gaining the whole world would make you rich, but if you lose your soul in the process, then what real value is there? There is nothing profitable for someone who is considered to be rich for the season of life but loses their soul and eternal future.

All of us who are associated with Added to the Church would like to thank you for opening up a copy of *The Mountain Messenger*. Whether you are reading this from your electronic device or the printed page of one of our physical copies, you possess a small document that contains a rich amount of value. This value comes from the wisdom that our writers have mined from within the word of God. These writers have carefully labored to approach their topics with the intent of expressing God's mind, which has been revealed through His word (1 Cor 2:10-12, 16). Please enjoy these lessons and apply all you can from God's word to your lives. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16). The word of God is profitable, and the more you invest in it, the more value you will bring to your life and eternal future. The word of God is able to save your soul (Jas 1:21).

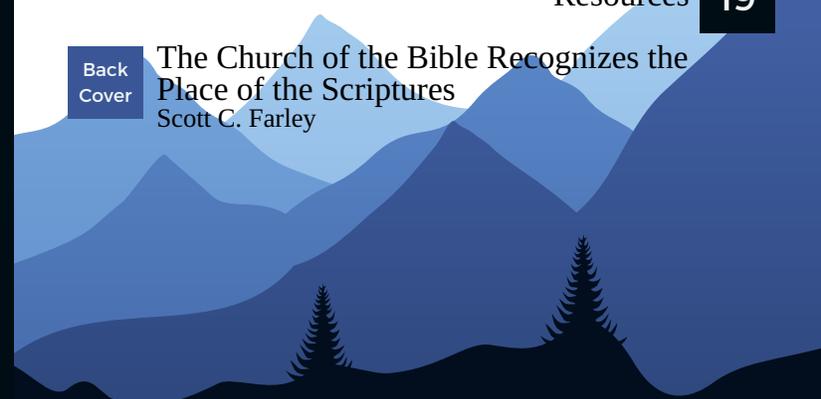
It currently is and always will be the mission of *The Mountain Messenger* to "Take the gospel of Jesus Christ through the country roads of West Virginia and beyond." Your desire to read and share what all our Christian writers have to provide helps to ensure our existence as a publication. If you wish to help invest in us so we can continue to be profitable to others with the word of God, contact us through our website, [www.addedtothechurch.com](http://www.addedtothechurch.com), or by writing to the address below.

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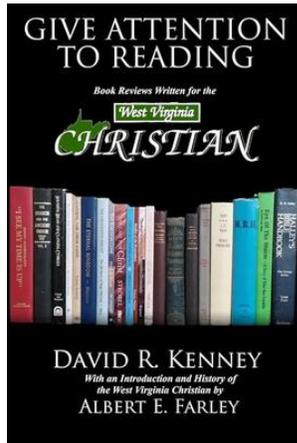
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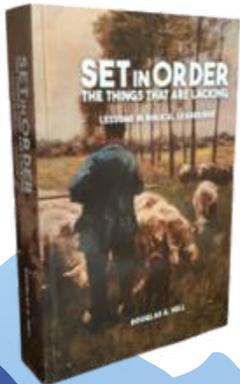
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# The Mountain Messenger

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# OPINION

versus

# LOVE

Jon Hescht

One topic that has been discussed continually and is coming to the forefront of debate today is what topics found in Scripture are matters of faith and what are considered only opinion. The idea presented by some is that there are many more issues that are subjective and, therefore, do not influence fellowship. A favorite way of framing the question is, “Is that a salvation issue?” In other words, they are asking if a topic is truly so important that it will affect fellowship and salvation or is it something that can be agreed to disagree on.

Making people decide which category things fall into who lack understanding of how doctrine is defined can force them to prematurely assume things. A good example of this trend and the effects it can have can be seen in a recent article by the Christian Chronicle by Calvin Cockrell on October 10th entitled, “Get over your differences – We’re about Jesus.” It was a celebration of two Spokane, Washington, churches of Christ who decided to “put aside” their doctrinal differences and merge together.

Sunrise church of Christ and Northside church of Christ had always been close in proximity, but after Covid both congregations were down in numbers. They discussed meeting together, but among other “key doctrinal differences,” one group used instrumental music

while to other held to the importance of a cappella music in worship. It was decided that “it was clear they should use a blended model of a cappella and instrumental music in the new church’s worship.” The congregation that had previously been a cappella “hoped” it might give more appeal to the younger generation and help with evangelism. In response to questions of compromise, it is reported:

To be clear, Northside leaders don’t believe they’re compromising on truth — rather, they say some of the doctrines they once believed were vital were really traditions. And they don’t feel they have the luxury of clinging to traditions that hinder their ability to evangelize. Convenience now overruled commandment, reducing doctrine to personal preference regarding entertainment.

Doctrine was made to be a matter of opinion that Christians should be able to overcome if they love one another, but this is contrary to what is found within Scripture. Doctrine is teaching, teaching that comes from God (2 Tim 3:16-17). If God is love (1 John 4:8), then making sure correct doctrine is taught is showing love to each other.

