



*“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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## PAUL'S DEALING WITH FALSE TEACHERS

*James W. Boyd*

***He uncovered the deceivers (like some today who pretend to be conservative but all the while promote liberalism). They can run with conservative brethren as if they were faithful and have fellowship with the denominational world at the same time.***

Paul wrote thirteen of the New Testament books (possibly Hebrews also), one hundred chapters. He dealt with false teachers in those books in addition to the record of events in Acts pertaining to Elymas, the Jerusalem Conference, in jail at Philippi, false teachers in Rome, Corinth, Antioch, Lystra, Ephesus, Athens, Thessalonica, just about everywhere he went. False teachers dogged his every step with trickery, traps to ensnare, plots against his life, “thorns in the flesh.” In those encounters he was guided by the Holy Spirit. But, he dealt with them.

He did not adopt the foolish notion proposed by Gamaliel that if you just leave something alone and it is false, it will fall of its own weight (Acts 5:34ff). Paul did not ignore them and just hope they would go away. He knew a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6). He was set for the defense of the Gospel (Phil. 1:17). He considered it a duty to stop the mouths of gainsayers; and, rebuked sharply those who taught error.

When something was done publicly, Paul did not feel disposed to handle the matter privately before exposing the fallacy lest others be misled. He always attacked error on the basis of WHAT was being taught; not WHO taught it. If we properly confront false

teachers we must learn from Paul, his actions, motives and attitudes. He did rebuke Peter to his face and called the names of some who were false teachers to expose them before brethren.

### **SOME FALSE DOCTRINES HE FACED**

In Corinth, fornication was being tolerated without discipline. Errors were taught regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage. Some denied the resurrection and misused spiritual gifts. In Thessalonica, questions were raised about the resurrection, the Judgment and the coming of the Lord.

While Corinth faced error regarding the Lord's Supper, some were teaching Gnosticism elsewhere, even denying the existence of God and the Deity of Christ.

Judaizing teachers were everywhere teaching the necessity to keep the old law, practice circumcision to be saved, challenging Paul's apostolic authority, the sufficiency of Scripture, even the authority of Christ. Worldliness was characteristic of so much behavior. There were other errors he had to fight.

We probably do not face any false doctrines (in principle) that Paul did not have to set down. They may come in a different dress, but they are not trivial and are not new.

### **WHY HE CONFRONTED FALSE TEACHERS**

Paul always did what he did from the motive of spiritual profit for others (1 Cor. 7:35). He sought salvation for the lost and to keep the saved faithful. He did not seek just to warn and shame. He was not a pugnacious person seeking personal triumph over others. He did not seek to put people down and show superiority or “get somebody told.” He knew the damage error does to the church. It mattered to those living and future generations. He had a love for the truth because truth saves; error enslaves. He got no joy from conflict, often grieved over it, writing letters to “beseech” (beg kindly) brethren to stand for the truth.

His personal manner was gentle and soft; yet firm and uncompromising. He was fierce in calling deniers of God, fools (Rom. 1:22). He was strong in his rebuke of those who perverted the Gospel (Galatians 1), pronouncing “anathema” (cut off from God) on them. He was bold without being rash, ill-tempered, mean-spirited or rude.

As he reproved and rebuked, he also persuaded and pleaded. He appealed through love, past loyalties and present persecutions. “Ye did run well...”

*(Continued on page 20)*

**False Teachers...**



Editorial...

## SHALL WE CHANGE WORSHIP?

Garland M. Robinson

In 1 Kings 12, **Jeroboam** the son of Nebat, erected idol worship at Beth-el in the north of Israel and Dan in the south. The background to this event begins with Jeroboam leading a rebellion against Rehoboam (son of Solomon) when he was anointed king over Israel at Solomon's death. The northern ten tribes of Israel followed Jeroboam and made him king. The two remaining tribes (Judah and Benjamin) in the south remained with Rehoboam. To inspire the allegiance of the people, Jeroboam knew he would have to take drastic measures to maintain his control. His solution was to give the people an alternative to worshipping at Jerusalem, the place of God's prescribed worship.

