

# The BEACON

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By the Newton church of Christ PO Box 893, 28658 Meeting at: 656 St. James Church Rd.  
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## Resolutions for the New Year

This time of year (as is any time of year) is an appropriate time to make some “resolutions.” I suggest the following for your consideration:

**1. I will study my Bible each day.** There are in any different ways to increase your knowledge of God’s Word. We may listen closely to, the preaching of the Gospel; we may study in one or more Bible classes that are conducted from week to week; we may engage in discussion groups in the homes of various members of the church; or, we may engage in a systematic study in the privacy of our homes. All of these programs are beneficial, and one is not designed to replace the others. The Christian who is keenly interested in learning more about the Bible is the one who, will avail himself of all of these opportunities. But too often the daily study of the Bible in the home is “pushed aside,” and “postponed” because of “lack of time.” Resolve to allot time every day of this year to study in this manner. And be sure your study, is systematic! I have heard people boasting of studying daily by allowing the Bible to fall open where it will, and then read a chapter. This is not good. It provides no continuity of thought. Choose a book. Read and study a chapter a day. You will be greatly blessed if you do.

**2. I will teach others about Christ.** If a man is truly converted to Christ, he will feel “compelled to tell others the “Wonderful Story of Love.” It is a great blessing to know the truth; but the “truth” may well condemn those who receive its blessings and refuse to tell others about such. Purpose to tell a minimum number of people about the crucified Son of God during the coming year.

**3. I will attend church services regularly.** The local congregation is only as strong and active as people like yourself choose to make it. There is too much “absenteeism” among the ranks of the Lord’s army! Members should feel a strong obligation to attend all of the services and activities of the local congregation. Do your part.

**4. I will give as I have been prospered.** The church is suffering everywhere because its members are not giving as they should. I know of many localities which need financial support in order that the Cause of Christ might be firmly planted. I am too pessimistic to believe that everyone will do their part this year, but I hope that you will. Plan now to give generously that the Gospel might be preached, souls saved, and churches planted in needy areas.

**5. I will help those in need.** Many of us are blessed with some abundance. We are not rich, but we do not suffer. But many of our brethren are in need. This was true in

Jerusalem soon after the church was established. When those that “had” learned of those that “had not,” they sold their abundance that the needs of those that “had not” could be supplied. Let us purpose to be our brother’s keeper. Let us do good unto all men, and especially unto those of the household of faith. We can obey this command as individuals.

Of course “resolutions” are not worth the time it takes to think about them if we do not zealously work to carry them out. Resolve, pray, and work! By Bryan Vinson, Jr. TM 1958



## **Truth - God's Revelation**

When Jesus Christ stood on trial for his life before Pontius Pilate, he affirmed, "Thou sayest I am a King. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate said unto him, "What is truth?" (John 18:37-38).

Pilate, whether sincere or not, propounded the question of the ages - WHAT IS TRUTH? Jesus had affirmed that he came to bear witness of the truth. To bear witness is to testify, give or be evidence of. Jesus Christ gave attestation of TRUTH! In this passage under consideration we have the affirmation of truth by the Son of God and the sneer of a man, "What is truth?"

Men have devised many subjective standards of truth. Possibly as many subjective standards as there are men. Men are prone to conceive truth as being relative and changeable. With them truth is what is workable and practicable. Value judgments are devised for the right courses of human conduct, but values change! The source of such systems is but the uninspired minds of men and is of no higher value. Such standards make it possible for men to do that which is right in their own eyes. The end results are chaos and confusion.

The Christian has only one ultimate standard of truth and authority, - the Word of God. Truth is the sum total of God's revelation. The Bible is God's revelation, hence, it is the only standard of authority in religion. What is truth? The revelation of the mind of almighty God - THE BIBLE! God's revelation is final, complete, authoritative, consistent, perfect and pure.

### **Truth - God's Mind Revealed**

Jehovah is the God of truth. David said, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, Oh Jehovah, thou God of truth" (Psa. 31:5). Isaiah affirms Jehovah to be the God of truth (Isa. 65:16). Jesus prayed, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). Paul declared, "God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

Jehovah, the God of truth, revealed the system of truth. This system is called "the one faith" (Eph. 4:5). Before the system of faith came, the Jews were under the law of Moses.