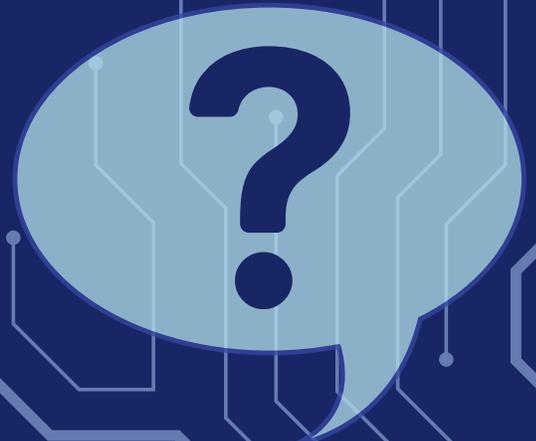
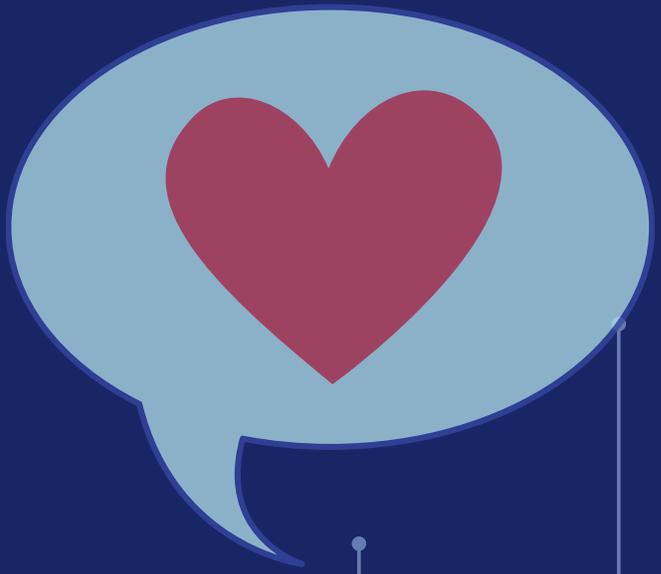
Paul tells Timothy it is vital to “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching,” (1 Tim 4:16) to know

# Opinion Versus Love • Jon Hescht

what is being taught is correct. In the same letter, Paul describes the type of person who would teach a doctrine that does not “agree with the sound words of Jesus Christ” (1 Tim 6:3) as “conceited” and “understanding nothing,” and they “have a morbid interest in controversial questions...out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions” (vs 4). According to the apostle Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, people who try to adapt doctrine to fit their needs are only there to promote controversy.

What this means for the two congregations in the article is that the members (especially elders and preachers) should look to the Bible to see what doctrine is taught about music in worship. If they do, they might find that singing is specifically commanded to be done by brethren during worship for multiple purposes such as teaching and admonishing (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). The same Greek word for “sing” is used to describe Gentiles glorifying God (Rom 15:9) and as how to praise God when cheerful (Jas 5:13). The fact that these ideas are taught as doctrine should be able to guide them in what they need to do.

What this means for all Christians is that their obligation to God is to carefully study the Word of God to know where they have cause for employing opinion, and where God has left no room for compromise. “If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed” (1 Tim 4:6 ESV). ▲



# Remarkable Women

Clista Heintzman

Each year, the Nexstar Media Group, Inc. sponsors a “Remarkable Women” contest in West Virginia. Nominations are submitted based on “universally selected criteria including community contributions, self-achievement, and family impact” (Nexstar.tv). Out of all the nominations in our area, one winner is chosen who then competes on a larger scale regionally and, hopefully, nationally to be Nexstar’s Woman of the Year. Since winners are chosen this time of year, I have been thinking a lot about the term “Remarkable Women,” and based on God’s criteria, I know a lot of remarkable women!

In the mind of God, being a remarkable woman is not a contest—it is a goal. Based on God’s Word, a remarkable woman is one who fears the Lord. “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord she shall be praised” (Prov 31:30 NKJV). “A healthy fear of the Lord entails a reverence for God that includes obedience and submission to His will” (Apologetics and the Scoffer, R&R-VOL. 41-NO.9, Dave Miller, PhD.) This kind of respect for God is remarkable, indeed, and noticeable in every aspect of her life. For example, the apostle Paul, recorded a list of remarkable traits that would be evident and qualify a true widow to be “taken into the number.” The list includes qualities such



as being the wife of one man, being reported for good works, bringing up children, lodging strangers, washing the saint’s feet, and relieving the afflicted (1 Tim 5:9–10). He also taught older and younger women to be reverent in behavior, to be teachers of good things, to love their husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, and to be obedient to their husbands (Titus 2:3–5). All these attributes speak highly of a woman.

Let’s talk about the reward for a remarkable woman. The reward for Nexstar’s winner is a trip to Los Angeles, California—a worldly destination. The reward for God’s remarkable women—an endless trip to heaven, where no sin, sorrow, or danger exists. In Nexstar’s contest, only a few receive a reward. However, God has provided a way for ALL women to gain the reward of heaven.

All women, who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, repent of sin, are washed in His blood through baptism, and then walk in His Way till death, qualify for the prize. In other words, if you are a faithful Christian woman—congratulations! You are a winner! You are remarkable! ▲



# One Word

## Sarah Curry

All it takes is one word added or removed to change a command God has given to cause us to fall. In the garden with Adam and Eve, they were told not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or that they would surely die, “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**” (Gen 2:17 NKJV emphasis added). The adversary, Satan, changed this by just adding one word!

Satan first questioned God’s command, “...Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” (Gen 3:1). After that, Satan changed God’s command with one word, “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will **not** surely die’” (Gen 3:4 emphasis added). All it took was ONE word added, and it changed everything.

Today, we see the same thing. The adversary changes God’s commands to try to get us to fall. These are a few of the things that the adversary has tempted man to



change, and it has caused a great number to fall.

Baptism is not for the remission of sins—instead, God’s words say that baptism is “..for the remission of sins...” (Acts 2:38).

The church of your choice, there is not one church—instead, God’s words that there is but “one body,” which is the one church that Christ founded (Eph 1:22,23; cf. 4:4).

Marriage is not needed—instead, God’s words of “marriage is honorable” (Heb 13:4).

Modesty is outdated—instead, of God’s words of being adorned with modest apparel (1 Tim 2:9).

God’s word is what we ALL need to be heeding. The adversary is cunning (Eph 6:11). Study to make sure EVERYTHING you do is according to God, and do not let the adversary trick you by changing even one small word. ▲

## What Am I to Do? Cheyenne Blizzard

As Christians, it’s important to know what we are to do to have a fruitful and purposeful life for God. When we think about this, several things can come to mind. We are to love our neighbor and love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).