In 1 Kings 12:26-33 we read, "...Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: <sup>27</sup>If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. <sup>28</sup>Whereupon the king took counsel, and **made two calves of gold**, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. <sup>29</sup>And he set the one in **Beth-el**, and the other put he in **Dan**. <sup>30</sup>And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. <sup>31</sup>And he made an house of high places, and made **priests** of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. <sup>32</sup>And Jeroboam ordained a **feast in the eighth month**, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in **Beth-el**, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in **Beth-el** the **priests** of the high places which he had made. <sup>33</sup>So he offered upon the altar which he had made in **Beth-el** the **fifteenth day of the eighth month**, even in the month

*which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense."*

In these eight verses Jeroboam devised and developed his own system of worship — a major departure from God's holy word. No wonder he goes down in history as Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who "made Israel to sin." There are many among us today who are doing the same thing — diverting the prescribed worship of Jehovah and fashioning it as they see fit.

**Jeroboam changed the PLACE of worship.** He designated two cities to which people could go to worship (1 Kings 12:27,29). His goal was to keep them away from Jerusalem — God's designated place of worship. The city of **Dan** was in the northern part of Israel and **Beth-el** was in the southern part. The kingdom of Judah was just a short distance south of Beth-el. Jeroboam knew that if people went to worship at God's designated place (Jerusalem) they would learn the truth and turn away from him (1 Kings 12:27).

People today are lied to and convinced that one does not have to be a member of the "called out body" of Jesus Christ, — the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). They are told to attend the church of their choice. The Bible does not give us a choice regarding which church to be a member of. The Lord adds obedient believers to the church Jesus purchased with his blood (Acts 2:41,47). It is the church that teaches heaven's truth and obeys heaven's commands. There is nothing man-made about it. The church of Christ is heaven made. The church is not a building or structure built by man. It was built by Christ (Matt. 16:13). It is the spiritual body of Christ (John 18:36). It exists in every place around the world where saints live and assemble to worship (Rom. 16:16).

When sinners **Hear** the Gospel (John 6:45; Rom. 10:17) and **Believe**

its teaching concerning the Christ (Mark 1:15; Luke 8:12; John 3:16), they are moved to **Repent** of their sins (Luke 13:3,5), **Confess** faith in Jesus (Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 8:37), and are **Immersed** (baptized) into water "for the remission of sins" (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-6, 17-18; 1 Peter 3:20-21). These "steps" makes one a Christian, a child of God. The Lord adds them to his church, the body of the saved (Acts 2:41,47). To ignore or refuse any of these steps does not save.

It's in the Lord's church where acceptable worship is offered to God. God only recognizes His people — those obedient to his Gospel. As acceptable worship was at Jerusalem during the days of Judah, acceptable worship among God's people today is in his church — the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). Jesus told the woman at Jacob's well that the day was coming when acceptable worship would no longer be required at a specific location in Palestine, whether in the mountain where the Samaritans worshipped or at Jerusalem where the Israelites worshipped (John 4:21-24). Since God is a spirit, acceptable worship offered to him is "in spirit" — meaningful, sincere, heartfelt. But, it is not from the heart only! John 4:24 tells us it is also "in truth" — governed, regulated, by God's holy word. Man is not left to worship is own way — what he thinks or how he feels. Acceptable worship is BOTH from the heart and according to God's word. Otherwise, it is vain worship.

There are many alternatives for people to worship today. Man sees it as a "have it your way" religion instituted by man. My way or your way is not authorized by the Lord, nor was Jeroboam's way. The systems of **Catholicism** and **Protestantism** are alternatives offered by man, but are not sanctioned by God's Word. It is only in the Lord's blood-bought body, the church of Christ, that worship is acceptable to God. Therefore, Christians are neither Catholic, Protestant, or Jew. They are members of the one and only church of Christ.

Sadly, even many Christians (who ought to know better) forsake its assemblies and stand condemned by God. In Hebrews 10:25-27 we read, "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day ap-*

proaching. For *if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*”

**Jeroboam changed the TIME of worship.** He set aside the 14th day of the 8th month (1 Kings 12:32-33). In the law of Moses there were three annual feasts to be observed in Jerusalem. *“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles...”* (Deut. 16:16; cf. Exodus 34:23). The dates of these feasts are given in the passages below. Jeroboam chose different dates.

**1) Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover):** *“In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD’s passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread”* (Lev. 23:4-6; cf. Num. 9:2-5; 28:16). This feast marked the beginning of months (first month) for the children of Israel. It was to remind them of the night of the tenth plague when death passed through Egypt and killed all the first born in the land, of both men and animals. However, it passed over the Israelites because of the blood sprinkled over and around their doors. This plague obtained their release from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 12). In the New Testament, sinners who repent and are baptized are forgiven of their sins by the cleansing blood of Christ that washes them away (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Titus 3:5).

