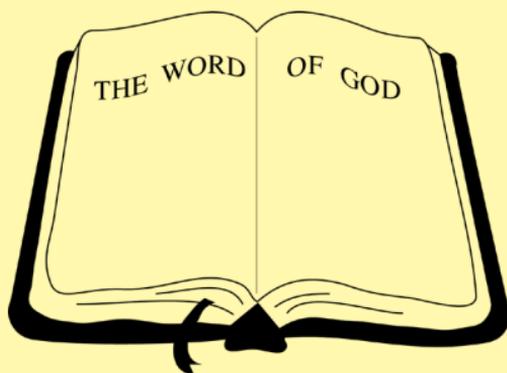


Back to the Bible For It All



"Thy Word Is Truth." –John 17:17

Let us all turn to the Bible as the only guide
from earth to heaven.

Lynn D. Headrick

Back to the Bible For It All

Vainly we seek after men for guiding light,
Or in dreams for a heavenly call;
Man, of himself, cannot set his soul aright;
So it's back to the Bible for it all.

If we the true and the living way should learn,
And be safe when the night shadows fall,
We must the will of the Savior truly yearn,
And it's back to the Bible for it all.

Whence cometh we? Wither is our destiny?
Where the faith and the hope for the pall?
How may we see what a-waits for you and me?
It is back to the Bible for it all.

Back to the Bible! The God-given Bible!
For grace and duty, great or small;
Each one may know what to do and where to go,
But it's back to the Bible for it all.

—page 346 of *Christian Hymns No. 2.*

We live in a confused world. Honest seekers after truth are wanting to know what is right in religion. Some are young, others are of middle age, a few are old, but all should want to know and do right. The confusion in religion does not come from God for “*God is not a God of confusion.*” (I Cor. 14:33). Confusion is the result of folk “*giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons,*” (I Tim. 4:1); of somebody’s teaching a different doctrine and consenting “*not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,*”

(1 Tim. 6:3); of somebody's failing to "*preach the word.*" (2 Tim. 4:2).

The design of this article is to encourage all to go back to the Bible as the only means of coming to the truth in this, a confused world. "*Thy word is truth*" (John 17:17). Let us turn to it.

Let Us Go Back to the Bible For Authority in Religion

I have in my library **The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches**, **The Book of Mormon**, The Discipline of the Methodist Church and many other writings of men. The authors of these books all claim to believe the Bible is from God but they have written their rules of faith and practice which they follow in addition to the Bible. They should know that the Bible furnishes the man of God "*completely unto every good work.*" (2 Tim. 3:17). When men go to the above books for authority in religion nothing but confusion can exist for these human productions contradict one another. When we open the Bible we read that Jesus has all authority. Jesus said, "*All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.*" (Matt. 28:18). God said, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.*" (Matt. 17:5). Peter spoke by inspiration and said that we must hear Christ "*in all things whatsoever he shall say unto (us).*" (Acts 3:22). The New Testament is the Word of Christ. Since you have a copy of it you have that which constitutes authority in religion today.

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We must love our parents but they do not constitute authority in religion. We are appreciative of our teachers but they are not authority in any matter of faith. They are simply to teach the *“faith which was once delivered to the saints.”* (Jude 3). Religious periodicals may have their place but we must slavishly follow none of them. Do not stake your hope of going to heaven on anything but the Word of God. Be in subjection to the authority of Christ and you will spend eternity in heaven.

Let Us Go Back to the Bible For the Answer to the Question, “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

This is the most important question we can ask. We want to be absolutely sure that we receive the correct answer because the welfare of our soul is at stake. In this confused world some men would answer this question by saying, “There is nothing you can do because God, before the foundation of the world predestinated certain ones to be saved and certain ones to be lost.” Another will say, “Just kneel down and pray.” Someone else teaches “we are saved wholly by grace.” Another will teach “faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.” Plainly, the doctrines of men contradict and confuse. But let us go to the Bible for the answer to this question. The Bible says, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.”* (Mark 16:16). Please read that again.

It means exactly what it says. We will have to have help to misunderstand such plain language. Again we read, “... *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” (Luke 13:3). Repentance is a change of mind resulting in a change of conduct. The Bible teaches us to “*confess the good confession.*” (1 Tim. 6:12). No inspired man ever asked anyone to confess that he believed that God, for Christ’s sake, has pardoned his sins. On the contrary, inspiration records this confession: “*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*” (Acts 8:37). In answer to the question, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” the apostle Peter replied, “*Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*” (Acts 2:37,38). Have you, dear reader, heard the word of God, believed it, turned from your sins, confessed your faith in Christ, and been immersed for the remission of sins? The honest seeker after truth will be able to come away from the confusion in the world by doing just what the Bible says. Study the Bible carefully.

Let Us Go Back to the Bible to Learn How to Worship God

The Bible says for us to “*worship the Lord thy God.*” (Matt. 4:10). But how are we to worship Him? The Bible tells us how. If we try to worship God after the instructions of men our worship will be vain

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worship. (cf. Mat 15:9). Let us then, go back to the Bible to learn how God wants us to worship Him.

The Bible says for us to pray with the spirit, and pray with the understanding; to sing with the spirit, and sing with the understanding. (see 1 Cor. 14:15). Our prayers are made through the “*one mediator*,” Jesus Christ. (1 Tim. 2:5). There is no authority for praying to God through Mary, the mother of Jesus. Some endeavor to invoke God directly, not even mentioning that their prayer is in the name of Christ.