Loving God means we have to do what He asks and commands us to do and always look to His way (John 14:15). As Christians, this can become our main focus. But sometimes, we can get so focused on working on ourselves that we forget there are others around us that need the gospel as well. Working on ourselves is

important, too, if we want to successfully teach others. We have to learn to teach. But we have to reach others needing the gospel, which is another result of loving God.

We also are to submit to God and resist the devil (Jas 4:7). Submission to God is choosing to follow His way instead of your way. After you put Him on in baptism, you are no longer your own person; you belong to God, and belonging to Him means you are to follow Him. When you choose to follow God, it means you do it for the rest of your life, not until you are 25 or 40, or 80. Until you die. Resisting the devil is resisting the things of this world.

1 Peter 4 gives us a bunch of things that we are to do as Christians. Even non-Christians have commands as well. Hear the word of God (John 8:32; Rom 10:17). Believe (John 20:31; Heb 11:6). Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30). Confess faith in Jesus (Matt 10:32; Rom 10:10). BE baptized for the remission of your sins (Mark 16:16; Gal 3:27). Be faithful unto death (Rev 2:10).

The choice comes down to you, but as John 3:5 says, “...no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (NRSV). ▲

# Is There a Leadership Crisis in the Church?

Would you be encouraged or aghast if you clandestinely observed the leadership meetings where you are a faithful member? Hearing the men deliberate, debate, resolve, seek God’s guidance, and hold each other accountable might give you a new perspective on the church you love and for which Jesus died. However, being a “fly on the wall” might expose the “elephant in the room.” Every church has leaders, but not all churches

have the kind that God approves. Even when men are qualified to serve, churches struggle in at least four areas.

- (1) Faithful men do not aspire to be elders (1 Tim 3:1).
- (2) No unity within the eldership (John 17).

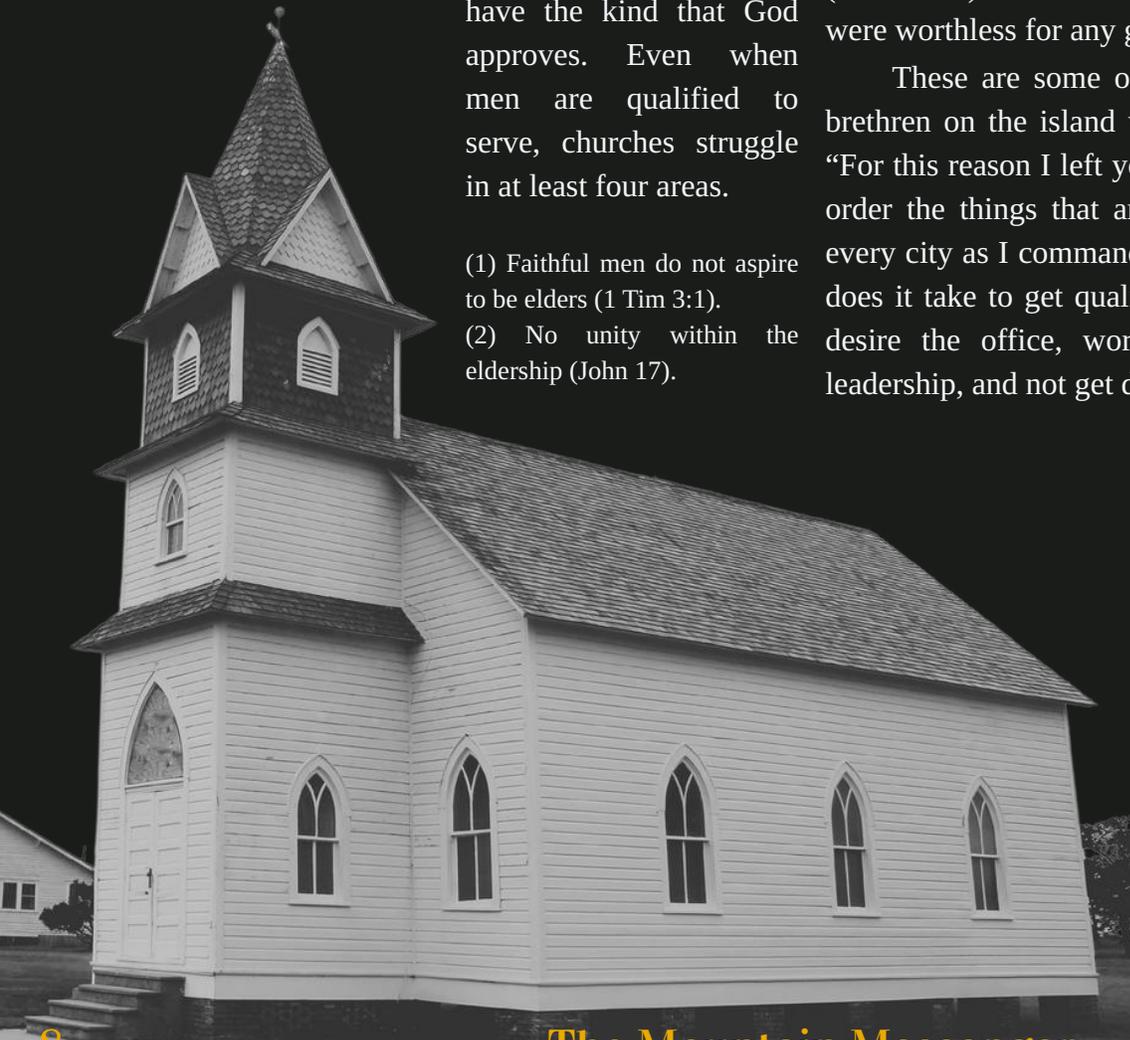
(3) The art of servant-leadership [Gr. diakoneō-hēgeomai] is not practiced (Luke 22:26).

(4) Elders are worn out from the burden they bear (Heb 13:17).