When the system of faith came, they were no longer under the schoolmaster, i.e., the law of Moses. Through faith in Christ one is baptized into Christ, becomes a Son of God and puts On Christ (Gal. 3:23-27). Christians are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).

The Word of God is truth. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Truth affords liberty. Jesus taught, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Men are enslaved in sin, ignorance and superstition. The only antidote for the enslavement of the human spirit is knowledge of and obedience to the truth.

Truth is embodied and personalized in Jesus Christ. Jesus declared himself to be, "The way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 14:6). Paul taught the Ephesians to put away their former manner of life, "If so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21).

The Gospel of Christ was fully revealed through the apostles by the Spirit of truth. Jesus taught that when the Spirit of truth is come he would guide the apostles into all the truth (John 16:13). The Spirit was poured out on the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2) and they went forth preaching the truth. The Thessalonians is a case in point as to how the message of truth was received, "And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which worketh in you that believe" (I Thess. 2:13).

The revelation of the Spirit of truth to the apostles is perfect and complete. James calls it the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25). Paul declared, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

This system of truth, revealed by the God of truth through Jesus Christ and the Spirit of truth, is also called sound doctrine. This means incorrupt, healthy teaching (Titus 2:7-8; 1 Tim. 4:16; 1 Pet. 4:11 ).

Truth cannot be perverted or altered without incurring the wrath of almighty God! Paul declared there to be only one gospel. There is not another. There is only one true and the rest is perverted! Those who pervert the gospel of Christ bring upon themselves the curse of God (Gal. 1:6-9). We are taught not to add or to diminish from truth (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18-19). We must not go beyond that which is written (I Cor. 4:6). Tradition will make void the commandments of God. Following the doctrines and commandments of men is but to worship God in vain (Matt. 15:6-13 ). There has never been a denominational body who taught and practiced all of the truth! The reason they exist as a denomination is because some truth has been ignored and doctrines and

commandments of men have been substituted. Their end is to be rooted up (Matt. 15:13; Psa. 127 :1; Matt. 7:21-23 ).

Christians are warned not to fellowship perverters of the truth! Those who cause divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which ye learned are to be marked and turned away from (Rom. 16:17). Be it noted here that opposition to false doctrine and unscriptural practices is not the source of division but the introduction of teaching contrary to the doctrine of Christ causes the division. -Men who love the truth can conscientiously do nothing else but oppose error every time it raises its ugly head. Those who teach contrary to the truth, leave the doctrine of Christ and leave God also! They have not God. They left him when they left the truth (2 John 9). A false teacher speaks the doctrines of demons (I Tim. 4:1).

### **Truth - Obeyed Through Faith**

The honest truth-seeker will do the will of God when he learns it. He who does the truth, "Cometh to the light . . . that his works may be made manifest that they have been wrought in God" (John 3:21 ). Knowledge of the truth frees one from ignorance and obedience to truth frees one from sin (John 8:32). It is the truth which begets (James 1:18). One is then born of truth. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth . . . And this is the Word of good tidings which was preached unto YOU" (I Pet. 1:22-23, 25). Jesus taught the new birth to be of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). This new birth is necessary to enter the kingdom of God. To become a Christian one must believe the truth, repent of his sins, confess his faith in Jesus as Lord and be baptised in water to be saved (John 8:32; Mark 16:16; Acts 17 :30-31; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 10:47-48). This puts a man into Christ (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:27 and makes him a child of truth. He is made a child of truth by being born of truth! If one is not born of truth, but of tradition, false teaching or denominational error, he is not a child of God. He is born of error and is, therefore, a sectarian and not a Christian!

### **Truth - Only Standard of Worship and Work**

The Word of God is truth (John 17:17). Jesus taught that true worshipers of God must worship him in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). To worship in truth is to worship as the word of God directs. This is the only acceptable worship. If some item or phase of worship in which you engage is not authorized in the New Testament, then it is sinful, i.e., out of harmony with revealed truth. Only that which is authorized is acceptable to God. He has expressly told us what he wants. To do otherwise is to be guilty of presumptions sin. Peter expressed three principles to guide us in our service to God: One, God has spoken, we have his oracles; two, all that God has spoken must be taught and practiced; and three, nothing which God has not spoken can scripturally be spoken or practiced. Read the passage (I Pet. 4:11).

