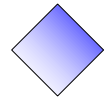


# The Voice of Truth



December 23, 2012

## "Nothing But The Blood Of Jesus"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

*"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23),* wrote the apostle Paul. Sin then, for all accountable persons, is a fact and a reality. *"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).* Sin separates one from God *(Isaiah 59:1-2).* Is there any hope for man? How could man be brought back in favor with God? Nothing but the blood of Jesus could do it! *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).* Knowing the results of sin as we do should bring us to the realization of the great need of the blood of Jesus Christ, since nothing but the blood of Jesus is the remedy for sin. *"What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus."* Let us look at some of the benefits of the blood of Christ.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus provides for man's redemption. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).* To "redeem" means to buy back. Christians have been *"bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20),* and that price is the blood of Jesus Christ. We have been redeemed *"with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19).* Jesus paid His own blood. The church was "purchased" with the blood of Christ *(Acts 20:28).*

Nothing but the blood of Jesus provides for man's sins being washed away. *"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5).* Because Christ loves us, He washed us from our sins. The means by which Christ released us from our sins is by His blood.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus provides for man's justification. *"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through*

*him" (Romans 5:9).* To "justify" means to declare one free of guilt; being guilty, man is in need of justification. Nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ will take away the guilt of sin.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus provides for man's reconciliation. *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).* The word "reconcile" means to be brought back to agreeable conditions. Man, who became God's enemy to because of transgression, was brought back on friendly terms with God, through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We know that the blood of Jesus is essential to man's salvation; then how can one contract the blood of Christ? Jesus shed His blood in His death *(John 19:34).* The only blood that can save and cleanse us is that which He shed in His death. And the only way we can reach that blood is said to be when we are baptized into His death! Paul, in his epistle to the church in Rome, pens the following words: *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4).* Until one is baptized into Christ *(Galatians 3:26-27)* and His death *(Romans 6:3-4),* he has not contacted the powerful, cleansing blood! Some people say we don't need to be baptized, that we are saved by grace only, and I would agree that we are saved by grace *(Ephesians 2:8-10).* Question: Where is grace found? *"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:1).* Grace is found in Christ! How do we get in Christ? One is baptized into Christ *(Gal. 3:26-27).* No sectarian preacher can point to a single passage that shows entrance into Christ by another means than baptism! *"What can wash away my sins, Nothing but the blood of Jesus."* We have access to that blood! •

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## Christmas Lies

### By Jonathan L. Perz

Is it not written within the pages of the sacred text, *“all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”* (Rev. 21:8)? Knowing this, I stand amazed that Christmas, a holiday traditionally based on Christ’s birthday, is actually based upon and has become the catalyst for a plethora of diverse lies. These lies all begin with the simple idea that “Jesus is the reason for the season.”

For some, it would be unthinkable to imagine the fact that the Bible does not even mention the holiday of Christmas, because Christ has been associated with Christmas for so long. Yet, the Bible makes no mention of the holiday. Not once! First century Christians never celebrated Christ’s birth as an annual holiday.

Rather, they celebrated His death, burial and resurrection by partaking the Lord’s Supper on each first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17ff). Thus, Jesus is not the reason for a season of activity as is commonly proclaimed. Would it not be far more accurate to say Jesus is the reason we can have life? Should not Jesus be celebrated daily, not annually?

Furthermore, many actually believe that Christ’s birthday fell on December 25<sup>th</sup>, the day chosen for observing Christmas. However, this little detail cannot be proven from scriptures or from history. As a matter of fact it would seem, based upon the scriptures, that Christ was born during a warmer time of year and not winter as is traditionally accepted. The shepherds who heard the angels’ proclamation would not have been staying in the fields during winter nights, rather they would have had their flocks in the folds (cf. Luke 2:8ff). Thus the very day chosen for the holiday is merely a tradition of men—it is not based upon a commandment or upon inspiration from God (cf. Matt. 15:9).