Imagine the leadership meetings among the churches on the island of Crete before Titus arrived. He found rebellious, empty-talking deceivers and Judaizing teachers (Titus 1:10). What kind of eldership would it take to deal with the false teachers and the covetous (Titus 1:11)? Or how about the detestable brethren who were worthless for any good deed (Titus 1:16)?

These are some of the horrible descriptions of the brethren on the island when the apostle Paul told Titus, “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” (Titus 1:5 NKJV). What does it take to get qualified men (1 Tim 3 & Titus 1) to desire the office, work in unity, practice the art of leadership, and not get discouraged?

**Douglas Pell**



# Is There a Leadership Crisis in the Church? • Douglas Pell

Is there a leadership crisis in the church where you assemble? All too often, based on my anecdotal evidence, we observe and declare, “We have a crisis here!”

“The apostasy which the Holy Spirit had predicted (1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 4:3,4) changed the church's organization, doctrine, practice, and worship. It is in the area of church organization, however, that the apostasy is traced most clearly.”[1] One of the many paradoxes of leadership is the undisputable fact that leaders are the problem (cf. Acts 20:28-30) and the solution (Titus 1:5).

Wendell Winkler, preacher and author, succinctly volunteered God's solution to the leadership crisis we find ourselves in. “Practically every problem we have among the people of God can be traced to unqualified and inefficient leadership. In Numbers 27:15-23, we have an amazing paragraph outlining the characteristics indispensable to leadership among the people of God. Leaders must be capable of superintending (verse 16),

they must be men who will go out and go in before the people (verse 17), they must be men who are capable of leading (verse 17), they must be men who can ultimately bring the members to the promised land (verse 17), they must be men capable of shepherding by affording proper provision, protection, and passion (verse 17), they must be men in whom the Spirit of God dwells (verse 18), they must be men willing to receive and accept their God-given charges and responsibilities (verse 19), and, they must be men who seek the counsel of the Lord (verse 21).”[2]

“Yes, we need qualified elders in every congregation of the Lord's church who recognize and respect that the greatest author has already written the greatest Book. We need elders who know the Book and can identify the strange sounds from pulpits and classrooms. And we need courageous elders who will take corrective action to put the Word of God back into modern preaching. Amen.” [3] ▲

[1] Yeakley, Jr, Flavil R. Church Leadership & Organization. Nashville, TN, Christian Communications, 1989, p. 10.

[2] Winkler, Wendell. "The Living Message of Numbers." The Spiritual Sword, vol. 11, no. 3, Apr. 1980, p. 16.

[3] Pell, Douglas A. Set In Order The Things That Are Lacking. Pulaski, TN, Sain Publications, 2024, p. 42.

# TIME FOR SPRING CLEANING!

Colton Ferrell

Spring is on the way, and everyone cannot wait. People are tired of the snow, cold, and being stuck in the house. We want to be outside, enjoying God's creation and taking in the sunlight. So, when spring rolls around, people will start uncluttering their houses, and there will be yard sales all around. It is always nice to get rid of all our junk, so that we may have a clean house.

Our souls, just like our homes, can get cluttered up and be messed up if we do not properly clean it out. Many continue to let their souls be cluttered up and do nothing about it. Our souls should be more important than our homes because if we do not take care of the clutter (sin), we will lose our souls. Who wants to lose their soul for eternity? Hopefully, no one, but it seems they do not care.

How does one go about cleansing their soul? Well, when we look in Scripture, we see very clearly how one cleanses their soul. Let's look at Acts 2:38 quickly. Peter just got done preaching, and the people ask what they must do to be saved. Peter let everyone of

you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (NKJV). To get rid of the clutter, we must have our sins washed away, and our souls will be white as snow. Now of course, we must repent, which means to change one's mind. Without repentance, there is nothing more that can be accomplished. If we have not truly changed our hearts, then the clutter will remain.

Look at the show "Hoarders," these individuals live in homes that are just full of clutter, and sometimes it is far worse. Some of these people never truly change their minds and after it is clean, they go right back to hoarding. Sadly, many come and put on Christ, as we see in Galatians 3:26-27, and they turn right back to sin. In Hebrews 10:26, the writer says, "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a Sacrifice for sins." These people choose to continue in sin after they have received the knowledge of the truth and now, they lose that sacrifice. Once we get the clutter out, we must keep it out and remain faithful. Why not start now and get rid of the sin in your life? ▲



# Prepare to Meet Thy God

Sally Rutter

We often sing the song, "Prepare to Meet Thy God." I wonder how many of us really pay attention to the words of this song. We are asked in that song, "Careless soul why will you linger?" As Christians growing up in the church, it is hard for us to understand exactly why



others do not understand the urgency of becoming a Christian AND living our lives as such until we either pass away or Christ comes to take us home.

The Bible so clearly outlines the steps to becoming a Christian. We read in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (KJV). Therefore, we know that we must hear the Word. The next step is to believe as we read in John 8:24, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins, for if you believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." Repenting of our sins is the next step. This is so important that it is repeated twice in Luke 13:3 and again in verse 5, "I tell ye nay, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The next step is to Confess our faith in Christ. Romans 10:10 tells us, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Of course, after following all these steps, we need to obey Acts 2:38 and be baptized, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." But that is not the last step in our obedience. Some people think that as long as you have been baptized, you will be saved. Ladies, we know that is not all that we have to do. We need to live a life of faithfulness to God. 1 Corinthians 15:58, we read, "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

So many times, we see people getting baptized, and we rejoice with them. They are faithful for a while, and then they start slipping away. That is why it is so important to the older members of the church to pay attention to who is and is not present in our services. It is not that we are being nosy; it is that we care for their souls. We need to call, send a card, or visit them if they have missed a few services and find out if they are sick or having a problem that we can help with. It is so easy to make a phone call or drop a card in the mail. We need to let them know that we miss them and ask if there is something we can help them with. After we miss a few services, it seems easier not to come back. We may feel that people are too judgmental, which we sometimes are. We need to ask the reason they are slipping away and offer a solution to the problem or find someone else that can help them with their need.

