

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

**BETWEEN** the atheist who would not dream of financially supporting the church and the Christian who will not financially support the Lord's church?  
**BETWEEN** the skeptic who does not believe the Bible and the negligent Christian who never reads it?  
**BETWEEN** those who do not believe in Bible classes and those who choose never to attend a class?  
**BETWEEN** the atheist who does nothing to build up the Lord's church and the Christian who finds fault with others, but does nothing himself?  
**BETWEEN** a man of the world, and a person in the church who lives like a man in the world?  
**BETWEEN** a man of the world who lives for self and a person in the church who lives for self, not God?  
 These are tough questions for Christians who live in a tough world. The fact is, Christians make no difference until they are different. Again, **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?** ♦

**HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT**

- If you want friends — **be friendly.**
- If you want someone to smile — **smile.**
- If you want courtesy — **be courteous.**
- If you want knowledge — **study.**
- If you want a good name — **live right.**
- If you want to reap well — **sow well.**
- If you want to be a Christian — **obey God's word.**
- If you want to go to heaven — **live a Christian life** ♦

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

- Hear and Learn** - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe** - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent** - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord** - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized** - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching** - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

**About the Hillcrest church of Christ**

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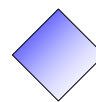


**Schedule of Assembly**

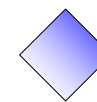
**Bible Study:** Sunday, 9:00am  
**Worship Service:** Sunday, 10:00am  
**Bible Study:** Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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# The Voice of Truth



September 25, 2011

**Know The Truth**  
 By Jimmy Pettigrew

A brother in Christ gave me a tract which he received in the mail entitled "Would you like to know the Truth?" This tract was from the Watchtower (Jehovah Witness). When you first look at the title it sounds good, but once you start reading the material it all falls apart. They ask certain questions in this tract like:

"What happens to us when we die?"  
 "Is there any hope for the dead?"

All sound like good questions to ask, but how they answer, is altogether different than what the scriptures teach. They start out after labeling these questions, asking, "Where would you look for answers to these questions?" They tell us that there is "one book that contains reliable answers. It is the book of truth. And we know that Word as the Holy Bible." The Jehovah Witnesses claim to urge upon the people only the word of God and that sounds good, but not true! Actually, instead of accepting scripture only and imposing that on others, they impose their system upon the scriptures and force it to comply with their beliefs. How? Well, notice what they write in this tract concerning the question, "What happens to us when we die?" They write, "Most of the world's religions teach that something inside a person continues living after death ... or that God punishes the wicked by condemning them to eternal torment in a fiery hell." Then they write "What the Bible teaches: At death, humans cease to exist." They need to read **Matthew 17:1-13** in the Bible, concerning the transfiguration of Christ. Moses had been dead fifteen hundred years (**Deut. 34:5-7**), Elias had been departed from the earth nine hundred years (**2 Kings 2:11**). Yet both continued in existence in another place, an unearthly one. There is life after death. Only the body is in the grave. The spirit is alive, conscious. Men do not cease to exist (**1 Thess. 2:19**). There is consciousness after death. When Jesus taught of God saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (**Matthew 22:32**), was He not proving that they exist? Wait, in their tract it states "The Bible teaches at

death, humans cease to exist. The dead ... are conscious of nothing at all," states **Ecclesiastes 9:5**. What does **Ecclesiastes 9:5** say? "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." They are in error concerning this verse in which they use to prove their point. The context of Ecclesiastes is discussing things on earth from the point of view of "observation", not "revelation." As far as we observe here on earth the dead know nothing of world events. They no longer use their knowledge and wisdom for they are gone, the body returns to dust, but the spirit is alive, conscious.

Does that sound like they believe in the Bible only? The Jehovah Witnesses reject the doctrine of eternal torment! Why? They claim it is unscriptural. According to the Bible, those who die in a state of rebellion toward God will be subjected to affliction in the hades realm immediately after death (**Luke 16:23-25**). Again Jesus taught, "And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (**Mark 9:47-48**). **Matthew 13: 42, 50** very clearly talks about the wicked being cast "into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (**Revelation 20:11-15**). The Witnesses are in error in their teaching concerning hell. Remember they stated in the beginning of this tract, "one book that contains reliable answers... the Holy Bible." Can there be any doubt that they do not believe in the Bible only? There is eternal punishment and there is eternal life. Sometimes it is argued that there can't be eternal fire for it would soon burn you up. But we see the example of a continuing fire which does not consume in **Exodus 3:2** when Moses sees the burning bush. The bush is not consumed.

