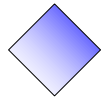


The Voice of Truth



July 21, 2013

Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part I

By Jimmy Pettigrew

There are two views on church authority. Paul said scripture would make us complete and completely furnish us unto every good work (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**). Yet denominations offer, recite, and bind catechisms, manuals, creeds, and disciplines. There is the Lutheran Catechism, the Catholic Catechism, the Baptist Manual, the Methodist Discipline, the book of Mormon, and on it goes, as if the Bible is insufficient. Let us examine these creeds in the weeks ahead and see how they compare to the Bible.

First, the Methodist Discipline claims to be inspired. In the Episcopal Greetings, p. 1, we read, "We have therefore expected that the Discipline would be administered, not merely as a legal document, but as a Revelation of the Holy Spirit working in and through our people." The Bible is inspired of God (**2 Tim 3:16-17**). Which is RIGHT or WRONG?

The Discipline teaches "faith only." On p. 29 we find, "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith is a most Wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort" The Bible When it says faith saves or justifies it is talking of a faith inclusive of works of obedience. **Romans 1:5** and **16:26** talk of the "obedience of faith." "Faith only" is mentioned in the New Testament; but it teaches the very opposite. The Bible clearly refutes the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Please read **James 2:14** Notice **verse 17** says faith without works is dead in itself **Verse 19** says the demons have faith alone and shudder. **Verse 20** says faith only is barren. **Verse 22** says that by works faith is made perfect then in **verse 24** James says that one is justified by works and not by faith alone. And finally he concludes by saying faith without works is just as dead as a body without a spirit.

"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43). Now this passage says they be-

lieved. Was it enough? Faith only, in their case stopped short of confessing Christ. The enormity of that situation is seen in the teaching of Jesus (**Matt. 10:32-33**). No, according to Jesus, faith only is not enough. One must go on and confess Jesus. Here in **John 12** is an example of some who only believe, and they are lost. Which one will you take: the Bible, God's Word or Methodist Discipline?

Notice another passage. *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).* These words are pretty clear. If you believe in Christ you have the right or power to become a child of God. You are not a child of God by faith only; you have the right or power to become one. The Bible clearly refutes the doctrine of salvation by faith only.

On the same page, Article of Religion No. 67 of the Discipline teaches "Original Sin." They teach we inherit the sin of Adam, so we are born with original sin. One passage they use is **Romans 5:12-14**, please read these passages. Well, it said sin entered the world by one man. That would be Adam. And then it clearly says death therefore passed unto all men for that all sinned. So we die because of the sin of Adam, which we all bear. So we are born with original sin. We sinned in Adam they teach.

However, I understand the "death" of this passage to be talking of spiritual death. The moral and spiritual situation of mankind is under discussion. Too, "all sinned" cannot refer to sinning in Adam for **verse 14** says that from Adam to Moses men did not sin after likeness of Adam's sin. They were not guilty of a sin like Adam's. They were guilty of another kind of sin. If they sinned in Adam, they did sin after the likeness of Adam's sin.

Further, it is argued that through one man sin entered into the world. So they teach it is inherited, all sin in their father Adam, so death passes unto all men. But how does

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sin enter into the world by one man? Adam ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. From then on one could learn good and evil and when he chose the evil he sinned and thus died spiritually. Sin did not pass into the world by being inherited. Because Adam ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, mankind from then on lost its innocence, sinned, even not after the likeness of Adam's sin, and so death passed to them.

The Holy Spirit declares that the child shall not bear the iniquity of the parent (**Ezek. 18:20**). David was not of the belief that his child died with a corrupted nature and guilty of sin. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (**2 Sam. 12:23**).

"Questions Which Demand Answers"

By Jarrod Jacobs

As we talk to people about the church and becoming a Christian, we may become frustrated because we do not know an answer, or because we do not know the answer right away. While we should never be afraid to say, "I don't know, let me study that and I will get back to you," we should also know enough to answer most questions when they are asked of us. Peter said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (**1 Pet. 3:15**). Let us look at some questions that are asked of us at times and answer them from the Bible.

