



FREEDOM in CHRIST

Romans 8:!

By: Travis Byars



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FREEDOM in CHRIST

By: Travis Byars

3:27. “For as many of you as have been baptized **into** Christ have put on Christ.” Paul tells us all that the only way to get into Christ is to be baptized into Christ. Baptism is immersion in water, In fact the literal meaning of the word baptism means. *Baptizo*: to immerse, submerge; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet).

Perhaps you have been told your whole life that simply believing in Christ alone puts you into Christ, and now you are asking, well is it baptism alone that saves me? The answer to that simply is no. There is not one single passage

that shows the conversion of anyone from the establishment of the church in Acts 2 forward by simply saying a quick prayer or only stating their belief in God and stopping, and neither is their any passage that shows a person being saved who was baptized without believing or repenting. The Bible paints a beautiful picture and connects all the points of what commands God gave like a beautiful tapestry. Let us notice a few verses together. In Mark 16:16 Jesus said, “*He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved.*”

What were the words of the master? “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.” Many commentators deny what the savior said because of the last part of this verse when Christ states, “*But He who beleiveth not shall be damned.*” However that is not an argument that holds water. Why? Because the first word, He that Believes or (*Pisteuo: To have faith in, to entrust*), and is Immersed shall be saved, But He that (*Apisteo to be unbelieving, and by implication disobey*) shall be condemned. A literal translation of this verse could be “He that puts his trust in Christ and is immersed shall be saved, but he that disobeys shall be condemned.” The first part of this command is we must have that trusting Faith in Christ. And we will focus on that first.

Heb 11:6 tell us that without faith it is **impossible** to please God. So how do we come to a point where we have faith in Christ? Romans 10:7 has the answer for us. “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

But are belief and baptism the only two things commanded? Lets continue to connect the dots and see the

Imagine for a moment, if you will, that you had committed a grave crime, a crime so grave that it will result in your death as a punishment. You were convicted for being responsible for the death of an innocent man. While you await this death sentence not knowing what to do a man comes to your home and tells you that there was a way that you could be free and forgiven from every wrong and every sin you have ever committed, including what you had done to that innocent man. This is exactly the message the Apostle Paul was trying to convey to the Christians at Rome when he wrote Romans 8:1. Paul wrote, “*There is therefore now **No** condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...*”

There is No condemnation, No sin, No fearful looking toward Judgment but freedom and hope in Christ Jesus. The doubts and fear of death and what happens after this life can be eased with the knowledge that when one who is in Christ passes, there is a home, a place of rest and of peace awaiting him. Paul is telling them the wonderful news that if you are in Christ you are free from all past guilt, sin, and condemnation. Oh, what joy! Where else can you find such a promise? Perhaps you are thinking to yourself, I want to be free from sin, I do not want to carry this guilt around and have this worry on my mind all of the time. How do I get into Christ so that I can have this joy, this peace of mind, and this freedom in Christ?

Paul tells them exactly how to get into Christ earlier in the book of Romans in Chapter 6:3. “Know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized **Into** Christ were baptized into his death.” But that’s not the only place, he also tell Christians in Galatia that to put on Christ they must be baptized into Christ, notice Galatians



Rom. 6:3-4
death
wash
every one
justify
circumcision
faith

Acts 10:48

Mark 16:16

burial

BAPTISM

immersion

Acts 22:16

christ
name

gladly

Acts 2:38
Jesus
down

water

cleansed
believe
call

1 Pet. 3:21

LMS
PRODUCTIONS

Recently, I was going through my files on my external hard drive and came across something that I knew was there but had forgotten. I found my recordings of my brother Franklin Camp's classes on the entire Bible. So, wanting to pick my studies up some and study through the New Testament by the end of the year, I began listening. Today I came to 1 Thessalonians 1:6. In his teaching on this verse brother Camp mentioned that he foresaw a coming time when the Christians in America would be laughed at for believing the Bible and being faithful to it! And then it hit me, he was right! I believe we are living in that time today, the time when saying that you go strictly by the Bible and God's plan for mankind is ridiculed by the world at large.