I grew up in a Christian family. My grandparents on my dad's side, and most of his brothers and sister and their families were faithful Christians. We knew if we were with them, we would know that we would be worshiping the God of heaven. I am so thankful for this. I realize that others were not privileged with that upbringing. And that's what we need to always remember. We need to teach them the importance of being at every service. Hebrews 10:25 teaches, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." People have various reasons for missing worship. Some are sick, facing a life decision that is overtaking all their time, or having problems with their spouse or children. There are many that just were not taught all that is expected of them once they become Christians. There is a lot of work to do out there. We just need to seek the need and use our knowledge and means provided for us to go out and seek and save the lost.

Each day, in today's world, there are so many shootings, accidents, hurricanes, tornados, floods, and so many things that could take our lives. Each morning we need to pray for our safety and a safe return to our homes each night. Each day, policemen, military personnel, security guards, etc., put their lives on the line. We don't have to be in one of these positions to face a tragedy that could take our lives. We all need to PREPARE TO MEET

# GOD DESIGNED ME WITH AN INNATE ABILITY TO DEFEND

Deborah Amos (PhD- Biomedical Sciences)

As you read in the last article of our series, we have a vast number of cells that God used to build our human bodies. Now, let's take a closer look at how our cells fight incoming foreign invaders so we can keep on fulfilling His purposes in our lives.

Our blood is the medium pumped throughout our vessels carrying oxygen, carbon dioxide, nutrients, platelets, erythrocytes, and five types of white blood cells (WBCs) we refer to as leukocytes.

Each of our leukocytes were produced by red bone marrow housed in our bones, but they are structurally different, meaning they all function in different capacities. In fact, all begin as immature cells (blast cells), and depending on what factors are present, they will differentiate into their mature form. Some even travel to different locations in the body, like our T cells, to go through another stage of maturation to "train them" on their role. There are two main categories of leukocytes: granulocytes and agranulocytes. Granulocytes have little granules surrounding their nucleus that function to lead to the breakdown of foreign cells that sneak past our mechanical barriers (Ex. skin and mucus). There are three categories of granulocytes: neutrophils, basophils, and eosinophils. Agranulocytes lack granules. The two agranulocytes are monocytes and lymphocytes. Most individuals have heard of lymphocytes because they have heard how HIV impacts the T cells and B cells. As goes with the name, the lymphocytes travel in the



lymph and are a key player in the lymphatic system.

As stated before, the five leukocytes are different, but they work together for a common purpose. Isn't it interesting how God patterns his creation? Like members of Christ's church who all have a role in the body, each one of our little members inside of us have a purpose, and although different, they are indispensable (1 Cor 12:12–24). Neutrophils are your most common type of leukocyte. They target

bacterial and viral invaders. So, if you think back to the last time you had blood work if there was an elevated count of neutrophils, that indicated you likely had a bacterial or viral infection. Eosinophils are named due to their red color. When the red dye, eosin, is used to stain them, our eosinophils glow red under the microscope. They work to help your body fight allergens by inducing inflammation, itching, and redness. Additionally, they're the best leukocyte for fighting protozoa and parasitic worms. The toxic substances released by their granules are able to eradicate these foreign invaders. Basophils, along with the eosinophils, are the least common WBCs in the body. Basophils are named because they present a blue hue when died with a basic dye. Again, like eosinophils, they also aid in allergic reactions by producing histamine, which provokes swelling and inflammation. Most of the time, we constantly try to reduce inflammation with medications like anti-inflammatory drugs, but in many cases, a certain amount

# God Designed Me With an Innate Ability to Defend

• Deborah Amos (PhD- Biomedical Sciences) •

of inflammation is actually vital to keeping a problem localized and allowing the body to bring factors into that area to help it heal! Basophils also release heparin, which is an anticoagulant. This becomes of utmost importance when a blood vessel breaks, or we need to produce a scab when we have a cut. The second most common leukocyte is actually an agranulocyte: the monocyte. It is a very special cell that is able to migrate by squeezing through our blood vessels to get to damaged tissues that have signaled they are in distress. When the monocytes migrate, we call them macrophages. “Phage” literally means to eat, so the macrophages “nom nom nom” foreign invaders. After the invader is engulfed, special enzymes within the newly formed complex are able to kill whatever is causing havoc. Last, but absolutely not least, we have the three categories of lymphocytes: Natural Killer Cells, T cells, and B cells. Natural killer cells are part of our non-specific defense mechanism because they don’t care what type of invader we have encountered. They will attack it with all their might! T and B cells differ in that they must be formally trained. After being formed in the red bone marrow, T cells will travel to the thymus to mature/be properly trained by “thymosins.” From that point, they will create memory T cells, cytotoxic T cells, and cells that are able to activate our B cells. These matured cells will show up in our blood and other organs that play a role in our immune system. B cells are formed and then subsequently mature in the bone marrow. Once matured, they can become plasma cells or memory B cells. Memory cells, in general, “remember” the patterns on the membranes of foreign invaders they

encounter to make it easier to fight the same bacteria or virus if our body encounters it again. Plasma cells are those that produce our antibodies (immunoglobulins) and are most commonly activated by T cells. Antibodies are a type of protein, and depending on their structure, they can last from days to years. That is one reason why it is unlikely for you to become ill from the same strain of virus for a long time after you encounter it the first time.

The good thing is, even if your antibodies specific for a particular virus break down, your memory cells can be activated to lead to the formation of new antibodies, so hopefully, you won’t get ill again.

Is it not amazing to think that God equipped our bodies with the ability to maintain internal stability (homeostasis) even when we are constantly being attacked by foreign invaders? These leukocytes, or WBCs, are constantly roaming in our blood and on surveillance in other organs, watching out for foreign invaders. This is a pattern that makes me think of 1 Peter 5:8. We as individuals have to constantly be on guard for all kinds of enemies that attack our spiritual bodies. May our body’s immune system and spiritual immune system always be sober and vigilant, watching out for foreign invaders, and be prepared to eradicate anything that could cause harm physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually.

