



# The Voice Of Truth

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### Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part IV

By Jimmy Pettigrew

We have been looking at the views on church authority. This week let us take a look at the Presbyterian faith. The Presbyterian faith began in Geneva in 1534 A.D., being founded by John Calvin and John Knox. The Confession of Faith was introduced in 1522 A.D. From that time, the Bible was preached, being colored and molded by this creed. Presbyterians teach: Total Hereditary Depravity; It teaches that a baby is born a sinner, lost and so depraved that as it grows it can never do one good thing in any way to effect its salvation. A passage used is Psalm 51:5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." From that verse it is taught that the little child is born full of sin. **NO**, David is merely saying he was born into a sinful world by parents, like all mankind, who are sinful. Notice this passage, David writing, as he did in Psalm 51:5; "But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly" (Psa. 22:9-10). David registers his assurance as being God's, from his birth. But Presbyterians teach babies are sinners, and sin separates one from God (Isa. 59:1-2), but David said God was his God from my mother's belly. Which one are you going to believe, man or God? The Bible does

not teach that babies are sinners (Matt. 18:3; 19:14). The doctrine that a child is born a sinner actually if true would make a sinner out of the Lord. The doctrine holds that the sin is inherited from the parents, and all the way back to Adam. But, the Lord Himself was born of a human mother. Psalm 51, makes no mention of the father, but my mother conceived me, if sin is inherited from the mother, then this would make a sinner out of the infant Jesus, since He was born of a human mother. If the doctrine that a child is born a sinner, this would make sin come from God.

Another passage used to teach "Total Hereditary Depravity" is Psalm 58:3: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." First we notice they "go astray." They are not "born astray." It says it happens as soon as they are born. How soon is "soon"? Verse six says "break their teeth." Verse three says they speak lies. Do just-born infants speak? Do they have teeth? All this verse is saying is that man is so sinful that even at a very early age he goes astray.

Presbyterians teach: Unconditional Election. Meaning before the foundation of the world God chose to save certain individuals and condemn

others. The Bible teaches that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11). The Lord desires all to repent and be saved (2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:3-4). "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable with him" (Acts 10:35). People who are disobedient will be condemned (2 Thess. 1:7-9). Man's obedience is the key of salvation (Rom. 6:17-18; Heb. 5:8-9). Our manner of election is obedience to the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-15). Christ died for the whole world (1 Cor. 3:16-17); there is no limited atonement (1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:2). Man decides his own destiny by his own free will.

Presbyterians teach: Irresistible Grace. Meaning God saves man whether that individual wants salvation or not; the man is unable to refuse it. The Bible teaches God desires to have all men saved (2 Pet. 3:9). Without faith one cannot be well pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6; Jn. 8:24). Without obedience one is lost (Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9). If it's irresistible, a person will be saved whether he wants to be or not, whether he reforms or not, whether he repents or not, worships or studies! The Christian religion is taught (2 Tim. 3:16-17); heard (Acts 2:36-37) and learned (1 Cor. 6:44-45). There is no irresistible grace. We can accept or we can refuse God's grace.

Presbyterians teach: Perseverance of the saints. Meaning, once saved, a person is always saved. There is nothing he can do or say to be lost. Presbyterians teach that God will not let the called fall. Let's just hear God's word on this however. Paul said, "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5:4). A Christian can be severed from his Savior, and it clearly says he can fall from grace. The Bible teaches Judas, an apostle, by transgression fell (Acts 1:25). Paul knew it was possible to fall (1 Cor. 9:27). Demas loved this present world, and forsook Paul (2 Tim. 4:10). The truth is, the Bible teaches that we must continue worthy to be saved.

Presbyterians sprinkle water on infants (only

the "elect ones" of course) and labels the act as "baptism." Baptism is seen by them as not necessary to salvation, but as an outward joining to their faith and as a sign of a covenant with grace already accomplished by God. The Bible teaches that baptism is immersion or burial in water in order to salvation (Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 2:38, etc.). Only those who can believe are to be immersed (Mk.16:16). Infants cannot believe, therefore are not candidates for baptism.

The Presbyterian creed also looses God's law of divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:9). "Willful" desertion (Leaving one's mate) that cannot be "remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage." Christ stated that only fornication was reason to dissolve a marriage and that only the innocent could remarry (Matt. 19:9-12; Mk. 10:11-12). Presbyterian doctrine therefore adds to God's Word (Prov. 30:6). Which one will you take your stand with, Doctrine of men or God's Word?

(Part 5 of this article will be printed in next week's bulletin)

### I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT... CAN YOU?

You have a reasonably intelligent and knowledgeable preacher! (Okay, I did say "reasonably".) He can do a pretty good job of explaining why one must be baptized in order to receive the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, why one should only wear the name of Christ, why we should sing only, why we partake of the Lord's Supper weekly, and a great number of other such matters. But, in spite of his "reasonable" brilliance, he must freely confess there are some things he simply cannot explain!

For example, he cannot explain why Christian people will not avail themselves of the opportunity to be in Bible classes on Sunday morning. He cannot explain, especially when we all know the value of Bible study and the fact that a good number of people prepare themselves to teach, and then, a lot of people simply do not come. He cannot explain why some parents do not bring their children to Bible study. He has a real difficulty explaining why a lot of folks, who could do it, do not come to mid-week Bible study. He just has a hard time explaining things like that! Why is it? Do you just have a dumb preacher? . . . Well, maybe. And, if he is, then can YOU explain it?