**2) Feast of Weeks (Pentecost):** *“And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end”* (Exodus 34:22). *“Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. <sup>10</sup>And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand...”* (Deut. 16:9-10, see the whole chapter).

Pentecost is derived from the Greek word meaning “fiftieth.” It was observed

**seven weeks and one day after Passover** (7x7=49+1=50). It was a celebration of the first fruits of harvest but also of the giving of the law through Moses at Mount Sinai. On that occasion about 3,000 men rebelled and were put to death (Exodus 32:28). On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, about 3,000 gladly received God’s word and were baptized (vs.38-41).

**3) Feast of Tabernacles** (tents, booths): A week long festival to remember their dwelling in tents (tabernacles) in the wilderness after leaving Egypt. *“...The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. <sup>35</sup>On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. <sup>36</sup>Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. <sup>37</sup>These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day”* (Lev. 23:34-37). Israel sojourned in the wilderness but eventually reached their promised land in Canaan. Christians today sojourn in this world and will be rewarded with our final abode in heaven (Phil. 3:20; 2 Peter 1:5-11; 2 Cor. 5:1; 2 Tim. 4:7-8).

**Jeroboam changed the OBJECT of worship.** He set up **two calves of gold** (1 Kings 12:28-29). Idolatry was forbidden in the law of Moses. *“Thou shalt have no other gods before me. <sup>1</sup>Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: <sup>5</sup>Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me”* (Exodus 20:3-5). *“Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God”* (Lev. 19:4).

Jesus made it clear that the only acceptable worship is directed to God in heaven, not idols. *“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only*

*shalt thou serve”* (Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8). When Peter traveled to Caesarea to teach Cornelius the Gospel, *“Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man”* (Acts 10:25-26). In the book of Revelation we read: *“And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. <sup>5</sup>And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great”* (Rev. 19:4-5). In Revelation 19, an angel refuses John’s worship. John writes: *“I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God...”* (Rev. 19:9-10). *“Submit yourselves therefore to God”* (James 4:7).

**Jeroboam changed the PRIESTS of worship.** He ordained priests of the lowest of the people that were not of the sons of Levi (1 Kings 12:31). Worship under the law of Moses was done through the priests who were descendants of Aaron of the tribe of Levi (Exodus 27:21 28:4). The Israelites would give their offerings to the priest and the priest would in turn make the sacrifice(s) on their behalf.

In New Testament worship every Christian is a priest (1 Peter 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6). Faithful Christians are the only ones from whom God accepts worship. They have obeyed the Gospel and have been added to the church. They are his people, there are no others. Christians go through Jesus to worship (1 Tim. 2:5). There is no such thing as proxy worship. No one can worship on our behalf. Every individual has this charge.

**Jeroboam changed the AUTHORITY of worship.** He devised worship *“of his own heart”* (1 Kings 12:33). He knew what God authorized in the law of Moses. That’s why he changed it. He was not about to do anything God said. He was setting up what he wanted, not what God wanted.

Paul wrote to the church at Colossee and said: *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him”* (Col.

3:17). Acceptable worship is that which is done by faith in accordance to God's word. Otherwise, it will be rejected every single time. Man has no right to do *what* he wants to do, *how* he wants to do, and *when* he wants to do.

God's people assemble to worship on the first day of every week. This was the practice of every church in the New Testament. We even have two specific examples of the time of acceptable worship:

1) Troas: "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight*" (Acts 20:7).

2) Corinth: "*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him...*" (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

Every congregation worshipped on the first day of the week and participated in the same acts of worship. We know that because Paul taught the same Gospel everywhere he went (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:2,16; 14:33; Gal. 1:6-9; Col. 4:9; 1 Thess. 2:13; 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:2; all the churches in Galatia, 1 Cor. 16:1). There is only one Gospel.

Acceptable worship is authorized

in five actions:

1) **Teaching / preaching** the whole counsel / word of God (Acts 20:20,27; 2 Tim. 4:2-5).

2) **Singing** psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (*acappella*) — without accompaniment, and with the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

3) **Praying** (Acts 2:42; 12:5; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17).

4) **Lord's supper** (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 20:7).

5) **Giving** a free-will offering (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:2-15).

Saints in the first century met often. We can also meet any time, but the first day of the week is mandatory.

