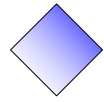


# The Voice of Truth



July 28, 2013

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

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Last week we looked at the views on church authority. Some people look to creed books rather than the Bible only. Many look at these books to give them guidance in their work and worship. This week let us examine the Roman Catholic faith.

(1) Look at the Roman Catholic faith attitude toward the Bible. The Roman Catholic faith teaches two sources of revelation today are the Bible and traditions. Please notice this quote from one of their own books: "It is affirmed that the Bible, sacred tradition, and the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the other" (The Documents of Vatican II, p. 118). The Catholics say the scriptures and traditions, but God said scripture, and God's word alone is all-sufficient. The Roman Catholic faith is making exactly the same mistake as the Pharisees did: *"And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition"* (Mark 7:9). They love to think of men above that which is written, and this is a violation of the scripture (1 Cor. 4:6). They love to change the truth into a lie (Rom. 1:25). Many Catholics have been deceived by the hierarchy of that faith by saying the traditions are as good as God's word, but notice what God thinks about the traditions of men: *"And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men: but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God"* (Luke 16:15). Regarding traditions of men He further said, *"Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be meted up"* (Matt 15:13). And the apostle Paul warned, *"Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"* (Col. 2:8). *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God"* (1 Pet. 4:11). Human wisdom along with human traditions and human philosophy are all condemned. The only reliable source of God's words is in the writings of the apostles and prophets called the Bible.

(2) Purgatory: That there is a place where the dead go to suffer punishment in order to be purified. Notice what the Catholics advocate about purgatory: The state in which souls exist for a time after death to work out the temporal punishment due to venial sins or forgiven mortal sins. The soul is purified in this state to prepare it for its entrance into the delights of heaven and the Beatific Vision. "It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Mac. 12:46)

We should first observe that this false teaching is based on apocryphal book which is not considered to be inspired Scripture except by the Catholic-oriented religious groups. Judas Maccabeus was not an inspired man. But what does the Bible say regarding sin remaining and needing to be burned away in punishment for the believer? Paul said, *"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him (Christ)"* (Rom 5:9). And again he said, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"* (Rom. 8:1). When one becomes a Christian, he is cleansed of his sins in water baptism, and is just by the blood of Christ, saved from the wrath of God, and under no condemnation. The scriptures are clear on that, and the Christian need not go to his grave with sin. In fact, he must not.

The Bible teaches that when a Christian sins he must repent of sin and pray to the Lord for forgiveness (Acts 8:22). He confesses his sin to God and the blood of Christ keeps on cleansing him of sin (1 Jno. 1:7-9). Christ is the propitiation for our sins (1 Jno. 2:1-2). He appeases the wrath of God and covers our sin. We do not face God laden with sins. Also, the case of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:20-31, the great gulf, and no crossing hence or thence, reverse's the Catholic idea of praying to the saints to get souls out of purgatory. The doctrine of purgatory is an invention of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic faith,

Continued on Page Two

### In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part II  
Pages 2 to 4 - "What Determines Truth?"

Page 4 - THINK ABOUT IT!  
Page 4 - What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Continued from Page One, "Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part II"

it is false and the Bible does not teach or indicate any such place.

(3) Auricular Confession: The priest, in the place of God, can forgive sin and give the sinner some act to do to remove the temporal sin. It is not enough to repent and pray like the Bible teaches (**Jas. 5:16; Acts 8:9-24**). Why not follow the Bible, and confess only to God through Christ our Advocate? (**1 Jno. 2:1-2**).

(4) The Perpetual Virginity of Mary: It is taught that Mary, after the virgin birth, never had children. But the Bible, clearly taken for what it says, shows the opposite. Her children are listed in **Matthew 13:55-56**. So, the doctrine of perpetual virginity of Mary is a human tradition.

Also, they worship Mary, that Mary is immaculate, the mother of God, spouse of the Holy Spirit. Look carefully at these scriptures: (**Lk. 1:47; 2:22; Jno. 2:3-5; Ex. 20:4**).