If you thought this article was interesting, please look for the next article, where we discuss another type of barrier that we have: the skin and integumentary system and its role as a mechanical barrier! ▲

# FROM PIECEMEAL TO PERFECT

Andy Robison



The plan of salvation was conceived before time began (Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8), then revealed little by little through the ages to mankind, making it a once concealed, but since revealed “mystery” (Eph 3:3–6; Rom 16:25–27). Regarding Old Testament prophets who recorded the history of God’s working toward this perfect salvation’s full revelation, Peter wrote that they did not get the full import of all the things they wrote; indeed, not even angels did (1 Pet 1:10–12).

The New Testament makes it clear, though, that such piecemeal revelation is over. For a time, God allowed miracles through Christ and the apostles to verify the word of God (John 20:30–31; Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:1–4). It was always prophesied, though, that the end of such things would come when the need for them was over.

1 Corinthians 12–14 deals with the abuse of spiritual gifts by the church at Corinth. Chapter 13, frequently cited as “the love chapter of the Bible,” is a study in how love works better than the way they were trying to show off their gifts in the worship assembly. To cap off the argument, Paul says that those miraculous gifts like prophecies, miraculously received knowledge, and tongue-speaking (speaking in a foreign language not previously studied) would cease “when that which is perfect has come” (vs 8–10).

“That which is perfect” is the fully revealed New Testament. Some have contrarily contended that “that which is perfect” is the second coming of Christ, thus meaning miraculous gifts would continue until the Lord’s return. That cannot contextually be. The passage indicates that at such time, three gifts would remain: faith, hope, and love (v 13). However, faith, “the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1), will not exist any longer when “we see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2). With sight, faith is unneeded. Neither will hope exist when hope has been realized (Rom 8:24–25). Faith and hope exist in this world in anticipation for the next; love continues there.

Therefore, “that which is perfect” had to be the completion (that meaning is entailed in the word) of something during earth-time. It makes sense that such is the fully revealed word of God. It would no

longer come piecemeal; it would be given in full, totally sufficient to make a man of God “complete” (2 Tim 3:16–17) through its study and “approved to God” by his “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15).

Completed Scripture even reveals the mechanism by which the piecemeal revelations and miracles would cease. Apostles did miracles (Acts 2:43). They laid their hands on others, who could then do miracles, Philip being a prime example (Acts 6:5–6; 8:6). Philip could do miracles, but when he needed to pass on miraculous abilities, he had to call apostles to lay hands on people; he could not do it himself (Acts 8:14–18). It was “through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given” (8:18). Thus, when all apostles died, nobody new would be getting such gifts. When all of the recipients of those gifts died, those gifts died, too. Not coincidentally, the timing would work out to roughly the end of the first century, about the time the last books of the New Testament (“that which is perfect”) were completed.

Now, Christians have the full revelation of the mystery to study. They can fit James’ admonition: “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does” (Jas 1:25 NKJV). ▲



# REPENTANCE <sup>IN</sup> ROMANS 12:1-2

## Joshua Hall

Repentance: we read about it often in God’s Word, we hear it stated as a necessary part of salvation nearly every week, and we know it is something that we, as Christians, are to practice. Let us consider three points on repentance from a passage that I believe is a wonderful description of repentance, Romans 12:1–2.

### The Meaning of Repentance

Many would say that repentance is simply just being sorry or that repentance is the confessing of your sin. Though they are a part of repentance, they are not at the core of what Biblical repentance is. Paul wrote, “...do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Rom 12:2 NKJV). Repentance takes place between the ears, it is a change of mind resulting in a change of life, deciding that “I need to change, I want to change, and I am going to change.” Notice the change in the life of those in Corinth in 2 Corinthians 7. Paul wrote them the letter that we know as 1 Corinthians to correct them in their sin. This produced a sorrow in them, but a sorrow that only lasted for a while (2 Cor 7:8). It wasn’t until they were sorrowful in a Godly manner that repentance was the result (2 Cor 7:9–10). Then we see the change in the church in Corinth when it says, “For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter” (2 Cor 7:11). We see this change of mind in the Parable of the Two Sons when the first son says, “...‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went” (Matt 21:29), and again with the Parable of the Lost Son when it says that the lost son “...came to himself...” (Luke 15:17).

### The Call to Repentance

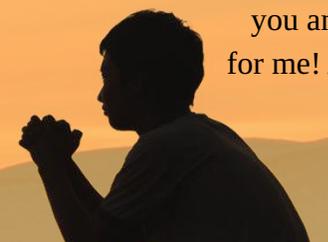
Paul begins in Romans 12:1 with “I beseech you...” or as the NASB translates it, “I urge you, brothers...” (emph. added). The idea here is a strong appeal or request—

encouraging someone to do something. This is one of the things Christ came to do, Jesus said, “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Luke 5:32). Although Christ is not physically walking on the earth today, He is still calling sinners to repent through the Gospel. 2 Thessalonians 2:13–14 tells us that “...God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel...” (emph added). In Luke’s account of the great commission, he summarizes it by saying, “and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47). Simply put, we are to go out and urge people to change. We must repent!