## False Teachers...

(Continued from page 17)

but were being hindered. He made sure his readers understood what he meant. He was not like the time two men heard a preacher preach, one turning to the other and asking, "What is he talking about?" The answer was, "He don't say!"

### HOW PAUL CHARACTERIZED FALSE TEACHERS

It is good to "know thyself" but it is also good to know the enemy. He called them perverters, troublers, lovers of this world (Demas), willing to do evil against those who preached the truth (Hymaneus, Philetus, Alexander), being like Egyptian magicians (Jannes, Jambres), and dishonest with evidence. They were ever learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. They would "check the wind" and "go with the flow," lacking conviction and willing to compromise. Like Satan, they would appear as angels of light but were messengers of darkness; ashamed of those who stood for truth. False teachers are sneaky, deceptive, vain talkers, doing evil privily with enticing words and a show of the flesh, a pretended humility, wolves in sheep's clothing, arrogant, egotistical, ambitious for self and self-superior to all others. He had no good word for them.

### TACTICS OF FALSE TEACHERS

False teachers will object, obstruct and hinder the truth all they can. They are fearful of people learning

the truth on the wages of sin, liberalism, evolution, human legalism, premillennialism, the denominational doctrines from creed books, catechisms, manuals, etc. How they run in horror from the truth on music in worship and church government.

Paul did not leave error unexposed even though he was subjected to lies, physical abuse and misrepresentations by those who did not love the truth. He uncovered the deceivers (like some today who pretend to be conservative but all the while promote liberalism).

Some false teachers are mild mannered, well-spoken, charismatic and personally pleasant in order to win the hearts of the gullible and misinformed. But they are quick to call faithful brethren stupid, ignorant, without education and stubborn. They refuse to preach the whole counsel of God and expose error lest they lose their jobs, salaries and prestige. They are hirelings seeking to please people by finding out what they want and presenting it to them. They can adapt to most any situation and "fit in" because they lack conviction and will compromise. They can run with conservative brethren as if they were faithful and have fellowship with the denominational world at the same time.

### METHODS PAUL USED

He constantly and powerfully presented the truth. This is the only way to remove ignorance (this is no reflection on one's intelligence but lack of knowledge). All must know the truth; not just leaders. He presented truth

that cannot be refuted — sound doctrine. He preached the Word, correcting, exposing, warning of the consequences of error, but showing what was right and true.

He not only condemned but provided the cure to error. Like Jeremiah, he rooted out, pulled down, threw down and destroyed, but also built and planted (Jer. 1:10). He would reprove, rebuke, but also exhort (2 Tim. 4:2). He reasoned logically, historically and consistently (see Rom. 10:13-17; 1 Cor. 15:12-20). He saw error only in terms of loss, danger and an attack to snatch victory from the faithful.

Paul would ask rhetorical questions (Is Christ divided? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? What saith the law?) The answer to such questions made the truth emphatically clear.

While some are heard to say, "I don't see why this or that! I don't understand!" That does not change the truth one whit. We must accept God's truth on the basis of His authority whether we grasp it all or not. We believe certain things are true simply because God has revealed it. Paul used the argument, "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). His teaching on the system of salvation is plain, easily understood and intelligently arranged. He spoke by divine authority. We must observe that same authority.

He was considerate and thoughtful in his explanations and patient with those in error "up to a point." But he would not compromise any truth to get along with anybody. He used the

Scriptures prolifically as did Christ when tempted by Satan (Matt. 4). He even resorted to sarcasm as did Elijah (1 Kings 18) by boasting in order to show the absurdity of error. His sarcasm was not mean-spirited as critics often use. He was never irreverent toward things holy as we see and hear among some today who laugh at “two songs and a prayer” and eating juice and crackers. Paul never wallowed in the gutter as false teachers do.

#### WHEN NOTHING STOPS A FALSE TEACHER

Truth and error will not mix. Exposure, pleading, appealing, use of authority, sarcasm, Scripture, questions, truth, all together, will not stop some false teachers. False teachers are not honest. We should not be naïve to think they are. They say evidence does not prove. What “works” is all that matters to them. The end justifies the means.

We cannot have fellowship with false teachers whether in or out of the church (1 Cor. 5; Eph. 5:11; 2 Cor. 6:14ff; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 3:10,11; 2 John 9-11). Need we say more? We dare not support their functions nor look upon them as innocent. We cannot give them opportunity to spread their venom in meetings, lectures, literature, “summits”, youth meetings, etc. Some even say of a false teacher, “He may be in error but he will hold you a good meeting.” How ridiculous is this attitude! The false teacher will seize the opportunity to sow tares in the field and devour the flock.