The New Testament does not direct one to use mechanical instruments of music in

worship. To add it in worship is to step outside the bounds of truth (2 John 9). The same principle applies to the organization and work of the church. The scripture furnishes completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:17). If not authorized, then it is not a good work. Remember we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17).

### **Truth - Can Be Held In Unrighteousness**

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hinder the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom 1:18). Those who hinder truth by their ungodly living and unrighteous conduct shall be the recipients of the wrath of God. God will allow those who love not the truth to believe a lie and be lost. Not because God is unmerciful but because they love not the truth and had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

It is possible for those who have obeyed the truth to err from it (James 5:19-20). One in this erring condition must be converted back to truth in order to save his soul from death, i.e., separation from God. Those ensnared by Satan often oppose themselves. Their only hope is to acknowledge the truth and repent (2 Tim. 2:25-26). Faithful brethren must seek their restoration (Gal. 6:1). Brethren are warned not to have bitter jealousy and faction in their hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth (James 3:14). Erring brethren are admonished to confess their sins to God (1 John 1:6-10).

### **Truth - Only Standard of Conduct and Judgment**

All men must live according to truth for the truth will be the standard of judgment at the last day. The judgment of God is according to truth (Rom. 2:2). One becomes a child of truth by obeying truth (1 Pet. 1:22-23). He is cleaned by truth (Psa. 119:9-11; John 15:3). Children of God then walk in truth (3 John 4). Falsehood is put away and every man speaks the truth with his neighbor (Eph. 4:25). Christians love not in word, neither in tongues, but in deed and in truth (1 Jn. 3:18 ). You must live now according to truth to be approved of God at the day of judgment.

Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my savings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the some shall Judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Whatever the truth records about salvation, the church, worship, Christian living and etc., that will be the standard of judgment at the last day. How does your life measure up?

What is truth ? God's revelation! Have you obeyed the one gospel ? Are you worshipping God and working for him according to truth? If you are holding the truth in unrighteousness, then renounce your error and return to God. Acknowledge the truth and stand in it. Walk according to truth that you may be judged faithful at the last day.

Truth Magazine April 1960 Arvid K. McGuire

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# SUPPOSITIONS

Many of us are inclined to rely heavily upon suppositions in the realm of religion. To "suppose" means to imagine, believe without proof, guess, assume, or take for granted. In most realms we are not willing to depend on suppositions, but in religion we take things for granted and feel insulted if someone challenges the validity of our beliefs and practices.

## Bible Examples

**1. Joseph and Mary.** (Lk. 2:41-46.) When Jesus was twelve years of age, His parents went up to Jerusalem for the feast of the passover, one of three annual Jewish festivals. As they began the return trip, Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, but Joseph and Mary knew not of it. Supposing Him to be in the company, they went a day's journey. After being unable to find Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance, they returned to Jerusalem and found Him in the temple, hearing and asking questions to the astonishment of the doctors. Mary asked, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?" He replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

It was customary for the Jews to travel in large caravans when going to and from their feasts at Jerusalem. This was done for two reasons: (1) protection against robbers; (2) social advantages. No doubt there were numerous relatives and close friends from Galilee in the company with Joseph and Mary. They felt no occasion for alarm when they first missed the boy Jesus. They assumed He was in the group and would sooner or later turn up. But their taking it for granted that He was there did not make it so.

Many of us now suppose that we are Christians and that Jesus is with us as we travel the journey of life. If we would begin looking around and comparing what we practice with what the Bible teaches, we might realize that Jesus is not with us at all. It is possible that we might not find Him even among our relatives and close friends. In that case, we, like Joseph and Mary, would need to go back to Jerusalem. I do not mean this literally, but I mean back to the old Jerusalem gospel. Jesus was not lost because He had strayed; Joseph and Mary had simply left Him behind. If Jesus is not with us now, it is because we have left Him. Christ can always be found when men return to the ancient gospel and submit thereto.