Sure, there are still a large number of people in America that claim Christianity, but go up to one and tell them that Genesis is an account not an allegory, go to them and tell them that what God said with regard to worship or the roles in the church is still binding today, go to them and tell them that if you are not a member of the Lord's church, the New Testament church, the church of Christ you have no hope of heaven. You'll see what I mean! But, I wanted to take a short moment to remind my brethren and our readers that there's a reason why we say these things.

BECAUSE GOD SAID THE EXACT SAME THINGS!

And because of this, we stand proud when people laugh and ridicule us for being "Bible thumpers". That phrase has always interested me, even when I wasn't a member of the church. Because, what use is thumping a Bible? Shouldn't we be called, "Bible readers" or "Bible believers" or even "Bible nuts"? These statements are the truth, at least they should be!

BIBLE READERS

This statement is something that every Christian ought to be able to be called, as with each of the statements. Let's be honest with ourselves. I know we like to think that we know a lot of the Truth, and we may! But how in the world

are we going to claim to be faithful to God and not let God speak to us? Many Christians will openly admit their prayer lives need to be better, which is our way of speaking to God, but when the topic of Bible study is brought up we shut down and aren't willing to admit that we ought to be doing more of it. Hopefully, we can all be called "Bible readers".

BIBLE BELIEVERS

In the context of 1 The. 1:6 we read of those in Macedonia and Achaia being those who "believe". What does it mean to believe? That word has some strings attached in today's world because of all of the false teachings that are done on the subject. If one were to take what God said,

however, it's very clear. To believe means to have the assurance based upon the evidence that God exists

and to act upon that assurance, following God's plan and not man's (Heb. 11:1, 6, Col. 3:17)! Do you have both of these criteria? Then you are a Bible believer.

BIBLE NUTS

This is where I may lose you.

You see, the word "nuts" has a number of different meanings to those of my generation. You can be crazy, quirky, obsessed or just enthused by the object of

which you are "nuts." But, let's think about it like this. The Christian, one who is a member of the church of Christ ought to be obsessed with his Bible, after all it is given to us directly from our Creator (2 Tim. 3:16). He ought also to be enthusiastic about his Bible because when he opens it, it means he's about to get even closer with God! So, I hope we are all Bible "nuts".

Now, I know this has been a little tongue and cheek, and it was meant that way. Because I want to stress something to you as you read this. Peter wrote that people who are called Christians ought to glorify God on behalf of that name, especially when persecuted and ridiculed. If we let the names and harsh statements control us, then we can't do just that! But if we take their criticisms and turn them into good we can rejoice in them because we GET to be called those names all for doing what our Lord said to do (James 1:2).



**Upcoming
Issues**

July - Andrew Lamica
August - Ben Giselbach
September - Brandon Britton
October - Billy Hayes
November - Nathan Franson
December - Robert Hatfield

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and see the full picture. Romans 10:10 connects belief and confession together and their necessity for salvation. *“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

Are there any other connections in this picture? Absolutely, we are still unveiling the full beautiful picture of salvation and now we come to Acts 2:38 Peter tells them to Repent and be Baptized by the authority of Jesus Christ to receive forgiveness of their sins, now let's notice. *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..”* Then in 1 Peter 3:21 Peter writes, *“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.”*

Baptism does what Peter? Baptism doth also now save us, not the water, the water isn't miraculous but obeying what God said allows us to be put in a place where we can be saved. Remember Mark 16:16? He that disobeys shall be condemned.