To combat false teachers we must take a stand, set our feet on high ground, stand fast with proper motives and hold in contempt that which is wrong. We must keep our eye on the goal and Him who leads (Heb. 12). We must be willing to be the targets of the fiery darts of the evil. Our battle is not easy and our victory will not be in this world. Paul paid a heavy personal price to be a faithful servant of the Lord. Shall we expect anything less?

God’s people have always had to stand against the majority. Learn the life of Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Elijah, John the Baptist, Paul, Christ. But they gave no ground to false doctrines. Let all be done in love and make sure we are well-grounded in “*thus saith the Lord.*” Accept the fact that there

have always been false teachers and such will ever be. But fight the good fight of faith. The strife will not be long. This day is the noise of battle, the next the victor’s song.

Learn from Paul in dealing with false teachers.

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McMinnville, TN 37110*

## MY BEAGLES AND MY BRETHREN

*Jeff Grimes*

*It is sad to say, but some of my brethren are “potterers” ...they never know the joy and thrill of serving God and others.*

All the folks who know my son Keith and me know that our hobby is “Beagling.” Beagling has to do with the training of beagles to run rabbits. Not necessarily to shoot the rabbits (I find the older I get, the less I want to hurt anything) but for the sheer enjoyment of seeing and hearing those little hounds in hot pursuit of Mr. Bunny. Listening to a pack of 4 to 6 beagles after a big cottontail rabbit is music to the ears. I told a preacher friend, “Now that’s true a’cappella music.”

Keith and I also enjoy running our little hounds in competition events sponsored by the American Kennel Club (AKC). We have been successful through the years and were fortunate enough to train and finish eight of our beagles to be recognized as AKC Field Champions.

You may not believe this, but the AKC has a **rule book** by which beagles that run in competition are to be judged. The AKC rule book has a list of *Desirable (Positive) Qualities* and a list of *Faulty (Negative) Actions*. As I looked over the Positive and Negative qualities described in the rule book, I could not help but think about some of my brethren. I use the term brethren in a generic sense, which would include my “sistern” as well. The positive qualities desirable for my beagles to be successful are some of the same qualities needed for all my brethren to succeed too. The same is true concerning negative qualities. There are negative qualities that beagles have that produce failure, and those same negative qualities will also produce failure in my brethren.

Now, all of this may sound strange, but it is true. Let me illustrate a few of the positive and negative charac-

teristics mentioned in the AKC rule book and see if you agree.

The AKC rule book also lists “**Desirable Qualities**” for the ideal beagle to possess.

1. **Proper use of Voice** — “*True tongue is honest claiming that running mates can depend on*” (p.31). In other words, for a beagle to be barking (for the sake of barking) without actually being in contact with rabbit scent is called “Babbling” and is described as “*excessive or unnecessary tonguing*” (p.32).

The proper use of the tongue is also important for my brethren. The folks who wrote the AKC rule book understood that a “babbling beagle” creates more confusion and problems than it solves. When the Lord gave us His “Rule Book” (the Bible), He understood the same thing. Check these verses: Psalms 37:30; 39:1; 71:8; 141:3; Proverbs 8:7; 11:9; 13:3; 21:23, and James 3:1-12. Are there times we are guilty of “excessive or unnecessary tonguing?”

2. **Endurance** — “*The ability to compete throughout the duration of the hunt and to continue as long as may be necessary*” (p.29). Endurance is listed as a positive quality. After all, no one wants to own a beagle that is a quitter. This trait prompted AKC to list “*quitting*” as a serious fault, deserving severe penalty (p.30).

Listen to what the Bible says concerning this matter, “*And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*” (Luke 9:62). “*Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back [quit], my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that*

believe to the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10:38-39). It sounds like the attitude of God toward my brethren, who are quitters, and the AKC’s attitude toward my beagles, who are quitters, are similar — both the Lord and the AKC view quitting as a severe fault.

**3. Patience** — *“Patience is a willingness to stay with any problem encountered as long as there is a possibility of achieving success...Patience keeps a hound from bounding off and leaving work undone”* (p.29).

