



# The Voice Of Truth

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## Hillcrest church of Christ

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### THE WORD OF GOD

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning (James 1:17).

Men are surrounded by gifts of God. Jesus Christ is God's unspeakable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15); Eternal life (Romans 6:23); Salvation (Ephesians 2:8); Rain and sunshine (Matthew 5:45); Earth and fruitful seasons (Acts 14:17). Life is a gift from God (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

We want to look at the Bible as God's good gift to man. The Scriptures are inspired of God (God-breathed) (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is a gift from God to men. The Bible is complete revelation of God's truth to man. Mankind has failed to appreciate and respect the Bible as God's absolute and final will for man. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? (Jeremiah 8:9). Man in Jeremiah's day had failed to appreciate and respect God's Word. We live in that kind of society today! There is no respect for God and His Word. We humans do not generally regard rules and regulations as absolute occurrence. We usually perceive them as offenses upon our freedom; deliberate attempts to restrict our behavior. What about us in the Lord's

church? We may have a tendency to display resentment and a rebellious spirit when faced with spiritual standards. We feel that God is prying and merely burdening our lives with offhand, senseless instructions.

God intends mankind to fashion his life, his thinking, his speech, his whole being according to that divine book. Man needs something to direct him in life (Jeremiah 10:23). God's Word is man's lamp and light (Psalm 119:105). God's Word is man's hope against sin (Psalm 119:11). God's Word is the truth whereby man may be freed from sin (1Timothy2:4). The truth of God's Word is the means whereby we obtain the purification of the soul (1 Peter 1:22-23). The Word of God gives all we need (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God's Word sanctifies (John 17:17); cleanses (Ephesians 5:26); it gives understanding (Psalm 119:30); it will judge us (John 12:48). God's Word has power to produce a new life (James 1:18). It is quick, living and powerful (Hebrews 4:12; Romans 1:16). It is able to build us up and give us an inheritance (Acts 20:32); set us free (John 8:32). It is able to make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15). The Word of God provides us with righteousness (Proverbs 14:34). We become all God wants us to be through faithful

obedience to His Word.

Now knowing all this concerning God's Word, His guidelines for humanity, His commands are not burdensome (1 John 5:3) nor too hard (Deuteronomy 30:11). The laws of God, His Word, for humanity are actually very desirable (Psalm 19:10) and tasteful (Psalm 119:103). As the Israelites were engaged in their final encampment on the plains of Moab prior to entrance into the Promise Land, Moses pronounce a most important principle: the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes . . . for good always (Deuteronomy 6:24).

You see, God is not asking us to do anything that will hurt us! God is not hampering us and exercising His authority in our lives in order to make us unhappy! Quite the opposite! Our obedience to His Word will make us happy! If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them (John 13:17). But he that looketh into the perfect law, the (law) of liberty, and (so) continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing (James 1:25). Our faithfulness to His Word will make us righteous. (My) little children, let no man lead you astray: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous (1 John 3:7). Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves (as) servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16). Our obedience will bring us true friendship! If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments (John 14:15). Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you (John 15:14). Our obedience will enable us to be saved (Hebrews 5:9). He offers salvation freely to all them that obeys Him. Though He has by the grace of God tasted death for every man and so made an atonement for all, he nevertheless bestows salvation only on those who obey Him. If we will do God's will, we will be wise (Matthew 24:45-46; 7:24). We become all God wants us to be through faithful obedience to His word.

Friend, do not resist the commandments of God, no matter how difficult they may seem to be

to you. Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord (Lamentations 3:40). Read the Bible in order to be wise. Obey the Bible in order to be holy. Give me the Bible! For after all, it is given for our good!

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### Baptism

By Jimmy Pettigrew

“That aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water” (1 Peter 3:20). Having affirmed that salvation in the days of Noah was through the water of the flood, Peter now draws a comparison with the water of baptism: “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21). Salvation offered through water in the days of Noah is exactly parallel to salvation offered through water baptism. Baptism is the antitype of the waters of the great flood.

The water itself had no saving power in the flood, nor does it have any saving power today. The saving power for Noah was his obedience to God's Word. Today people obey the Gospel plan of salvation culminating in water baptism, and God likewise saves them through water.

Baptism is between the sinner and salvation! God has placed baptism squarely between the sinner and every spiritual blessing! “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3). The word ALL means of every kind. Not one spiritual blessing is to be had outside of Christ. Salvation is in Christ (2 Timothy 2:10); grace is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 2:1); if one is in Christ he is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17); and this newness of life follows baptism (Romans 6:4). Baptism into Christ saves us (1 Peter 3:21; Mark 16:16). Baptism into Christ washes away one's sins (Acts 22:16). Baptism into Christ is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism into Christ makes it possible for one to go to heaven (John 3:3-5).

Since ALL spiritual blessings are IN Christ, it is evident that we do not have access to them while OUT of Christ! The only way to get into Christ is to be baptized into Him! “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). If one has not been scripturally baptized, then he is not in Christ, and cannot receive even one spiritual blessing.

Man did not place baptism between the sinner and salvation: this is the work of God! Man cannot alter that divine arrangement. He can accept it, or reject it; but he cannot change it!