### The Reason to Repent

It was “by the mercies of God” (Rom 12:1) that Paul urged those in Rome to change. Romans 2:4 says, “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” God has always been good! He was good to us before we were ever good to Him, He was good to us before we ever knew what goodness was! When we recognize God’s goodness, it should compel us to repent! “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for

themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Cor 5:14–15). Christ has given all, He emptied Heaven, and He emptied Himself for you and for me! ▲





Youth Group  
Christian  
Author

# Lead Me to Calvary

Cole Curry

There's a song in our songbook named "Lead Me to Calvary." Let's look at verses 1 and 2; verse 1 reads, "King of my life, I crown Thee now, Thine shall the glory be; Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow, Lead me to Calvary." The chorus goes, "Lest I forget Gethsemane; Lest I forget Thine agony; Lest I forget Thy love for me, Lead me to Calvary." Just as the song says, "Lest I forget," when we look at the Lord's supper, we see that it is a memorial of Christ's death (1 Cor 11:23–26). The second verse in the hymn reads, "Show me the tomb where Thou wast laid, Tenderly mourned and wept; Angels in robes of light arrayed Guarded Thee whilst Thou slept." We need to remember the love that Christ has for us and the sacrifice

He gave. When we partake of the Lord's supper, we need to remember and reflect on what the bread and cup represent; the bread represents Christ's body that was beaten for us, and the cup represents the blood that was shed. The last two verses read, "Let me like Mary, thru the gloom, Come with a gift for Thee; Show to me now the empty tomb, Lead me to Calvary." The last verse reads, "May I be willing, Lord, to bear Daily my cross for Thee; Even Thy cup of grief to share, Thou hast borne all for me." We should, like Mary, be willing to come with a gift for Christ, and that gift could be anything that we do for God. But the thing it all has in common is that there's work in it; we need to work and not be ashamed to bear our cross for Christ. "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Cor 9:15 NASB). That gift being Christ. ▲

# Eyes On the Prize

Connor Curry

In Hebrews 2:1, we read, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it" (NASB). The Hebrews writer is telling us that we, as Christians, are to have our mind set on Christ and that when we take our mind off Christ, we will drift away. This passage tells us the importance of staying faithful and keeping our eyes on the prize, Christ!

Furthermore, Jesus has previously given us a parable about working for God and being ready. He also speaks of what our reward in the end will be if we are faithful. In Matthew 25:14–29, we read the Parable of the Talents. I would like to skip to the middle portion of the parable, verse 23. Here, we see how the faithful servant was put in charge over many things and was able to enter the joy of

his master; the same is promised for us as Christians if we remain faithful (Rev 2:10). It is essential for Christians to stay faithful until death despite what most denominations preach; you can fall away, you can go back to your old life of sin, and suffer eternally for it. But it is very important to know that you can always come back to Christ and then continue to live faithfully. "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (Matt 10:22). ▲

Youth Group  
Christian  
Author





# Changes

Robert Leedy



Society is constantly changing. Look at technology. Some remember a time when there were no phones, computers, or televisions. Look at the landscape. Is your hometown the same way you remember it growing up? Or have there been changes?

Something else that has changed is morals. There are many things that the majority of people in society looked down on 50 years ago that are acceptable to the majority of people today: things such as homosexuality, abortion, and divorce. The Bible speaks against these things.

While society around us changes, here are some things that will always remain the same.

**Sin remains the same.** What was sin in the first century is still a sin today. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God” (NKJV). These same sins, among others listed in Scripture, are still sins today, just as they were in the

first century. Sin still separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1–2; Rom 6:23; Jas 1:14–15).

**Jesus remains the same.** Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Jesus is our Savior. In Matthew chapter 1, an angel had appeared to Joseph in a dream, and the angel said in verse 21, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” Jesus said that He came to seek and save that which is lost (Luke 19:10). It’s because of His blood (Matt 26:28; Rev 1:5) and our obedience to Him (Acts 2:38) that we can have our sins forgiven.

**God’s plan of salvation remains the same.** Man will tell you all kinds of things in regard to salvation that are not found in the word of God. It is God’s word that is our authority (2 Tim 3:16–17). It is God’s word by which we will be judged (John 12:48). What does God’s word say in regard to salvation? God’s word teaches the necessity of obeying the gospel (2 Thess 1:7–9). If we must obey the gospel, what is the gospel that we are to obey? Paul declares the gospel to the Corinthians as being the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor 15:1–4). How do we obey that? I encourage the reader to read all of Romans chapter 6. They obeyed that FORM of DOCTRINE (Rom 6:17). The doctrine they were delivered would have been the gospel (Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 15:1–4). The form that they obeyed can be seen in Romans 6:1–4, where they died to sin, were buried in the waters of baptism, and raised to walk in a newness of life.

**God’s promises remain the same.** Jesus is coming again one day (Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thess 4:13–18; 2 Pet 3:9–13). On that day, we all have the judgment to look forward to (2 Cor 5:10). God promises eternal life to the faithful (Titus 1:2; Rev 2:10).

Even though society around us is changing, let us all hold fast to these eternal truths. The song that is sometimes sung in the assembly, “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand,” still rings true. ▲

# Events

## JULY

**WVCYC INTERMEDIATE WEEK — July 6-11**  
**WVCYC JUNIOR WEEK — June 29 - July 13-18**  
**WVCYC ALL-AGE WEEK — June 29 - July 20-25**  
**WVCYC SINGING EMPHASIS WEEK — July 27 - August 1** • Register at [www.wvcyc.com](http://www.wvcyc.com)

## APRIL

### 12 — WVCYC\* SPRING CAMP

Starting at 10 AM and going until 7 PM on April 12, the one-day Spring Camp will take place at the campground. Ages 11 and up are welcome to join in a day of singing, learning, worship, and fun. The lessons will come from the Beatitudes. The speakers will be **Joshua Ball, Zach Hammond, and Dane Hamilton.**

To register, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/WVCYCSpring2025>

### 27 — TRAVELING YOUTH GROUP

**Rockport** church of Christ on **Sunday April 27th @ 6:00pm** We will be conducting a **song service** so we ask that all of our song leaders to please plan on attending.

## MAY

### 9 — FRIDAY NIGHT SING

**Belle** church of Christ on **Friday May 9th, 7-9pm**  
 111 Kanawha Street, Belle WV 25015  
 Refreshments to follow. **Praise for the Lord** hymnal.