If only my brethren could realize that patience is a “desirable quality” that produces success. Having a “willingness to stay with any problem encountered as long as there is possibility of achieving success.” Just think how many marriages could have been saved if only the husband and wife had the patience to work through their problems instead of “bounding off” in different directions. Many “church quarrels,” as a general rule, could have been avoided if brethren exercised more patience with each other when solving problems. Stop and consider for a moment: what if the Lord’s patience with us was no better than our patience toward each other? We should be thankful that the Lord *“is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9). Paul said: Hebrews 12:1, *“...Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”* Brethren, *“let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”* (Gal. 6:9). Jesus said, *“In your patience possess ye your souls”* (Luke 21:19).

**4. Determination** — *“Determi-*

*nation is that quality which causes a hound to succeed against severe odds. A determined hound has a purpose in mind and will overcome, through sheer perseverance, many obstacles that often frustrate less determined running mates. Determination and patience are closely related qualities and as a general rule found in the same hound. Determination keeps a hound at its work as long as there is a possibility of achievement and often long after its body has passed the peak of its endurance. Determination is desire in its most intense form”* (p.29).

It is a great joy to hunt with a pack of patient and determined beagles. On the other hand, what a greater joy it is to be associated with a group of brethren with these same qualities. These are qualities Satan hates. He knows he cannot win against brethren possessing these qualities. Like Joshua of old who determined, *“...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”* (Joshua 24:15). Paul, too, had a determination about him worthy of imitating. *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified”* (1 Cor. 2:2). The Determination to put the Lord first in our lives will assure our success (Matt. 6:33; 25:21,23).

The AKC rule book also lists **“Faulty (negative) Qualities”** for the ideal beagle to possess.

**5. Pottering** — *“...Is a lack of effort or desire to make forward progress on the trail. Hesitation, listlessness...a lack of intent to make progress is marks of the potterer.”*

It is a fact the beaglers (those who own beagles) that I am acquainted with will not tolerate a “pottering beagle.” A Beagler can put up with some

hound faults, but “pottering” is not one of them. Life is too short for a rabbit hunter to waste time and money feeding a “pottering” beagle. Pottering beagles are suitable only to be given away as a pet to someone. Then, all that is required of such a beagle is to lie on the porch and watch for the postman. They will never know the joy of becoming part of a well-trained pack or the thrill of the chase. They are content to lie on the porch in a soft chair, waiting for someone to spoon-feed and pet them.

It is sad to say, but some of my brethren are “potterers.” They show no “desire to make forward progress.” These brethren are characterized by “hesitation and listlessness.” They never get excited about the Lord’s work or apply themselves to spiritual growth. They have to be “petted” and “spoon-fed!” There’s no initiative, never launching out on their own. Living in their own little world, they never know the joy and thrill of serving God and others. *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat”* (Hebrews 5:12; 2 Peter 3:18).

My dear brethren, *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth”* (Col. 3:1-2).

Precious brothers and sisters, do not let Satan confuse your minds in the difference between time and eternity.

25714 Grimes Alley Rd.  
Adalusia, AL 36421

## “IT STILL MEANS WHAT IT SAYS”

Marvin L. Weir

***The Bible (God’s Word) has always meant what it says! Man can choose to ignore the Scriptures, but such does not change the fact that he will one day be judged by exactly what God has said (John 12:48).***

The story is often told of the Bible class teacher who reads a verse of Scripture and someone asks, “What does it mean?” The teacher quickly replies, “It means what it says.”

Although this answer is not suitable for every question that is raised, it does cut to the heart of the matter regarding the accuracy and finality of the Scriptures. God cannot lie (Heb.

6:18), and neither will His Words *“pass away”* (Matt. 24:35). Jesus warned people regarding His unchanging Word during His earthly ministry in stating, *“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth*

*not my word, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).*

Most religious groups today teach that baptism is **not** necessary for one to become a child of God. The question asked on Pentecost was easily understood and so was the answer. *“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:37-38).* What does Acts 2:38 mean? It means what it says. Baptism is **required** for one to have remission of sins and become a member of the Lord’s church.

Jesus said to the apostles, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16).* This verse clearly states the Gospel requires one to be baptized to be saved. It means what it says!

Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).* Is it not easily understood that baptism is necessary in order to wash away one’s sins? If Saul of Tarsus was saved per denominational teaching, he was saved in his sins! Such is not true! The Lord knew that *“the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23)*, and thus He warned his audience in declaring, *“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).* A careful Bible student will also observe that Paul’s “praying” and “fasting” did not remove his sins (Acts 9:9- 11), but baptism did wash away his sins. The Scriptures state, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).* This Scripture means exactly what it says!