We have read directly from the Scriptures the beautiful picture of how one can get into the only place of freedom, and that place is in Christ. We must hear the Word of God so that we might believe his words and have a trusting faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. We then having that belief and trusting faith in Christ must be willing to confess before men that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 3:16). Because we believe and are willing to make that confession we must repent, that is to turn away from our past sins and no longer continue in them, and following our repentance we must be willing to be baptized into Christ and at that point we will be In Christ and have all the blessings contained therein as according to Ephesians 1:3. When we bring the whole picture together isn't it a beautiful picture to behold? The Grace and Love of God is amazing, wonderful, astounding, and great. For by Grace are ye Saved through Faith, which faith am I saved by? I am saved by The Faith. I could never make my own way or plan of salvation, oh no it is the gift of God, from the mind of God, showing his wisdom. (Eph 3:8-11)

A man named Paul, an inspired Apostle of God has told you that there is in fact a way that you can be free and forgiven from every wrong and every sin you have ever committed how will you respond to him? Will you run act on this opportunity to be saved and have the Lord add you to The Church. (Acts 2:47)

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It is once again, my pleasure to study with you a very great question. Because of the nature of this question we will only explore one question in this edition of “The Preacher’s Favorite Passage”. As I read this question over and over, my mind put emphasis on different parts each time. I stepped away from the question for a few days and then, revisited it. It was as if I had never read or thought of this question before. I hope this study will be a profitable study to you as it was to me.

“Can a disciple of Christ do all that is required of him by God and never place membership at a church of Christ?”

I believe there are really three questions placed within this one sentence. Notice these three questions as they follow: 1. Can a disciple of Christ ***do all that is required*** of him by God? 2. Can a disciple of Christ do all that is required of him by God and ***not worship or fellowship with the church of Christ?*** 3. Can a disciple of Christ do all that is required of him by God and ***“worship” and fellowship with a denomination?*** This is a very important question that deserves our undivided time and attention.

First, I think it is a profitable study to look at the question can a person do all that is required by God? It is the fact that mankind can do all that God requires in an effort to satisfy Him. As you and I often think about sin, we might see sin as a wrong doing toward others or self. In fact every sin that has ever been committed has been a slap in the face of God by man. In Genesis 3.3, Eve restates the law given to her by God. That law was never about fruit, it was about submission. Did that first family submit unto the law of God? No. at the point in which Adam’s and Eve’s teeth pierced the skin of that fruit, mankind (Adam and Eve) has needed to satisfy the justice of God Almighty. That justice was to be satisfied because it was that justice that had been disregarded.

From that point up until this very minute, humanity has been given the choice to obey God or obey self. We often choose self rather than God. You and I are no better today. There is not a soul (of accountable age) who is

alive today, who has not been in or is currently living in violation to God’s law. As a logical progression, if we are aware of sinning and sinning against God, mankind must have some means of satisfying God. If not, God is not fair nor just.

It is possible for mankind to obey God. A person must hear God’s law (Romans 10.17), exhibit Biblical faith (Hebrews 11.1-6), repent of his sin he committed (Luke 13.1-5), confess the deity of Jesus (Matthew 10.32), be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2.37-38, Romans 6.1-4). This process given by God is the only way for mankind to satisfy the justice of a righteous God. God set those rules because He is the offended One for every sin ever committed by man.

Notice secondarily, that from the death of Christ and the establishment of the church, mankind has not obeyed God without being added to the church for which Jesus bought with His blood. Notice some interesting verses as the doors of the church open: “...Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (Acts 2.41-47)

There is a substantial precedence that has been in place from that date until this very second. Mankind cannot obey the law of God concerning salvation without being added to the church by the very ‘pen’ of the Savior of the world. **Because of that plain fact, mankind cannot obey God in every way without being a member of the church of Christ.** But why? One of the requirements of God is to live a faithful life, in every way. Notice these command: “...For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a

crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4.6-8) & “...Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: **be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life**.” (Revelation 2.10)

When a person obeys the true plan of salvation given by God, he is automatically added to the church by Jesus.

