

**Searching His Word**  
*Let the Bible Speak*  
**By Russell Earl**

*"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:6-7).*

Most Christian groups today say they follow the Bible. Some may even say that they teach the Bible and the Bible only. During Paul's time as we see in Galatians 1 there were some who thought they were following truth! Paul confronts these individuals and says they have turned to "*a different gospel, which is not another.*" Paul calls these individuals out for following teachings that were not taught by Christ or the Apostles. Instead, they were following after the teachings or convictions of those who "*trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.*"

Today, we MUST let the Bible speak! We MUST follow the words of God and His words alone. Let's look at some of those things that are being taught as if they are part of "the gospel".

Let's begin with the most important teaching which happens to be the teaching most perverted by men today - Salvation. First, Christ says in John 3:3, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*" John 3:3 and again Christ says "*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*" (John 3:5). The fact that one had to be born again in verse 3 is explained in verse 5. There is one birth; there are two elements - "*water,*" and "*the Spirit.*" Therefore, both are essential to the new birth; and the new birth is essential to entering the kingdom.

What is meant by being born of water and the Spirit? To enter the kingdom is to be saved "*He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins*" (Colossians 1:13-14). To be saved one must believe, repent, confess and be baptized for (unto) the remission of sins (Hebrews 11:6, Luke 13:3, Romans 10:10, Acts 2:38). Being born of the Spirit and of water is the same as believing the gospel, repenting of sins, confessing one's faith in Christ, and being baptized for the remission of sins. To be born "again" is to obey the gospel. One is born in the Spirit by believing the Word which the Spirit gave, and born of water by coming forth from the waters of baptism. The flesh produces fleshly life; the Spirit produces spiritual life (Galatians 3:26-27).

Thus, to be born again is to obey the gospel which, as we see in this verse, includes baptism. It is also important to notice that every conversion in the book of Acts includes baptism. Why would they be baptized if it was not necessary? Baptism was necessary then is commanded today (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:16, Acts 19:3-5, Romans 6:4-6). We cannot have our sins washed away (Acts 22:16) or have our sins remitted through His blood (Matthew 26:28; Acts 2:38) unless we are baptized. The Bible clearly teaches such. However,

there are many who teach another “gospel” who omit baptism as being necessary. Isn’t that teaching “another gospel”? When we change Christ’s command, we change the gospel. If a congregation is not teaching Christ’s teachings then are they not guilty of teaching “another gospel” or a “different gospel”? The Bible says YES.

Second, Christ speaks to us (through the Word of God) and through His Apostles to tell us – mankind - how we are to worship Him. Christ wants us to worship Him, BUT He wants us to do so in the way He commanded. Over the years man has changed, a service that was designed to be directed toward God and turned it to be directed towards self. This has been done by ignoring God’s commands and examples of worship. This has been done by approaching worship with the attitude of “this is what I like, or what I enjoy” instead of worshipping and praising God *“in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:24). While worship should be something we enjoy, it shouldn’t be enjoyed because we are entertained. It is enjoyed because we are worshiping and praising the God of our Salvation (Revelation 19:1). It should be enjoyed when we know that our worship is pleasing to God. If we are attempting to worship God some other way than how the Bible describes, then our worship is not pleasing to Him and we are again teaching people to follow a “different gospel”.

To worship God in spirit (John 4:24) is to worship God with the right attitude and having our minds focused on Him. To worship Him in truth (John 4:24) is to worship Him as He commanded us to do so in the New Testament. Since we are no longer under the Old Law but are under the New Law (Colossians 2:14-17), the law of Christ, we cannot use those Old Testament examples of worship to support our worship today. Why would one use the Old Testament to justify what we do today? In the Old Testament, concubines and multiple wives were permitted by God, but not in the New Testament. So why do so many argue that the Old Testament allowed such things as mechanical instruments of music? If we keep one part of the old way of doing things we should keep them all and not pick what we like and argue for it when we don’t do so for keeping the Sabbath, or feast days, the jubilee, and so on.

The reason such an argument is used is because the New Testament doesn’t authorize mechanical instruments of music. As a matter of fact, it does not even mention such things. Notice what the Bible says in Colossians 3:16, *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* The only instrument mentioned in this verse is the heart. We praise God from our hearts. If praising God with instruments is a command wouldn’t Christ or one of the Apostles have mentioned it? After all, the Holy Spirit was to “guide them in all truth” (John 16:13), yet mechanical instruments are never mentioned. We find a similar verse in Ephesians 5:19, *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,”* If we are to worship God in a way that is pleasing to Him, we cannot put what we like or what sounds good to us first. If our worship isn’t pleasing to God, then our worship is vain

(useless, Matthew 5:19). Thus, again if we are not following the commands of Christ then we are guilty of following a “different gospel” created by mankind.

Third, let's consider the source of so much “doctrine” today. The word doctrine means “sound” teaching. The Bible reveals that the doctrine for us today comes from Christ alone. With this being the case one then must consider the names used for so many “churches” today. In the “Baptist” churches, for instance, some believe that the “Baptist” church goes back to John the Baptist. Yet, in reality, the Baptist church is not seen in the Bible. The first denomination did not appear until the first large departure from the church which was established in Acts 2. Thus, the first denomination was seen approximately 600 years later. In reality John the Baptist got his name from his occupation. He was a baptizer. His purpose was to teach and preach repentance and baptism for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:2-4). The name “Methodist” came from those who wanted a method of worship that was “more spiritual” in nature. Our “Lutheran” friends follow the beliefs of a man named Martin Luther, who, like many others wanted nothing named after him and openly disapproved of mechanical instruments of music like many others who began their own congregations. However, even the founders “system of beliefs” are not seen much today.

Today, we have a huge issue facing true Christianity. Will we truly and completely follow Christ? There is only one Savior, only one Messiah, only one Son of God and only one True Teacher, Jesus Christ. Paul says the same thing in Galatians 3:16, “*Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.*” Thus, Christ is our only teacher and our only true example to follow. If we are to join Christ in eternal life, we must follow Christ and the only true Gospel.

If the teaching did not begin in the Bible, then it has no reason to be taught as if it were part of the Gospel. If you have a Bible question, we can show you a Bible answer. Join us as we worship God according to His Word and teach from His Word. Join us at the church of our Savior, the church of Christ.