This tract goes on to ask the question: "Is there any

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hope for the Dead?" They say the Bible teaches ...those resurrected as humans will have the opportunity to live on a paradise earth (**Luke 23:43**). What does **Luke 23:43** say? "*And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*" Where is the wording that states paradise is the new earth? If Paradise is this new earth that men will live on after death, that means Christ and the repented thief were living on this new earth? Don't think so! "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up*" (**2 Peter 3:10**). **Revelation 6:14** says the heavens will be rolled up as a scroll. **Revelation 16:26** says every island fled away and no mountain was found. **Revelation 20:11** says no place was found for the earth. "*But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*" (**2 Pe-**

**ter 3:13**). See, Jimmy the JWS are right, the new earth. No! **2 Peter 3:13** is speaking figuratively for the abode of the saints will be in heaven, not on earth (**John 14:1-3**). Where is the Lord? In heaven! **First Thessalonians** says we will ever be with the Lord (**4:16-18**). Since the JWS believe in the scriptures, they will believe Peter when he states "*our inheritance is reserved in heaven*" (**1 Peter 1:4**). There is where we put our treasures (**Matthew 6:19-21**). There we have our citizenship (**Philippians 3:20**). "*If ye abide in my word, (then) are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (**John 8:31-32**).

These teachings of the Jehovah Witnesses reject clear and unmistakable teaching of the scriptures. The Jehovah Witnesses claim that they only follow the word of God, but they twist the scriptures to fit their needs. "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one (point), he is become guilty of all*" (**James 2:10**). ♦

## "Does It Matter What I Believe?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Many ask this question in reference to religious matters. Some will try to say that it does not matter what we believe as long as we are honest and sincere about religious issues. Let us look to the Bible and see the consequences of that reasoning.

If, in religion, it does not matter what you and I believe, why did God say, "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me*" (**Ex. 20:3**)? Why did God not allow those Jews to worship the "god of their choice"? Isn't it possible that there were some Canaanites and heathens that were sincere and honest in their infant sacrifices, mutilation of their bodies, and other forms of "worship" to their gods? Yet, God did not allow such a thing (**Josh. 24:20**). Why would that be unless God expected worship to be to Him and Him alone, no excuses and no exceptions?

If, in religion, it does not matter what you and I believe, why did Jesus condemn the Pharisees and the Sadducees for their behavior? Let us notice **Matthew 15:9**. There Jesus said, "*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" Does this sound like Jesus does not care how we worship him? Is there a possibility that some may believe that they are truly worshipping God, but in reality it is "in vain"? Yes!

Another passage we ought to look at is found in **Matthew 22:29**. Jesus condemned the Sadducees at this time, and said, "*Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor*

*the power of God.*" How could these people "err" if it does not matter what you and I believe on religious matters?

Let us look at an early teacher and preacher of the gospel. A man by the name of Stephen. This space will not allow us to print the entire text, but please read **Acts 7** so you can understand the entire context. Toward the end of **Acts 7**, Stephen condemns the Jews for refusing to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Please notice what happened, "*When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth...And cast him out of the city, and stoned him*" (**Acts 7:54, 58**). Does this reaction sound consistent with people who have heard words to the effect, "I'm O.K. and you're O.K. -- There are many roads to the same goal"?