Another popular false doctrine today is that a child of God cannot sin so as to be lost. Many folks believe in the “once saved, always saved” dogma in spite of what the word of God clearly states. Paul said to the Galatians who had obeyed the gospel, *“...whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4).* How can

one “fall away” from grace if he were never saved?

Peter warns, *“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Peter 2:20-22).* What do these verses of Scripture mean? They mean exactly what they say. It is possible for a child of God to choose again a life of sin and fall from the grace of God. There is absolutely no way for anyone to **explain away** what the apostle Peter teaches. Common sense and logic screams that one cannot fall from somewhere he has never been!

Another popular false doctrine today is that one is saved by “faith only.” The Bible teaches, however, *“Ye see that by **works** a man is justified, and **not** by faith only” (James 2:24, emph. MLW).* To make sure there is no misunderstanding the Holy Spirit continues in saying, *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26).* These verses mean exactly what they say — one **cannot** be saved by **faith only!**

Can one who desires to go to Heaven attend the church of his choice and please God? The Bible says, *“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18).* This verse means what it says. Christ promised to build **His** church (singular). The apostle Paul teaches there is only “one body” (Eph. 4:4) and that God *“...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).* These verses mean exactly what they say. There is only **one body** over which Christ is **head** and it is the **church** that He built! Christ declares that He is the savior of His body and no other (Eph. 5:23)!

What does it mean to “seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteous-

ness” (Matt. 6:33)? What does it mean when it says, *“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (Heb. 10:25)*? What does it mean to *“love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matt. 22:37)*?

The Bible (God’s Word) has always meant what it says! Man can choose to ignore the Scriptures, but such does not change the fact that he will one day be judged by **exactly** what God has said (John 12:48).

Do the Holy Scriptures mean exactly what they say? Absolutely! And no one or anything in this world will ever change this truth!

484 CR 44700  
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## CONTRIBUTIONS

Jack D. Langford.....	\$50
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Allen & Irene Tate.....	\$100
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Rodger Miller.....	\$120
Ed Waggoner.....	\$100
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Web site (1yr).....	\$165.00
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Ending Balance.....	\$22,270.52

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a great publication. I try to send a donation every month. As far as I am concerned, the two best publications we have in the church today are *Seek The Old Paths* and *The Gospel Journal* with Johnnie Skaggs” ...**Carl O. Cooper, Lewisville, NC.** “I would like to receive a copy of your monthly publication, *Seek The Old Paths*” ...**R. B. Watts, Gilmer, TX.** “Bernyce Robinson has passed away” ...**Compton, CA.** “I would like to receive *Seek The Old Paths*. I am a member of the church of Christ” ...**Rodger Miller, Cowden, IL.** “Please delete Catherine Skelton from your mailing list. She passed away. She always enjoyed reading all the different articles. Thank you” ...**William Skelton, Seligman, MO.** “It is such a good publication. Your first one in January 2024 is especially good. Many thanks to you for changing the address and for all that needs to be done to get STOP in our mail boxes each month. Thanks again. All of this is to be anonymous” ...**OH.** “Thank you” ...**Allen & Irene Tate, Cache, OK.** “In a world that increasingly disrespects the truth, it is refreshing to find articles written by those who are emboldened by the Gospel. Thank you for your efforts. Ten copies are enough to send us” ...**Midland C/C, Midland, MI.** “Would you please add me to your list to receive a paper copy of *Seek The Old Paths*? My friend tells me it is a very good paper. I am very

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**DIVINE REQUIREMENTS OF SELF CONTROL**

There is no doubt the Bible sets forth the admonition to add the quality of self-control in our lives. We must master our body, not let our body rule over us. While the whole world follows the lust of their flesh, we choose to follow God’s holy word and restrain from such lust. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John was caused to write: “*Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*” (1 John 2:15-17).

We are to control the spirit within us. “*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you*” (Eph. 4:31-32). As Christians, we “*...are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you*” (Rom. 8:9). Proverbs also tells us: “[*He that is] slow to anger [is] better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city*” (Prov. 16:32). This is simply what Christians do. The world sees it as weakness, but God sees it as strength. Therefore, we are told Ephesians 6:10, “*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*”

— Garland M. Robinson

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Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** — seektheoldpaths.com

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