(5) To call a man father: There is the custom of calling the priest "father." But Jesus said, "*And call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven*" (**Mat 23:9**). It is a sin to wear a religious title as that which separates one Christian from another. Jesus clearly condemned religious titles such as Reverend,

Priest, Bishop and Pope.

(6) The Lord's Supper: Transubstantiation. Transubstantiation means to "change into another substance." This is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Roman Catholic faith. They call this the sacrifice of the mass. They believe that the bread and the wine were changed into the literal body and blood of Christ at "mass" when the priest would say the words of consecration, this is my body. The Bible does not teach this view, it is man made in origin. If this were true, would not this make them a group of cannibals?

Note that Christ was not yet crucified when he instituted the Lord's Supper - "This is my body." It could not have been literal. The Lord's Supper, as portrayed in the Scriptures is not a sacrament, but a memorial. Our Lord said, "*This do in remembrance of me*" (**Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24**). As Christians eat that bread and drink of that cup, they "*do show the Lord's death till he come*" (**1 Cor. 11:26**). The Lord's Supper, therefore, looks backward to His death, forward to His coming, and inward as a man examines himself in connection with the Lord's Supper (**1 Cor. 11:28**).

The Roman Catholic doctrine is not Bible doctrine. We ask that you reason with us on the Bible only! ♦

## "What Determines Truth?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Truth is an endangered thing. Many want nothing to do with the truth. They are like the Gentiles who "*did not like to retain God in their knowledge*" (**Rom. 1:28**). Why did they not want to retain God in their knowledge? Because God stood in the way of them doing what they pleased!

In like manner truth, the standard between right and wrong, is cast aside by many today. Many people say, "Truth is relative." Therefore, what may be the truth for you, will not be true for me and vice versa. In spiritual matters, truth must be determined by God. Truth itself transcends all lines. If it is right, it is right, if it is wrong, it is wrong.

Let's study and learn what does and does not determine truth.

### What Does Not Determine Truth?

#### Personal Experience

The Methodists say they determine the truth by: 1) The

Bible 2) Scholars 3) Personal Insight/Experience 4) Reason 5) Tradition. With this in mind, we can understand why the Methodists have changed their beliefs at different times through the years!

Just like the Methodists, there are many people who try to determine the truth based upon what they have experienced in their lives. Consider the following statements of those who try to determine the truth based upon personal experience.

1. "*I have always heard it said ....*" Or, "*I have never heard it said ....*" Before Columbus sailed to the Americas, people had "always heard" that the earth was flat, did this make it the truth? Obviously not!

2. "*I have never done it like that.*" Just because something is unknown to you does not necessarily make it wrong. There were several people in the Bible who thought their personal experience revealed the truth. Consider the Athenians who, after hearing Paul preach the truth,

Continued on Page Three

*Continued from Page Two, "What Determines Truth?"*

"mocked" him (**Acts 17:32**). Why was this? It is because what Paul said was different from all they had ever experienced. They had "never heard anything like that"! Therefore, they automatically assumed it was wrong.

In like manner, the Jews persecuted Christ and the apostles because what was taught by them was not what the Jews had experienced before. Clearly, personal experience does not determine the truth.

### One's Conscience

"Let your conscience be your guide" is the cry of many. The word "conscience" is defined as: *"1. the sense of what is right or wrong in one's conduct or motives, impelling one toward right action. 2. the complex of ethical and moral principles that controls or inhibits the actions or thoughts of an individual"* (Webster's).

Our conscience can be helpful in our decision-making process, but it depends upon how it was trained. If our conscience is trained right, it will bother us when we do that which is wrong. Otherwise, our conscience will not bother us, even when we do wrong things.