**2. Mary Magdalene.** (John 20:11- 15.) Very early in the morning on the day of our Lord's resurrection Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre and saw the stone removed. It never occurred to her that He had arisen. She took it for granted that someone had removed the body. She ran to tell Peter and "that other disciple" about it. They came to the tomb, examined it carefully, were convinced that the body was gone, and went home. Mary remained at the sepulcher weeping. She looked inside and saw two angels, then turned back and saw Jesus standing nearby, but she knew not that it was Jesus. Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said, "Sir, if thou have bourned him

hence, tell me where thou hast laid him..." She believed so strongly (without any proof) that someone had removed the body, that the thought of His resurrection never entered her mind. One supposition leads to another. Supposing His body had been removed, she supposed that the gardener would know something about it, and when Jesus appeared she supposed Him to be the gardener. It was not until Jesus called her by name that she recognized His true identity.

Skeptics now suppose that there is some natural explanation for the disappearance of Jesus' body from the tomb. Their suppositions become so strong that they are blinded to the overwhelming evidences that he arose by divine power. We should not guess at the true identity of Jesus of Nazareth; we should form our conclusions on the basis of the documented facts at hand.

**3. The Apostles.** (Lk. 24:36-43.) After appearing to Mary, Jesus appeared also to a group of women, two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and Simon Peter. The apostles were assembled in Jerusalem discussing these very matters when suddenly Jesus stood in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they were seeing a spirit. The literal, bodily resurrection was more than they could grasp. But the Lord said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." On that same occasion, He took food and ate to show them that they were not seeing a ghost, as they supposed, but the same flesh-and-blood body that had been nailed to the cross.

**4. Mockers on Pentecost.** (Acts 2:1-15.) Ten days after Christ's ascension the apostles were in Jerusalem. After they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they began speaking in other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance. Jews were in the city out of every nation under heaven, and when every man heard them speak in his own tongue, all were amazed and marvelled. But there are usually doubters and skeptics in the crowd, and this was no exception. Some mocked and said "These men are full of new wine." They assumed that there was some natural explanation for this unusual event. Yet how ridiculous was their assumption. How could drunkenness empower a man to speak in foreign languages — tongues he has never studied? Most men under the influence of intoxicants do well to speak their own tongue, much less foreign languages! But any sort of wild speculation advanced by infidels to explain away the supernatural or miraculous, no matter how perfectly absurd that supposition may be, has appeal to those who are of a skeptical turn of mind.

When Peter stood up to speak, his first point was in answer to the mockers. He said, "These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." After reminding them that it was too early in the morning for drunks to start appearing, Peter proceeded to show that these events were in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy about the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days.

**5. The jailor.** (Acts 16:25-30.) It was when Paul and Silas were in jail at Philippi, where false charges were brought against them, that the stillness of the night was broken with a great earthquake. The doors flew open and every man's bands were loosed. The

keeper of the jail awakened out of his sleep, saw the doors open, supposed that his prisoners were gone, and started to take his own life. Knowing the strictness of Roman law at that time, his life would be required if his prisoners escaped, so he would spare disgrace by killing himself. Paul cried with a loud voice and said, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." These events form the setting for the conversion of the jailor and his house. This example shows the danger in depending on mere supposition. Here was a man about to take his own life because he took something for granted and did not investigate. His only evidence was the open doors. However, the doors being open did not prove that the prisoners were gone. Before we censure the jailor for staking his life on what he supposed, let us ask ourselves if we are staking our souls on something just as flimsy— a thing we have supposed to be all right.

### **Present-day Examples**

With these Bible examples of suppositions before us, let us now look at some modern cases.

**1. One church as good as another.** We have heard it preached time and again that "one church is just as good as another, therefore join the church of your choice." A lot of us have taken it for granted that this is true. Supposing that church membership makes no difference in reality, we have "joined" some group we like.

Now take another look at this matter. Is one church actually as good as another? Jesus bought His church with His own blood. (Acts 20:28.) Other churches have been started by men for various reasons. Is a manmade church just as good as the divinely-planned church? If I went out and started some new denomination, would that be just as good as that for which Jesus laid down His life? If not, then one church is not as good as another. Here is a point on which we need to think seriously and study carefully. Don't presume a thing to be right just because many are echoing it.

