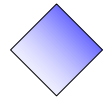


# The Voice of Truth



September 22, 2013

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

By Jimmy Pettigrew

We will examine some of the doctrine of the Independent Christian faith which places them in opposition to the doctrine of Christ.

Instrumental music in worship. For many, this is the only difference that is recognized between the Independent Christian faith and the Lord's church. Too many of the members of the Independent Christian faith believe it is a matter of indifference, a matter of opinion, and that one can worship with it or without it and be equally acceptable before God.

When one turns to the Bible, he sees that every reference to Christian worship authorizes Christians to sing (**Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16**), with NO reference to playing of an instrument. Where does God's Word, expressed in the New Testament, advocate the use of mechanical instruments in worship? Not anywhere! Instrumental music in Christian worship is vain worship because it originated with man, not with God. By using instrumental music in worship, one rejects God's authority and is not adhering to the doctrine of Christ.

There is not anything wrong with instrumental music as a God-given art or science. Within itself it is not a matter of morals, of right or wrong. It is just like eating ham and eggs are not moral issue. However, eating ham and eggs would become a sin if performed as an act of worship in the Lord's Supper, because the law of Christ allows only the kind of food that He specified and that is bread and the fruit of the vine. It would also be like bathing or sprinkling water on a baby would be morally right, but do so as a religious act, calling it baptism would become a sin because it has no authorization by Christ; He did not command it. There is no more authority to add instrumental music as a part of Christian worship than it would be to put jelly on the bread at the Lord's Table. God has told us what He wants; He does not have to say, "Thou shall not use instrumental music in worship." Having told us what He wants, He does not have to give us a list of all those

things that He does not want. In telling us what He requires, He eliminates all others, and they are thus unauthorized! (**Hebrews 7:14**).

Members of the Independent Christian faith hold to the false teaching of Premillennialism. They are unable to see any problem in holding to such a teaching that makes the church of our Lord simply an after-thought in the mind of God. Premillennialism teaches that the kingdom was postponed because Christ was rejected as King, and as a result, the church was substituted until He shall return to establish His kingdom. The Bible teaches that the church was not an after-thought, but rather was in God's eternal purpose (**Ephesians 3:10-11**). Then Paul said, "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son*" (**Colossians 1:13**). John joins in the refutation of premillennialism by reminding all that he was in the kingdom while exiled on the isle of Patmos (**Revelation 1:9**). "If there was no kingdom, where was I?" asks John. Peter informs premillennialism that Jesus is now sitting on David's throne - not in Jerusalem, but in heaven (**Acts 2:30-36**)! If one has a throne, he certainly has a kingdom! Therefore, to say that the kingdom has not been established is to oppose the very Word of God!

There are a number among the leadership of the Independent Christian faith who accepts any immersion, without it being for the remission of sins. From a letter from a preacher of the Christian faith responding to an inquiry about his position on baptism, "I do not teach that baptism is a necessity for the remission of sins . . . ." "My own stand on baptism is that... it is an outward expression of inward change . . . that it is not necessary for salvation, for forgiveness of sins, nor is it necessary to receive the Holy Spirit." (Restoration Herald, January, 1991, page 2.)

If this is true, then the new life of the saved person would also begin prior to baptism. Yet, Paul says that the

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new life occurs after baptism (**Romans 6:4**). The same thought is found in **Colossians 2:11-12**. In these last days, baptism saves us (**1 Peter 3:21**). This baptism is for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**). Baptism washes away our sins (**Acts 22:16**).

There is NO WAY that faithful children of God can fellowship the members of the Independent Christian faith.

Let us ever "*contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*" (**Jude 3**).

I hope that you enjoyed these articles dealing with other faiths. I hope you learned something from them. Let it be clearly understood that these articles in no wise are personal attacks on anyone. We have a responsibility to expose and refute error, wherever it is found. For this we make no apologies. ♦

## "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 "babbling" 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*" (**1 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 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

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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 ♦*

## God's Two Laws Of Pardon By Heath Rogers

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).* We live in a fallen world—everyone feels the wages of sin. All the pain and problems that plague mankind can ultimately be traced back to sin. But, as the above passage points out, God offers a way out.

The word pardon means, "to release a person from further punishment of a crime" (Webster's). What man needs, and what God provides, is pardon. We have suffered enough for our sins. We want to be released from further punishment. We seek eternal life with God and Christ. The Bible is the best selling book of all time because it contains the message of pardon, or the forgiveness of sins. Man's greatest need—salvation—is found in the Bible.

God is able to forgive us of our sins because of the shed blood of His Son Jesus Christ (**Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7**). But the fact that the blood has been shed does not mean that everyone is automatically forgiven. We chose to sin, resulting in our being lost. We must also choose to be saved. God has made a way for us to be forgiven, and this way can be referred to as a law of pardon.

God is not going to save us on the merit of our goodness. Cornelius is a great example of this (**Acts 10**). Cornelius was *"a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people,*

*and prayed to God always" (v. 2).* Yet, he was told to send for Peter who would tell him what he "must do" (**v. 6**). The fact that he was told he must do something implies that a law exists which he had to obey in order to be saved.

**1 Timothy 2:3-4** says, *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."* God wants to save everyone, but this is not possible until man comes to a knowledge of His law of pardon. Man is not free to choose HOW to be saved. There is a truth that must be learned, believed and obeyed before we are saved. Jesus provides the truth and points the way (**John 14:6**). He has been given all authority (**Matt. 28:18**). He is God's approved spokesman (**Heb. 1:1-2**). And He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (**Heb. 5:9**). To learn God' law of pardon, we must listen to Jesus.

What has Jesus said we must do to be saved? Believe! *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24).* Repent of Our Sins! *"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).* Confess Faith in Christ! *"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).* Be Baptized! *"He who believes and is baptized*

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will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Anything other than, or short of, what Jesus says is not the truth. It is through obedience to the gospel that we enter into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27) and enjoy every spiritual blessing in Him (Eph. 1:3-14).

We do not become perfect when we become a Christian. Even the most sincere Christians sin from time to time. Unforgiven sins have the same effect on Christians that they do on alien sinners—spiritual death, eternal Hell. So, the question of how Christians receive the forgiveness of their sins is also very important.

We Must Confess Our Sins! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Confession is good for the soul. Our forgiveness is dependant upon our willingness to own up to the fact that we have sinned. God must see in us a heart like that of David who confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. 12:13).

Repent of Our Sins! Acts 8 tells of Philip the evangelist

taking the gospel to those in Samaria. Among those who were converted was one identified as Simon the sorcerer (vs. 9-13). He sinned by trying to buy the ability to dispense the gifts of the Holy Spirit for his own personal gain (vs. 18-19). He was told by the apostle Peter to "repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you" (v. 22). Repentance is more than just being sorry that you have sinned. To repent means to turn away from sin. God must see in us an effort to turn away from sin and back towards Him.

Pray For Forgiveness! Simon was also told to pray for forgiveness. God must hear from us that we desire to be forgiven.

God is ready and willing to forgive all people of their sins. But we must seek His forgiveness through the means He has made available. If you are not a Christian, the blood of Jesus will cleanse you of your sins if you will fulfill the requirements of God's first law of pardon. If you are a Christian, the blood of Jesus will cleanse you of your sins if you will fulfill the requirements of God's second law of pardon. God is faithful to do what He has promised if we will do what He requires of us. ♦

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. ♦

Either the Bible will keep you from sin . . .  
Or sin will keep you from the Bible. ♦

### 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