Additionally, children are often in holiday pageants that depict three wise men visiting Jesus at His birthing place in the manger. Herein exists two more lies. First, the Bible does not say that there were three wise men. It simply says that there were three kinds of gifts (cf. Matt. 2:1-12). There could have been any number of wise men, three is merely assumed. Second, the Bible does not say they visited Jesus at the manger where He was born. When the wise men arrived, Matthew tells us they had come into the “house” (Matt. 2:11). The star had been in the sky for some time already (vs. 2, 7) and was not necessarily over

the manger, but *“stood over where the young Child was”* (v. 9). Thus, children are being taught false details about Christ’s birth and many adults have accepted these things as truth, when they are in fact lies.

Besides these very serious spiritual issues, by which the word of God is being perverted, there are many lies associated with the secular aspect of Christmas. For example, Santa Claus and all the fantastic stories about him are being taught to children as fact. Sure, children eventually grow out these beliefs. Nevertheless, is it acceptable for adults, some of whom are Christians, to tell lies to their children? Surely not. You see, the rationalization is that it is harmless to let children believe in Santa Claus. Is it really harmless to teach your children to tell a little lie? Is it harmless to let them believe something that is not the truth? Is this merely pretending? Some rationalize that the story of Santa Claus is a necessary part of childhood or that a child’s Christmas would be diminished by not believing in Santa Claus. My children have always known the truth about Santa, as well as every other aspect of the holiday, and it has not diminished their holiday one bit. Don’t let movies like *Miracle On 34<sup>th</sup> Street* convince you it is acceptable to lie to your children. Remember the Lord’s promise for *“all liars”* (Rev. 21:8).

Another group of lies surrounding the holidays is often associated with gift giving. People lie when they say they like a gift when they do not. If one does not want to hurt another’s feelings, would it not be more appropriate to simply say “thank you,” or to just express appreciation? Such is not a lie. In addition, parents will lie to their children about the source of a gift—in an attempt to keep the Santa story in circulation. It is a lie. Some folks lie about why they were not able to obtain an important gift (e.g., the store sold out, etc.). Such is shameful. Some lie about the prices of gifts as well. Another shame. Why does such a seemingly harmless holiday and custom have to become the catalyst for so many bold-faced lies?

Must Christians manifest an Ebenezer Scrooge attitude toward the secular holiday? Is the holiday inherently wrong? Some may ask, is it unscriptural to celebrate the day as a secular holiday? There is authority to celebrate days (Rom. 14:5-6). Is it unscriptural to celebrate it as Jesus’ birthday (a spiritual holiday)? Yes—because we lack authority for the practice (Col. 3:17) and we do not abide in the doctrine of Christ by so doing (2 John 9). Regarding

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lies, Christians must always be careful to speak only the truth—whether it is about what the Bible teaches, or rather, does not teach about Christmas, or about the secu-

lar aspects of Christmas. Lies will condemn us (**Rev. 21:8**), but the truth saves (**John 8:31-32**).

Credit: [www.moodychurchofchrist.com](http://www.moodychurchofchrist.com) ♦

## "It Is All A Question Of Authority"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Error and sin abound in this country. This is an undisputed fact. Yet, why is this true? What is the reason that so many are involved in sin and teaching false doctrine? Let me suggest that it all boils down to a question of authority. Who is it that will rule us? Will we be ruled by self, or Christ? The Pharisees recognized the need for having authority for what we do in this life. They asked Christ on one occasion, "*By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?*" (**Matt. 21:23**). While their question was posed to try to ensnare the Lord, the basic premise is nonetheless true. If we do anything, we must have authority in order to do it. Now, where did we receive our authority? This is the question we must answer.