"Aren't You The Ones That Don't Believe In Music?"

When someone asks this question, do we know how to answer? One who asks this question needs to be shown that while we do believe in "music," we do not have instrumental accompaniment in our singing. This person needs to be shown passages like **Ephesians 5:19**: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Another passage to study is **Colossians 3:16**: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Yes, we believe in music, but according to the Bible, it is a sin to add the mechanical instrument to the worship. Other helpful passages include: **Romans 15:9**; **1 Corinthians 14:15**; **Hebrews 2:12, 13:15**; and **James 5:13**.

"Do You Think That You Are The Only Ones Going To Heaven?"

Generally, this question is the result of hearing us teach that there is only one church that the Lord estab-

The Bible teaches that each man is responsible for his own sin. Never is it indicated that one person is responsible for another person's sin. "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (**Deut. 24:16**). "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (**Rom. 14:12**).

No, we are not born with original sin, nor are we born depraved. The Bible is right and the Discipline is wrong! What a tragedy that many people will stand in judgment, facing the grim reality that they built upon the wrong foundation in life. Which one will take your stand with? ♦

lished (**Eph. 4:5**; **Matt. 16:18**). It came into being on the day of Pentecost with about 3000 souls being added that day (**Acts 2:41**). God has continued to add the saved to the church since that day (**Acts 2:47**). Seeing that this is true, does it not make sense that if I wish to go to Heaven I need to be a member of the church the Lord started?

It is not a matter of whether or not I think "we are the only ones going to Heaven." What I teach must focus on "what saith the Scripture?" (**Rom. 4:3**). The truth is that God has left us no other choice! We will do it His way, or suffer the second death in a Devil's Hell!

"Do We Not Have Choices In The Religion We Want?"

Many try to accommodate people by allowing them choices that God never offered! We need to learn that there is only ONE way to Heaven, and it is through Christ (**Jn. 10:9, 14:6**). The way that seems right to men leads to death (**Prov. 14:12**).

Jesus was crucified to purchase His church and no one else's (**Acts 20:28**). His church wears His name and no one else's (**Rom. 16:16**). We enter into that church under His conditions and no one else's (**Acts 2:38**). There is only one true choice! It is not "my" church, not "my" feelings that determine what I teach and preach. The determining factor is what Jesus has said in the Bible.

"You Do Not Believe In The Old Testament."

Since we say that we are living under the New Testament today (**Col. 2:14**), some take this to mean we do not believe in the Old Testament. Not true! The truth is that we believe in the Old Testament and believe its words when it

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prophesies of its completion.

God promised a new covenant in Jeremiah's day. He said, *"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. ... (Jer. 31:31-34)."* This promise is repeated in the New Testament and the Hebrew writer says that God has given us a better covenant under which to live, the New Testament (**Heb. 8:6-13**).

Yes, we believe in the Old Testament (**Rom. 15:4**). However, it is not binding on us as law (**Col. 2:12-14**).

"You Do Not Believe That The Blood Of Christ Saves ."

This claim is made because we teach passages like **Mark 16:16** and **Acts 2:38** which declare that one must be baptized in order to be saved. A mistake is made because these people then assume that this means we do not believe the blood of Christ saves us.

Certainly, Christ's blood saves us! We could not have redemption without Christ's blood (**Eph. 1:7**). However, is it the blood alone that saves us? Certainly not! If the blood alone saves us then what of the love of God (**Jn. 3:16**)? What of the grace of God (**Eph. 2:5**)? The Bible says these things save us as well!

A distinction must be made between what God has done to give us salvation, and what man must do in order to receive salvation. On God's side, He has saved us by His grace, love, and Christ's blood. We in turn, must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, repent of our sins, confess Christ and be baptized in order to receive the remission of sins (**Jn. 8:24; Lk. 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mk. 16:16**). Christ's blood saves us when we are baptized (**Jn. 19:32-37; Rom. 6:3-6**).

