

# The Old Paths

Volume 17, Issue 49

February 6, 2011

## "How Can We Know The Truth?"

Jarrod Jacobs

**W**e live in a world of religious confusion. For example, there are many churches who claim to love God and Christ. Their people claim to be saved, and want others to be saved. Many seem to respect the Bible, and seem to want to do all God has said. On the surface, we see their attitude as commendable! How great it is to see people who are striving to do what God has told them.

However, upon closer examination, most of these people will be engaged in worshipping with instrumental music (Eph. 5:19), offering altar calls, teaching baptism as non-essential to salvation (I Pet. 3:21), involving the local church in activities it that has no authority to do, etc. Some of these churches may have a larger or a smaller organization than God ordained in the local church as well (I Tim. 3; I Pet. 5:1-2).

Now we ask, with so much religious confusion, how can we know the truth? How could we look to some and say, "you are wrong," while telling others, "you are right"? How can we know the truth?

### We Can Know The Truth By Studying The Bible Without Preconceived Ideas.

When preconceived ideas are a part of our Bible study, we will not know the truth! The apostle Paul demands that men, "*Study to*

*show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (II Tim. 2:15). The Ephesians knew that when they read God's word, they would, "*understand my (Paul's) knowledge in the mystery of Christ*" (Eph. 3:4). Is it necessary that men bring their traditions, feelings, and rationalizations "to the table" when studying God's word? No, sir! What is needed is that people put those things away and fill their minds with the pure, unadulterated Word of God. Many forget that God's word will be used as the standard of judgment on the last day (II Pet. 3:16; Jn. 12:48). To refuse the Bible is to refuse the truth (Jn. 17:17). Thus, if we want to know the truth, we must know the Bible!

Troubles come when people "wrongly" divide God's word! Our understanding will be skewed when we allow preconceived ideas to infiltrate our study of God's word.

### We Can Know The Truth By Being Patient As We Study.

Many will fall away and refuse the truth when they find out that Bible study is a long process. Solomon said, "*And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh*" (Ecc. 12:12). God has conveyed His thoughts to us through writing that is easy to comprehend and yet incomprehensible in its scope! The Bible contains both the milk and meat of the word (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14). When people become discouraged and fall

away, or simply decide that they have done enough studying, they have cut off their only source of life. Don't do that, friend! Be patient as you study and grow (II Pet. 1: 5-6, 3:18).

### We Can Know The Truth When We Are Not Afraid To Admit Our Mistakes.

Pride will be the downfall of many (Prov. 16:18). The apostle Peter tells us that God will exalt us if we will humble ourselves (I Pet. 5:5-6). Simply because we misunderstand one or more passages of Scripture does not mean that we have to stay ignorant. We need to continue to study and grow (II Pet. 3:18).

Consider Apollos. When found to be wrong concerning the baptism of John, he was taught, "*the way of God more perfectly*" (Acts 18:24-26). As a result of Aquila and Priscilla's willingness to teach, and Apollos' willingness to learn, he travelled abroad and "*helped the brethren much*" (Acts 18:27-28). What would we think of Apollos had he been one who refused men's help, or refused to be corrected by those who loved him?

If we are to know the truth, we must not be afraid to admit our mistakes and fix them as soon as possible. Apollos did this, and went on to preach the faith in many places (I Cor. 3; etc.).

### We Can Know The Truth When We Realize That God's Silence Does Not Give Permission.

Many "religious" people have the mistaken idea that when God is silent, then they have freedom. Under the cloak of "silence," people have brought instrumental music, infant baptism, and a host of other things into their religions. Friends, God's silence prohibits action! It does not give permission.

Moses recognized God's silence when he told those who were defiled by touching a dead body to, "*Stand still, and*

*I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you*" (Num. 9:8). These men wanted to partake of the Passover, but could not. When they asked Moses what to do, he did not consider God's silence to be permission. He told them to *"stand still"* until God spoke! God spoke in verse eleven, and that ended the controversy. Remember, it took God's word to settle the question. When God is silent, we stand still!

Looking to the New Testament, Peter says, *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God"* (I Pet. 4:11). The word "oracles" means the "utterances." In other words, we speak where God speaks! Thus, reasoning from the standpoint, "God didn't say not to" is worthless! When God says nothing, we are to be silent as well. The apostles reasoned in this way when trying to determine whether or not the Gentiles had to be circumcised in order to be saved (Acts 15:7-19). When the letter was written to those in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, the apostles said, *"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment"* (Acts 15:24). In other words, those Gentiles were troubled concerning things about which the apostles had been silent! Seeing that the apostles were inspired to teach God's word (Jn. 16:8-13; Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15); when they were silent on a matter it was because God was silent. Let us never forget that God's silence prohibits action. When God is silent, we stand still!

Yes friends, we can know the truth (Jn. 8:31-32)! The question is, are we willing (Jn. 7:17)?

## 10 WAYS TO KILL A MARRIAGE

Author Unknown To Me

1. Be untrue to one another (Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 7:24; Heb. 13:4).
2. Be overly jealous one to another (Jas. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:1).
3. Nag one another to no end (Jas. 3:16; Col. 3:19).
4. Show no affection for one another (Gen. 2:23-24; Eph. 5:25, 28, 29; I Cor. 7:3).
5. Never agree on how to raise your children (Ps. 128:3; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; Prov. 19:18; 22:6).
6. Never say "please" or "thank you" (Lk. 17:11-19; Eph. 5:20).
7. Spend all the money on yourself (Prov. 15:27; I Tim. 5:8).
8. Let the husband be a tyrant with his family (Eph. 5:28, 29, 33; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).
9. Let the wife not love, honor, and obey her husband (Prov. 31:30; Eph. 5:22, 24, 33; Col. 3:18; I Pet. 3:1).
10. Keep God out of your marriage

(Deut. 4:9-10; Josh. 24:14-15).

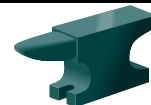
### Editor's Note:

I am convinced that in the last couple of generations, we have had people spending more time preparing for a wedding than preparing for a marriage! The marriage relationship is a beautiful relationship, created by God (Gen. 2:18-25). Within this relationship, husbands and wives reflect Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22-33). In addition to this, these two ought to treat one another the way they want to be treated (Matt. 7:12).

When looking at possible ways to kill a marriage, do we see a common thread in all of those reasons? It is there! It is SELFISHNESS! Let us remember that married people have become one (Matt. 19:4-6). Marriages that please God and are pleasing to men are no accident! They do not merely "happen," but come about as a result of hard work and a commitment by a man and woman to God and to one another. Spouses, are you committed?

### "Anvil Sparks"

R.L. Whiteside



"Humility on display is hypocrisy."

"Ignorance is usually dogmatic."

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