Men have added to the New Testament command to sing. They add a mechanical instrument of some kind. The Bible condemns this addition by telling us that “*whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.*” (2 John 9). Singing and playing are two different acts. God requires, under the law of Christ, that we sing praises unto him. (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5: 19).

In worship we eat the Lord’s Supper in memory of Christ. (1 Cor. 11:17-29). Since we follow the Bible we partake of this supper on “*the first day of the week.*” (Acts 20:7). Where you worship what is the practice? If you follow men they will tell you to partake of the supper quarterly, or monthly, or yearly. Men are confused. The Bible is right. Every week has a first day so we partake of the supper each first day of the week. This is the way that is right and cannot be wrong.

We are also taught to give. Each member of the Lord’s church is to “*lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.*” (1 Cor. 16:2). The work of the church

is financed by these freewill, liberal gifts. But men say the church can finance its work by cake suppers, raffles, begging, selling merchandise, etc., but the Bible plan is right.

In worship the word of God is read and discussed. The speaker is simply to “*preach the word.*” (2 Tim. 4:2). Discourses on politics, current events, and words of flattery may please men but will not save the souls of the hearers. Let us go Back to the Bible to learn how to render acceptable worship unto God.

Let Us Go Back to the Bible to Learn of the Work of the Church

It is understood, by those who read their Bibles, that the Bible sanctions only one church. Jesus said, “*I will build my church*” (Matt. 16:18) and he did build just one. “*There is one body*” (Eph. 4:4) and the body is “*the church.*” (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1: 22,23). So if the body is the church and there is only one body then there is only one church. But just now we are interested in the work of the church the Bible describes—the church of which all men must be members. Is it the work of the church to supervise Boy and Girl Scout troops, raise money to help defray expenses of human institutions, provide recreational facilities, etc.? To observe the activities of some churches we might conclude that such is the work the Bible outlines for the church to do. But let us go back to the Bible to see just exactly what constitutes the work of the local congregation under the direction of its elders.

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The Bible says that a work of the church is to preach the gospel of Christ to the entire world. (Study 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Thess. 1:8; Phil. 4:15,16; Mark 16:15,16). The church is God's organization for doing this great work. C.R. Nichol and R.L. Whiteside were right when they wrote that "the command to 'go' does not authorize the organization of societies to send forth men to preach. A society is not a method of doing anything; it is an organization to do a certain work. Societies must adopt the same methods of sending men and money that have been open to the churches throughout the Christian dispensation." (**Sound Doctrine, Vol. 1**, p. 91.) Let each congregation be busily engaged in preaching the gospel.

The Bible says a work of the church is to care for its needy members. The Jerusalem church grew until it had a "*multitude of disciples.*" (Acts 6:1,2). Some of the members were widows who were unable to support themselves, so the apostles simply told the multitude of disciples to select seven men from their number to "*appoint over this business*" (Acts 6:3) of caring for these widows. I do not know what method they used to do this work but I do know what organization did it. It was the church. In fact, "there is no place for charitable organizations in the work of the New Testament Church. It is the only charitable organization that the Lord authorizes or that is needed to do the work the Lord expects his people today to do." (Guy N. Woods, **Annual Lesson Commentary**, 1946, p. 340). The Jerusalem church not only raised the funds but it was the organization that administered

the fund. There is no doubt but that the church was its own benevolent society. Concerning some people, the Book of God says, “... *let not the church be burdened.*” (1 Tim. 5:16). However, the individual Christian is to “*work that which is good toward all men.*” (Gal. 6:10). If an individual Christian knows of someone that is in need he will simply do like the good Samaritan did. The Samaritan “*was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*” (Luke 10:33, 34). There is a distinction in congregational and individual work.

The Bible says that it is a work of the church to edify itself. The members must “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*” (2 Peter 3:18). To see how the church edifies itself study Eph. 4:16, Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 5:17, and Titus 1:9).

Let us have zeal which is regulated by knowledge (cf. Rom. 10:2) as we carry on the work of the church. Remember, “A simple church at a place—with its elders, deacons, and other members—is all the organizing and centralizing God has ever done for his church.” (E.A. Elam, **Elam’s Notes**, 1923, p. 127).

Let Us Go Back to the Bible to Learn How to Live the Christian Life

Custom is not the standard of authority with reference to the moral standard of the Christian. Customs change. The word of Christ, the New Testament, is to be our guide in all things. The Bible says, “*Be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.*” (1 Tim. 4:12). “*All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.*” (Matt. 7:12). Again “*whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*” (Phil. 4:8). Modest apparel and clean speech will characterize the Christian. (1 Tim. 2:9 and Eph. 4:9). The Christian will not be slothful but will work hard to provide for his family and to have to give to those who are in need. (Eph. 4:28 and 1 Tim. 5:8).

The Lord will bless those who go to His Word for all that they do in religion. Let us all study the Bible with an open, unprejudiced mind. Let us study with a willingness to do “*all things that have been commanded (us) of the Lord*” (Acts 10:33)

and then we can look forward to one day receiving that “*inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*” (1 Pet. 1:4) for those who are “*faithful unto death.*” (Rev. 2:10).

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