"Why Do You Make The Distinction Between The Universal And Local Church?"

We make a distinction between the universal and local church because the Bible makes that distinction! The universal church is made up of all Christians, living and dead. It has no earthly organization at all. We see a reference made to the universal church when we read Peter's command to, *"love the brotherhood"* (**I Pet. 2:17**). In Christ's promise to establish His church, He referred to the church in the universal sense (**Matt. 16:18**). When God adds people to the church, He adds them to the church (universal),

not to a local church (**Acts 2:47**). One can be in the universal church without being a member of a local church. However, if one never becomes a member of a local congregation, he has not fully obeyed God based on apostolic example.

A local church is simply a group of Christians meeting together in a certain locality. When we read of the church at Ephesus, Colosse, or Corinth, we are reading about local churches. They are organized with elders, deacons, and saints (**Phil. 1:1**). For people to be added to a local congregation, they must be a Christian. They must then make their desire known, and that local church must respond to the request (**Acts 9:26-28**). The local church has a responsibility to withdraw from those members who walk disorderly (**II Thess. 3:6, 14-15; I Cor. 5**). Of course, one cannot be a member of a local church without being a member of the universal church.

Hopefully, these distinctions will help us as we discuss the subject of the universal and local church. Many have blurred the lines between the two. When this happens, denominationalism is not far off!

"Why Do You Make The Distinction Between The Church And The Individual?"

We do so because the Scripture makes this distinction. For example, Christ said, *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church..."* (**Matt. 18:15-17**). Notice the distinction that is made between an individual and the church. Yes, there is a difference.

Paul talked about this distinction as well. He said, *"If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed"* (**I Tim. 5:16**). If there is no difference between the church and the individual, then when the individual was charged, so was the church! It did not matter that Paul said, *"let not the church be charged"* for it was charged when the individuals were! See how silly this gets? There is a distinction made between the church and the individual, and it is our responsibility to respect that distinction! Beware of those who say that there is no difference between the church and the individual.

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Conclusion

When we decide to follow what the Bible says in all things, the answers to these and other questions are not difficult to find. Let us study our Bibles together and come

to a proper understanding of God's word. What is your question? Ask me any Bible-related question, and I will do my best to answer you from the Bible. For this is our true standard of unity! *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦*

**Tomorrow
Unknown Author**

TOMORROW is the great enemy of advancement. Boasting of TOMORROW is the lazy man's way of evading today's duties. TOMORROW leaves more tasks undone, more books unread, more houses un-cleaned, more programs un-launched, more resolutions un-kept than any other factor of life.

TOMORROW is the great enemy of the church. Our greatest liability is not our ignorance, nor our unconcern, nor our unwillingness, but—TOMORROW. More absentees have been neglected, more prospects have gone un-enlisted, more lessons have gone unprepared, and more lost people have gone unsaved because of TOMORROW than any other reason.

TOMORROW is the great enemy of the soul. TOMORROW has probably sent more people to hell than all other causes combined. While many infidels, agnostics, and atheists have gone to hell, thousands of "believers" have gone because they counted on TOMORROW.

TOMORROW is Satan's best scheme in keeping men and women lost. Yes, Satan knows he will never destroy your faith in the Bible, or your belief in the love of God. He does not care when you realize that you need to be a Christian. He knows all of these things are of no avail if he can keep you waiting until TOMORROW.

"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). ♦

FIVE FIRSTS TO SUCCESS

1. Give God the **FIRST HOUR** of the day.
2. Give God the **FIRST DAY** of the week.
3. Give God the **FIRST PORTION** of your pay.
4. Give God the **FIRST CONSIDERATION** in every decision.
5. Give God the **FIRST PLACE** in your heart. And it really works, too. ♦

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