**2. Sprinkling and pouring for baptism.** A great host of people have had water sprinkled or poured on them in some kind of religious ceremony, and take it for granted that they have been baptized in accordance with God's will. Actually, they have not been baptized at all, in the Bible sense of the word "baptize." Bible baptism is a burial (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12) in water (Acts 8:36-38) unto the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38.) It is easy to suppose we have complied with God's will because we have followed what some preacher prescribed, but we should not depend on such an assumption. The Bible furnishes neither command nor example of sprinkling and pouring for baptism. My supposing that I have been scripturally baptized does not make it so.

**3. Instrumental music in worship.** Most churches use some type instrument to play in worship. It has never occurred to many folks that there might be anything wrong with such. It is generally imagined that music is music, be it singing or playing, and whatever type we have is all right. Notwithstanding, the New Testament clearly specifies singing as the kind of music to be used in worship to God. (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18,19; 1 Cor. 14:15.) When God specifies a certain act, that excludes other acts of



the same class. Since baptism is a burial, sprinkling and pouring are excluded. The music specified in the New Testament is singing, so playing is excluded from worship. But some suppose instrumental music is acceptable in worship today because David used it in the Old Testament. Do you suppose it is all right to have a plurality of wives today because David did? To offer animal sacrifice? To practice circumcision as a religious rite? To keep the Sabbath? To go to Jerusalem to worship? To burn incense?

**4. Missionary Societies.** Many denominational churches have missionary organizations of various kinds through which they work. Some suppose that if one opposes a missionary society he is opposed to mission work. This is not true, however. Others assume that these societies must be good because of the good work they do. This is to suppose that any sort of arrangement is all right as long as the end result shows good fruit.

The only missionary society that the Bible knows anything about is the church itself. God equipped each local church with the organization needed to accomplish every phase of the work assigned it. The setting up of other organizations for congregations to work through is a reflection on the wisdom of God. Missionary societies may do good, but much money is consumed in the super organizational setup that could be saved if God's plan were followed. To suppose that human societies are better than God's organization for preaching the gospel, is to assume that man is wiser than God.

**5. Time enough yet.** There are people who have had opportunity to learn the truth and who know exactly what they must do to be saved. If asked about it, these individuals will tell you they intend to obey the will of God. What hinders them? They suppose there is time enough ahead of them. They really do not intend to die in sin, but they have become victims of supposition. They believe (without any proof whatever) that they have many more years in which to become Christians. They take it for granted that death is a considerable distance away.

The devil delights in seeing men and women put off obedience to the gospel. The longer we wait, the greater are the chances that we will die without Christ. The only time of which we are assured is the present. It is folly to gamble with our souls.

## **Conclusion**

To suppose a thing does not make it true. One cannot go to heaven by following his own assumptions. We must study, investigate, think, read, and make sure we stand on solid ground. What would a patient think if his doctor said to him, "I presume this is your trouble ... I suppose you need the following medicine ... I take it for granted that this medicine will not be harmful... I guess you should take a dose every hour.. I imagine this sickness will not prove fatal.. . "? Most of us regard our health as of such importance that we would not risk it on suppositions. How much more important is the salvation of the soul! How foolish to rely on opinions, assumptions, and guess-work in religion! (By Irvin Himmel )

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# I Peter 3:20,21

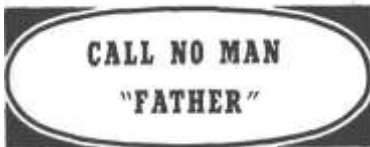
That salvation is a conditional matter is a proposition established clearly by the Bible. Matthew 7:21 says, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven." Hebrews 5:8,9 states, "Though he was a son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

The Bible is equally clear on the matter of what the conditions of salvation are, but this is a field of great controversy. It is alleged by some that one is saved at the point of faith before and without water baptism. "Baptism," it is claimed, "is not a condition of salvation. We are baptized because we are already saved." However, we affirm that the Bible teaches that water baptism is for (in order to) the forgiveness of past sins. As evidence, you are pointed to I Peter 3:20,21. This article is a study of those verses.

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (21) The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The words "figure" of the KJV, "likeness" of the ASV, and "corresponds" of the RSV are all translations of the Greek word "antitupos." This word, according to Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 51, means, "a thing resembling another; its counterpart; something in the Messianic times which answers to the type prefiguring it in the Old Testament." There is therefore, in verse 21 something answering to the type prefiguring it in the Old Testament as stated in verse 20. This Old Testament type and its New Testament counterpart can be discovered by a comparison of the similarities in verses 20 and 21.