Something interesting to note is the number of people in the New Testament who did the wrong things and their conscience did not bother them. For example, the apostle Paul did *"many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth"* (**Acts 26:9-10**). He persecuted the Christians in Jerusalem, *"ravaging the church, entering house to house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison"* (**Acts 8:3**). His life is described as follows: *"You have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers"* (**Gal. 1:13-14**).

Having done all of these things, he stood before the rulers of his day and said, *"Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day"* and *"So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man"* (**Acts 23:1, 24:16**). Did Paul's conscience bother him as he persecuted Christians? No, sir! In fact, when he showed *"raging fury against them"* (**Acts 26:11**), his clear conscience did not change the facts.

Consider some other people in the Bible. Paul said there were some who would *"depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a*

*hot iron"* (**I Tim. 4:1-2**). Still others had *"defiled consciences"* (**Titus 3:15**). Does this sound like these people are worthy of emulation? Of course, not! Therefore, we cannot blindly follow our conscience, and expect to be pleasing to God. Our conscience alone does not determine the truth.

### One's Family

Some blindly follow whatever their family does. The problem is that doing this is about like following our conscience. Families can be helpful or harmful to us spiritually, depending on how they are! While we are expected to honor our fathers and mothers (**Matt. 15:4; Mk. 10:19; Eph. 6:1-2**), our family does not determine the truth.

There were some people in the Bible who followed their family, and they paid dearly for it. Consider Lot's wife (**Gen. 19:24-26; Lk. 17:32**). The screams of her family and loved ones meant more to her than the safety provided by God. In her disobedience to God, she was turned into a pillar of salt.

Many Jews followed the traditions of their families rather than Christ. Therefore, Jesus told the people, *"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me"* (**Matt. 10:34-37; Lk. 14:26**).

### What Determines Truth?

Now that we know some things that do not determine truth, what determines truth?

### God

Jesus said, *"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth"* (**Jn. 17:17**). In saying this, we see that God's word (not man's) is synonymous with truth. When we speak of truth, we are speaking of God's word; and to speak of God's word is to speak of the truth! Jesus said that the truth is what makes men free (**Jn. 8:32**). Our Lord also said, *"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you"* (**Jn. 15:3**). Whose word was He speaking? God's (**Jn. 12:49-50**)!

Looking to David, *"the sweet psalmist of Israel"* (**II Sam. 23:1**), we read His words of praise to God's word when he

Continued from Page Three, "What Determines Truth?"

penned, "all your commandments are true" (Ps. 119:151). He also declared, "And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true" (II Sam. 7:28).

Since God determines the truth, when we push away the truth we are pushing away God (Rom. 1:28)! When we say that truth is relative, we have cast God aside as King. We are trying to determine what is truth, rather than yielding to God and His word. This is a dangerous position in which to be, because it is God who determines truth, not us.

A beautiful description of God's word is found in II Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." Based upon what has been said, we know that we could not make it through this life without God's word.

God's word is what is to be preached and taught today (II Tim. 4:2, 2:2). Why must this be done? Because in so doing, we are spreading the truth! The truth that tran-

scends borders, racial lines, and all other man-made divisions!

### Conclusion

God's word is what determines the truth because it is the truth (Jn. 17:17). That is why we stress that "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11)! Nothing else determines the truth. This is made clear in Galatians 1:6-9. If we follow our thoughts, or what any man says, then we are jeopardizing our soul's salvation!

Let us determine that we will let nothing keep us from following the rock-solid, unchangeable, indestructible word of God! This is all that matters. If we lose our soul, we have lost it all (Matt. 16:26). This is why it is so important that we follow the Lord's will and not man's whims. When we appreciate the fact that it is God who has determined what is the truth, it makes the choice much easier, doesn't it? Who will we follow, God or self? Truth or error?

May we follow God's will, so that one day we can see Heaven together (Rev. 22:14, 17-19).

Credit: The Old Paths - 3/31/13 ♦

## THINK ABOUT IT!

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. "By their fruits ye shall know them," (Matthew 7:20). ♦

## 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

Telephone: (920)499-5677  
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



### Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54313



### 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