Authority is defined as, "*ability... privilege, i.e. (subj.) force, capacity, competency, freedom, or (obj.) mastery (concr. magistrate, superhuman, potentate, token of control), delegated influence:— jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength*" (**Strong's**). Our English dictionaries define the word "authority" in a similar way. "*The power to determine, adjudicate ... jurisdiction, the right to control, command or determine .... a power or right delegated or given*" (**Webster's**). Therefore, the question we must ask is, who has given you the right, power, jurisdiction, liberty, or privilege to do the things you do? Is it God or men? Truly, "*It is all a question of authority!*"

### False Standards Of Authority

Just because someone acts a certain way does not mean that person had the privilege or right to do it! Thus, we have a false standard of authority. Such false ones abound in our world.

False standards of authority include: Self, Friends, The Preacher, Parents, Society, The Law of the land, Satan, and anyone or anything else who takes the focus and glory away from God.

How can we be sure that the above things are false? It is because the Bible declares there is only one true standard of authority today.

### The True Standard Of Authority

Once we determine what the true standard of authority is, we'll know that all others are false! It is like one measuring a room. When we understand that the ruler is the basic tool (standard) for measurement, when one "steps off" a certain measurement, or someone else "eyeballs" the length of the room, we know such standards are faulty. We need to use the standard — the ruler.

So also, in our lives, we find that there is one and only one standard by which we should measure our lives, and this is Christ! Our Lord told the apostles, "*All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth*" (**Matt. 28:18**). This is still true today. It is Christ to whom God has spoken in "*these last days,*" and who is "*heir of all things*" (**Heb. 1:1-2**). Paul told the Colossians, "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*" (**Col. 3:17**).

Having read these verses, let us consider the following thoughts:

- 1) If the Lord has "*all power,*" how much power can anyone or anything else possess?
- 2) When God spoke to Christ, He spoke to Him and no one else (**Heb. 1:2**)! The Father spoke to Christ, and then Christ revealed God's will to men. (See also: **Jn. 12:49-50**)
- 3) Paul said "*all*" we say and do must be done "*in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Therefore, if one does something which is not "*in the name of the Lord Jesus,*" would this be considered sin or righteousness (See: **1 Jn. 3:4, 5:17**)?

Based on these things, let us understand that the true standard of authority is Christ! No one else can fill this position unless they wish to remove Christ from the throne!

### Conclusion

Therefore, when someone tries to determine what he will or will not do, it is all a question of authority! If one

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chooses to serve God and live for Him, or chooses to rebel, it boils down to the question of authority. Whom will we serve -- God or self?

and spend their lives in error because they are actually doing the bidding of a false authority who wishes to remain anonymous -- Satan! Don't be fooled, brethren. Let us keep our eyes and ears open; for who we follow as our authority in this life will determine where we spend eternity (**Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46**)! *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com* ♦

Yes friends, there is a true and a false source of authority for what we do. Unfortunately, many do not know this,

**What Do I Owe My Congregation?**  
**Author unknown**

**I owe it my loyalty.** I must help carry out every good work it undertakes. I should help other congregations in special efforts, but I should not neglect my home congregation. I owe it my dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

**I owe it my financial support.** It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. I am responsible to the Lord to give as He has prospered me. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability, for if the members of the church do not support the work of the home congregation, it will not be supported. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contribution when absent.

**I owe it my presence.** If everyone stayed home there would be no worship of God. I am responsible as anyone to attend all of my congregation's services. I must not be a parasite.

**I owe it the influence of a godly life.** The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it the harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and the salvation of the lost. I should live in such a way that my life will be blessing to others. ♦

Sin will take you farther than you  
 Ever wanted to go.  
 Keep you longer than you ever wanted  
 To stay and cost you  
 More than you ever wanted to pay. ♦

**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**

**Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew**

How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
<p><b>Telephone:</b> (920)499-5677  <b>E-mail:</b> hillcrestcofc@live.com</p>  	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive                  Green Bay, WI 54313</p> 	<p><b>Bible Study:</b> Sunday, 9:00am  <b>Worship Service:</b> Sunday, 10:00am  <b>Bible Study:</b> Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p><small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small></p>