Many times, Paul would cause a riot in the cities he visited. Why was this? This was because he taught "*THE gospel of Christ*" (**Rom. 1:16**)!! He taught that there was not another gospel of Christ. Therefore, you will follow the one true gospel, or a perverted gospel, period (**Gal. 1:6-9**). Paul caused a stir among the Philippians because he was accused of teaching "*customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans*" (**Acts 16:21**). Does this sound like Paul taught that there are "many ways to serve God"? In Ephesus Paul, "*hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they*

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*be no gods, which are made with hands*" (**Acts 19:26**). Why would he say this to such an honest and sincere group of people who were just trying to worship their goddess the best way they knew how? How do we know that these people were honest and sincere in their beliefs about the goddess Diana? For one thing, they shouted "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*" for two solid hours to show their devotion to that idol (**Acts 19:34**). Paul did not teach these things in Ephesus alone, but everywhere that Paul went he taught the same gospel (**Acts 19:26; I Cor. 4:17**).

If it is true that God will accept you as long as you are honest and sincere in what you believe, then why was Paul converted in the first place? He was the epitome of an "honest and sincere," "religious" person, fully persuaded in his own mind (**Acts 22:3, 23:1, 26:9-10; Gal, 1:13-14; Phil. 3:4-6**). But it was not enough, was it??

## WHAT IF IT'S NOT IN THE SCRIPTURES?

By David J. Riggs

On several occasions, after I had stated that a certain religious belief or practice was not in the Scriptures, I received the reply, "Does that make it wrong?" Let me affirm plainly and emphatically in words which cannot be misunderstood that **it most certainly does make it wrong!** When one believes or practices something in religion which is not in the Scriptures, all of the following divine principles immediately apply:

1. It is not a good work - **2 Tim. 3:16-17**
2. It does not pertain to life and godliness - **2 Pet. 1:3**
3. It causes one to not have God - **2 John 9**
4. It is not authorized by Christ - **Col. 3:17**
5. It cannot be done by faith - **2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17; 14:23**
6. It is going beyond what is written - **1 Cor. 4:6**
7. It is not as the oracles of God - **1 Pet. 4:11**
8. It is not according to the pattern - **Heb. 8:5**
9. It does not pertain to the seed of the kingdom - **Luke 8:11; Matt. 13:18-19**
10. It is not of righteousness - **Rom. 1:16-17; 10:1-4**
11. It is of "no such commandment" - **Acts 15:24**
12. It is iniquity - **Matt. 7:22-23**
13. It is of men - **Matt. 21:25; 15:9**
14. It is not of truth - **John 4:24**
15. It is another gospel - **Gal. 1:6-9**
16. It is adding to the Word of God - **Rev. 22:18-19; Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6**

My friend, what we believe religiously, matters! What we believe concerning religious matters will determine whether we go to Heaven or Hell! This is how serious it is. We are not on "different roads to the same goal"! Now, we may be on different roads, but rest assured that one road leads to Heaven and the other road leads to Hell (**Matt. 7:13-14**). These are our choices!! When people declare that it does not matter what you believe as long as you are honest and sincere, they are teaching something completely foreign to the Scriptures. We must follow what the Bible and the Bible alone says on matters of religion, as well as in every other area of our life (**Col. 3:17**)!! If people will not give us book, chapter, and verse for their actions, we need not listen (**I Pet. 4:11**). The next time someone asks the question "Does it matter what I believe religiously...?" How will **YOU** answer them??

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In effort to justify their practice, people often argue, "The Bible doesn't say not to." The Bible doesn't need to condemn a practice to make it sinful and wrong. It is wrong when it is not in the Scriptures for it violates the above principles. Similarly, many use the time worn reply, "Isn't our practice a good work; look at the good we're doing." If it's not in the Scriptures, if cannot be a good work because, again, it is condemned by the above principles.

What should we say, therefore, about the many things which are practiced in religions today that are not in the Scriptures? For example, what about baptizing infants, sprinkling for baptism, christening, calling a man Reverend, instrumental music in worship, taking money out of the church treasury and sending it to human institutions, etc.? Aren't all of the above sixteen principles violated by such additions?

How can people claim to be followers of Christ when they have no respect whatsoever for the things which Christ said? How can they claim love and respect for Christ when they continue to do things in religion which have been introduced solely by man? Spending time and effort to learn the Word of Christ and continuing steadfastly therein, demonstrates genuine love and respect for Christ. Similarly, a rejection of all traditions and doctrines of men confirms true love and respect for Christ. Those who are doing things not authorized by Christ have no love and respect for Him. Credit: <http://oakridgechurch.com/riggs> ♦