Note, first, that there is a similarity in means or instrumentality. Verse 20 says "through (by, KJV) water." Verse 21 says "through (by, KJV) resurrection." There is a similarity as to deliverance of people. Verse 20 says "eight souls were saved." Verse 21 says "save you (us, KJV)." There is a similarity as to that which is saved. Verse 20 says "the ark" and verse 21 says "baptism." A diagram of the Old Testament type and the New Testament counterpart looks like this: Ark . . . saved . . . eight souls . . . through water  
Baptism . . . saves . . . us . . . through resurrection. We do not see how the Bible could be any clearer in teaching that baptism is necessary to salvation. Reader, which of the following statements do you believe? 1. Baptism doth also now save you. 2. Baptism doth also not save you. Number 1 is what the Bible plainly says. Number 2 is a flat contradiction of Number 1. If you believe Number 1 you believe the Bible. If you believe Number 2 you believe that which is a contradiction of the Bible. Why not believe the Bible teaching and act on this faith? Why not do it now? By Charles Boshart



Jesus taught His disciples, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." (Matt. 23:8-12.)

Titles of distinction have no place in the Christ's church. Our Lord plainly taught against their use and said, "all ye are brethren." Even the apostles did not wear religious titles. Peter addressed Paul simply as "our beloved brother Paul." (2 Pet. 3:15.) No preacher in apostolic times was spoken of as "Reverend." The word reverend is found only once in the Bible (King James Version), and there it refers to God. (Psa. 111:9.) It takes a great deal of imagination to hear the early Christians saying, "Father Peter," "The Reverend Timothy," "The Right Reverend Bartholomew," "Most Reverend Barnabas," or "His Eminence Father Philip." Instead of such high-sounding titles as these, the New Testament speaks of men of God as follows: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:1); "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:1); "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:1); "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Jas. 1:1); "Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord." (Eph. 6:21.)

If we are following the will of Christ, such titles as "Rabbi," "Father," "Reverend," and "Master" will not be applied to any man to distinguish him religiously. There is an honor due to the Father and His Son that does not belong to mortal man. All true servants of Jesus Christ are brethren, and one should not be elevated above the others by titles of distinction.

Jesus was not condemning the use of the word father to describe a relationship, whether physical or spiritual. Paul addressed men who had begotten children physically as "fathers." (Eph. 6:4.) I can call no man my father in a physical sense except the one man by whom I was begotten. In like manner, the one by whom I was begotten spiritually is my father, but the only one who is "father" to me in that sense is the one who taught me the gospel. Paul said to the Corinthians, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers . . . "Why did they not have many fathers in that sense? "... for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4: 15.) Only Paul had begotten them through the gospel, hence he alone could be called their "father" in the sense of that spiritual relationship. If ten thousand others, like Apollos and Cephas, came along and instructed them, they would not be their "fathers," for only Paul had begotten them through the gospel. To use the word father to describe a relationship is one thing; to use it as a title of distinction and honor is another thing.

There is no greater honor on earth than for one to be called a servant of Christ. The man who seeks to be higher than a servant needs to humble himself.

# God's Plan of Salvation for all Mankind

Hear the Gospel Rom. 10:17

Believe Rom. 10:10; Gal. 3:26; Heb. 11:6

Repent of Sins Acts 2:38; 17:30

Confess Jesus as the Son of God Acts 8:27-39; Rom. 10:10

Be Baptized for Remission of Sins Mark 16:16; Acts 2:48; Rom. 6:4-6; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21

Live Faithfully if you fulfill these commandments, you will be saved, and the Lord will add you to His Church (Acts 2:47). You'll be a Christian and are expected to serve God faithfully until death (Rev. 2:10)

Your soul is important to us . If you would like to set up a study please contact us..

We meet at 656 St. James Ch. Rd.  
in Newton, NC

Join Us

Sunday

Bible Study - 9:30 AM

Worship – 11:00 AM

Wednesday

Bible Study – 7:00 PM

Website:

[www.WORDANDSWORD.com](http://www.WORDANDSWORD.com)

contact@wordandsword.com

Phone:

(828) 465-3009 leave message

The Newton church of Christ

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