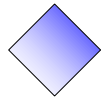


The Voice of Truth



January 13, 2013

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 proof 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**). ♦

"What Will You Do With The Truth?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Truth is something that demands a response. Every time we are faced with the truth of God's word (**Jn. 17:17**), we must do something with it. I imagine no better example could be given of the various responses man has to the truth than in the events recorded in **Acts 17** when Paul preached at Mars Hill. Let us study the book of **Acts 17**, and ask what ourselves what we will do when we hear the truth. When you hear the truth...

Do You Consider It Babbling?

When Paul entered Athens and saw all the idols in that town, *"his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there"* (**Acts 17:16-17**). When the Epicureans and the Stoics heard Paul, they asked, *"What does this babbler wish to say?"* (**Acts 17:18**). A "babbler" literally was a man, "lounging about the marketplace and picking up a subsistence by whatever may chance to fall from the merchandise; a parasite; getting a living by flattery or buffoonery; an empty talker" (Thayer's, p. 584). These Athenians looked to Paul and thought he was some kind of fool, a bum, or someone simply speaking for entertainment purposes. That is why there was so much interest in him at first. *"All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new"* (**Acts 17:19-21**).

The world at large considers the truth of God nothing more than foolishness. Paul wrote, *"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of their discerning I will thwart. Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God by wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe"* (**I Cor. 1:18-21**). It is a tragedy to see people who think the Bible is nothing more than "myths" or "stories." Is this your attitude?

Do You Mock When The Truth Is Preached?

In **Acts 17:22-31**, we read the most profound treatise on God from the creation to the second coming. When the Athenians heard this sermon, *"some mocked"* (**Acts 17:32**). The implication from this passage is that they mocked so much that Paul stopped preaching (McGarvey, Original Commentary on Acts, p. 223-224)! These people spent all their time either hearing or telling some new thing, but when it came to listening to the Truth, they could not bear it, and mocked the preacher (**Acts 17:21, 32**).

Are you one who would mock God's word? First, let us define what it means to mock as they did. To mock at

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God's word is to, "to jest, jeer at" (*Vine's*, p. 528). Mr. Thayer adds the word "deride" to his definition (p. 669). After we hear someone preach, do we say, "That is just his opinion," or "He gets paid to say that. If he didn't say that we would fire him"? When we say things like this about the Bible and those who proclaim the truth, we are mocking at the truth as they did in Paul's day, and that is sinful.

Do You Want To Hear It Again?

Some who heard Paul speak about the resurrection said, "We will hear you again about this" (**Acts 17:32**). This was not something negative, but it was something hopeful. Some wanted to hear more about God and the resurrection.

I am afraid that people forget that the command to hear God's words is just as binding as the command to preach! God commands us to "hear" Jesus (**Matt. 17:5**). When Peter preached on Pentecost, he told the people to "hear these words" (**Acts 2:22**). While Jesus was upon this earth, He said, "My sheep hear my voice" (**Jn. 10:27**). Literally, Jesus was saying that His sheep "keep on" hearing His voice, or continue to hear His voice. It is not a one-time thing! Therefore, it is a good thing when we see those wanting to hear God's word more and more.

These men wanted to hear Paul again so they could weigh God's word against man's word. That is what God wants all of us to do (**I Thess. 5:21; Rom. 12:2**). However,

friend, do not put off obedience to this word until it is too late (**II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:7-8, 15**)!

Do You Cleave And Believe?

A small group of people were impressed by the Truth so much that they decided right then to obey God. **Acts 17:34** says, "But some men joined him and believed, among whom were also Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." How great it is to see people that will decide right away that they want to obey the truth!

We should take time to study and examine God's word, but we must not wait too long! We have no lease on life, so we must take advantage of the time we have now (**II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:7-8, 15**). Christ calls people today to come and "learn" of Him, but the call will not last indefinitely (**Matt. 11:28-30**).

Too many want to hear about God, but do not want to hear what God says! The only way that we can know the Truth is to listen to His words (**Jn. 17:17**)! What kind of person are you when you are presented with the truth? Do you consider the preacher a man who is saying nothing? Do you mock at the truth? Do you seriously consider and study what has been said? Do you believe what you have heard and obey it? Let us seriously think about this because our answers to these questions will determine where we spend eternity! Credit: The Old Paths - 12/16/12 ♦

THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living today is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

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 Kind of DOER Am I?

By Jonathan L. Perz

There are all kinds of people who call themselves Christians. Some are good, some are not so good. Some are faithful, some are not so faithful. Some are honorable, some are not so honorable. Some are doers and some could be described as hyphenated-doers.

James instructs us to be “doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 1:22). One who is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, will be blessed in what he does (James 1:25). Unfortunately, not all are DOERS of the work.

You have those who are NOT-DOERS. They just don’t do the work. They expect blessings without any effort. They want a reward without any labor. Such a one has deceived himself (Jas. 1:22).

Don’t forget the DO-IT-WHEN-I-GET-AROUND-TO-IT-DOER. These are the ones constantly putting off that which should be done today. There is no zeal, fervor or diligence in their DO, only the never ending promise to do

it tomorrow. If something is worth doing—and the Lord’s work is always worth doing—then do it with all your might while you can (Eccl. 9:10; Jas. 4:13-17).

There are also those SOMEBODY-ELSE-WILL-DO-IT-DOERS. These are those who are content to leave the work undone until someone else does it. They like to see things get done, but they never volunteer because then they would have to do it. This brings to mind the story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important task to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but in the end, Nobody did it.

There are many kinds of hyphenated-DOERS who are not really doing much for the cause of Christ. Suffice it to say—being a Christian means being a DOER of the word! No hyphens. No excuses. No exceptions. Paul reminds us that we are, “His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (Eph. 2:10). Take a moment and ask yourself, “What kind of DOER am I?” *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦*

THINK! THINK! THINK!

What sort of church would the Lord’s church be if every member were just like me? ♦

A faith that will not take us to worship will not Take us to heaven!

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

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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

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com