## JUNE

**OVCYC\* SENIOR WEEK — June 15-20**  
**OVCYC INTERMEDIATE WEEK — June 22-27**  
**OVCYC JUNIOR WEEK — June 29 - July 3**  
 Register at [www.ovcyc.com](http://www.ovcyc.com)

**WVCYC SENIOR WEEK — June 29 - July 4**  
 Register at [www.wvcyc.com](http://www.wvcyc.com)

\*WVCYC: West Virginia Christian Youth Camp  
 425 Youth Camp Dr  
 Pennsboro, WV 26415

\*OVCYC: Ohio Valley Christian Youth Camp  
 1659 Camp Barbe Rd  
 Elizabeth, WV 26143



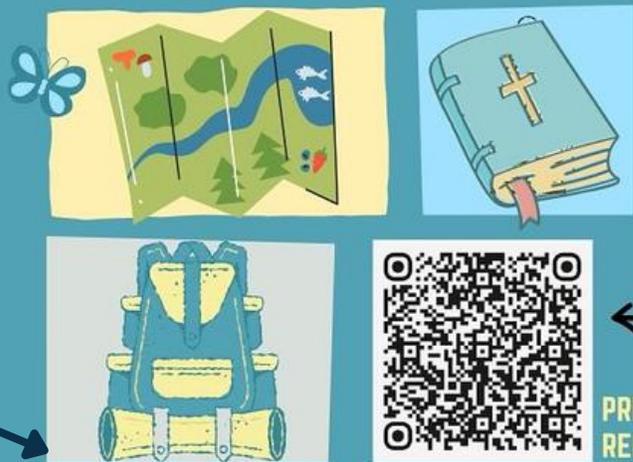
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# SPRING CAMP

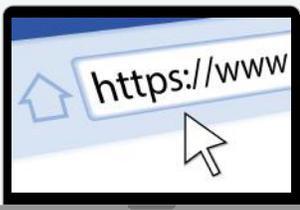
## Blessed: The Beatitudes



**PRE-REGISTER**

**APRIL 12, 2025**  
**10AM-7PM**  
**AGES 11+**

**@ WVCYC**



# Resources

## General Resources



**Added to the Church** - Publisher of Mountain Messenger, New Testament Expositor - [addedtothechurch.com](https://www.addedtothechurch.com)



**Our Authors** - Meet the authors of The Mountain Messenger!  
[addedtothechurch.com/christian-authors/](https://www.addedtothechurch.com/christian-authors/)



**West Virginia School of Preaching** - 2-year program of classes taught by sound Christians - [wvsop.com](https://www.wvsop.com)



**Sharp Five Media** - Affordable church websites and media by a member of the church - [sharp-five.com](https://www.sharp-five.com)

## Songs & Hymns



**Teaching and Admonishing** - Free to listen and use original hymns by members of the church - [churchofchristsongs.com](https://www.churchofchristsongs.com)



**WVCYC "Pressing On" CD** - Contact Andy Robison to order your CD or Thumb Drive!  
[andycd2020@gmail.com](mailto:andycd2020@gmail.com)

## Podcasts



**The Religious Coffee Hour** - Podcast hosted by Hunter Melott found wherever you listen to podcasts.



**Authentic Christian** - Podcast produced by GBN, hosted by Aaron Gallagher and Scott Ingram  
[gbntv.org/the-authentic-christian/](https://www.gbntv.org/the-authentic-christian/)

## Deepen Your Knowledge



**Apologetics Press** - Articles, videos, books, etc. focused on the defense of New Testament Christianity - [apologeticspress.org](https://www.apologeticspress.org)



**Gospel Broadcasting Network** - Provides Bible-based and unbiased resources from the Word of God - [gbntv.org](https://www.gbntv.org)



**Focus Press** - Provides podcasts, articles, videos, books, and daily devotionals. - [focuspress.org](https://www.focuspress.org)



**World Video Bible School** - Videos and free study courses on Biblical topics - [wvbs.org](https://www.wvbs.org)



**Through the Scriptures** - Study through the entirety of the scriptures - [throughthescriptures.com](https://www.throughthescriptures.com)



**Families of Faith** - Bible materials for families & churches. - [familiesoffaith.store](https://www.familiesoffaith.store)

## Fun and Games



**Birble** - Bible version of Wordle. Guess the five-letter word from the KJV Bible! - [ajrv.us/birble](https://www.ajrv.us/birble)



**Memoria** - Bible verse memorization tool. Removes 1 word at a time as you practice. - [ajrv.us/bible/memoria](https://www.ajrv.us/bible/memoria)



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## Scott C. Farley

Attacks have always been made on the authority of the Scriptures. Some have made clearly seen, open attacks on the Bible, and other subtler, back-door assaults. During the first century, some who tried to blend the Jewish way of life and Christianity, questioned the authority of Paul and were answered sternly (2 Cor 10-11; Gal 1:1-12).

Quite often, when men cannot defend their religious beliefs, they respond by trying to de-emphasize the authority of the Scriptures. One man told me recently, “We don’t have God’s word, this [the Bible] is the closest thing we have.” His view of grace did not agree with the

Bible, so instead of modifying what he believed, he has decided to pretend that the Bible is incorrect.

Probably the main way that people downplay the authority of the Bible is to emphasize the “message rather than the content” of the Scriptures. For instance, some claim that it is not so important that Jesus was born of a virgin, but that we understand the message of the story. Or, they claim that it is not vital whether Jesus was actually resurrected from the dead, but whether we recognize the spiritual impact of resurrection to a new life. For centuries, critics of the Bible have denied the authenticity of the book of Jonah. It is most significant that Jesus quoted and used the very passages that critics most often attack. He believed that fact of the flood (Matt 24:37-38) and the fate that met Lot’s wife because of disobedience (Luke 17:28-33). He used the example of Jonah as the sign of his resurrection (Matt 12:39-41)! If the account of Jonah was a myth or fable that had been repeated for centuries, then Jesus’ resurrection is just as made-up and pretend!

If we respect the authority of Christ, then we have no choice but to accept the correctness of properly translated Scripture. How can we be

Christians (followers of Christ) and not believe the same things as the Son of God?

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