Notice thirdly, the church to which a man is added is the church of Christ. As a point of emphasis in the English language, the name church of Christ means the church that belongs to Christ. In 2013 America, we would say “Billy’s truck”. We can also say the truck of Billy. The semantics of the phrase of the name is a lot less important than the actions of the group of believers which make up this church. The church of Christ is not a denomination. The church of Christ is the church we read about in the New Testament. Her worship can be found in the Bible, all five actions of worship- no more. Her name is found in the Bible. As a matter of fact, if a child of God decides to go visit a denomination during the times of the worship of God’s people, he forsakes the assembly of God’s family. Hebrews 10. 19-26, will prove to us that action is *a willful sin*.

Let’s sum up this question in one concise answer: A man who has obeyed God’s plan of salvation with a faithful attitude and life will attend the services of our Heavenly Father with our spiritual brothers and sisters. That place is found only one place on this earth and that is in the loving arms of a congregation of other followers of Christ in the church of Christ as it was bought by the blood of Jesus.

As you study keep an open mind, an open heart and an open Bible—“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1st Thessalonians 5.21

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Camp.**

THE BEST PART

The best part of anything having to do with the Bible and the divine God in Heaven is the fact that He has provided a way by which a man can be saved from his sins. Paul wrote that every single person, attempting to justify himself by way of his own means, has fallen short of the mark and has therefore been guilty of trespasses (Romans 3:23). But, thanks be to God, He has not left us alone in order to find our salvation! He has sent Himself, in Jesus Christ, to die on a cross for the forgiveness of all man’s sins (John 3:16). BUT, we have to access that salvation which is freely available. How does someone do that?

Hear - Romans 10:17

Believe - John 8:24

Repent - Acts 2:38

Confess - Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16

If you have not done these things, or have never even heard such things, please contact us at the PFP. We would love to help you in your spiritual life so that you can be accepted by the Lord (2 Cor. 5:9).



Presentation of the Problem

Inherent in the knowledge that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16) is the understanding that God used precisely the words He intended. This concept must be applied to Jesus’ selection of the word “church” to signify the collection of His followers (Matthew 16:18). Modern society applies this term to designate the building or speaks of “going to church” (referring to the worship services); however, the Lord chose this word to denote those who serve Him, and there is significant meaning in His selection of this term. “Church” is the translation of the Greek word “ekklesia” (ek- out, kaleo- to call or summon). This term is used in reference to the Lord’s people universally (cf. Col. 1:18), locally (cf. Rom. 16:1), and individually (1 Cor. 14:4). “Ekklesia” is also used in reference to the children of Israel (Acts 7:38) and a mob gathered for the purpose of persecuting Christians (Acts 19). Jesus’ choice of words left no doubt as to what His children are to be—set apart, called out, and chosen for a purpose. “[He] gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Tit. 2:14). The church’s peculiarity is sorely needed in the society of today—primarily in the field of ethics.

“Ethics” is “a discipline dealing with good and evil and with moral duty” and being “ethical” is “conforming to accepted...standards of conduct” (The Merriam Webster Dictionary, p. 246). “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD” (Isa. 55:8). God and the world have different standards for acceptable conduct and discerning between good and

evil. As Christians, we are to adhere to God’s standards, rather than those of the world—this is called “Christian ethics.” In obeying God ethically, we must recognize that we are ethically “ekklesia”—called out of conformity with the world’s ethical standards, and set apart for the purpose of obeying and proclaiming God’s ethical commands.

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter” (Isa. 5:20)! There is nothing more shameful than a society that celebrates wickedness and condemns righteousness, but that is what we have been given in 21st Century America. Homosexuality, abortion, polygamy, immodesty, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, lasciviousness, and the like are not only tolerated, but celebrated. The Bible, prayer, and God’s name have been banished from every corner of our society. These things must be expected by a world ruled by Satan; however, the greatest burden on my heart is to look around and see my brothers and sisters in Christ conforming to the world. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:2). “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:14-16).

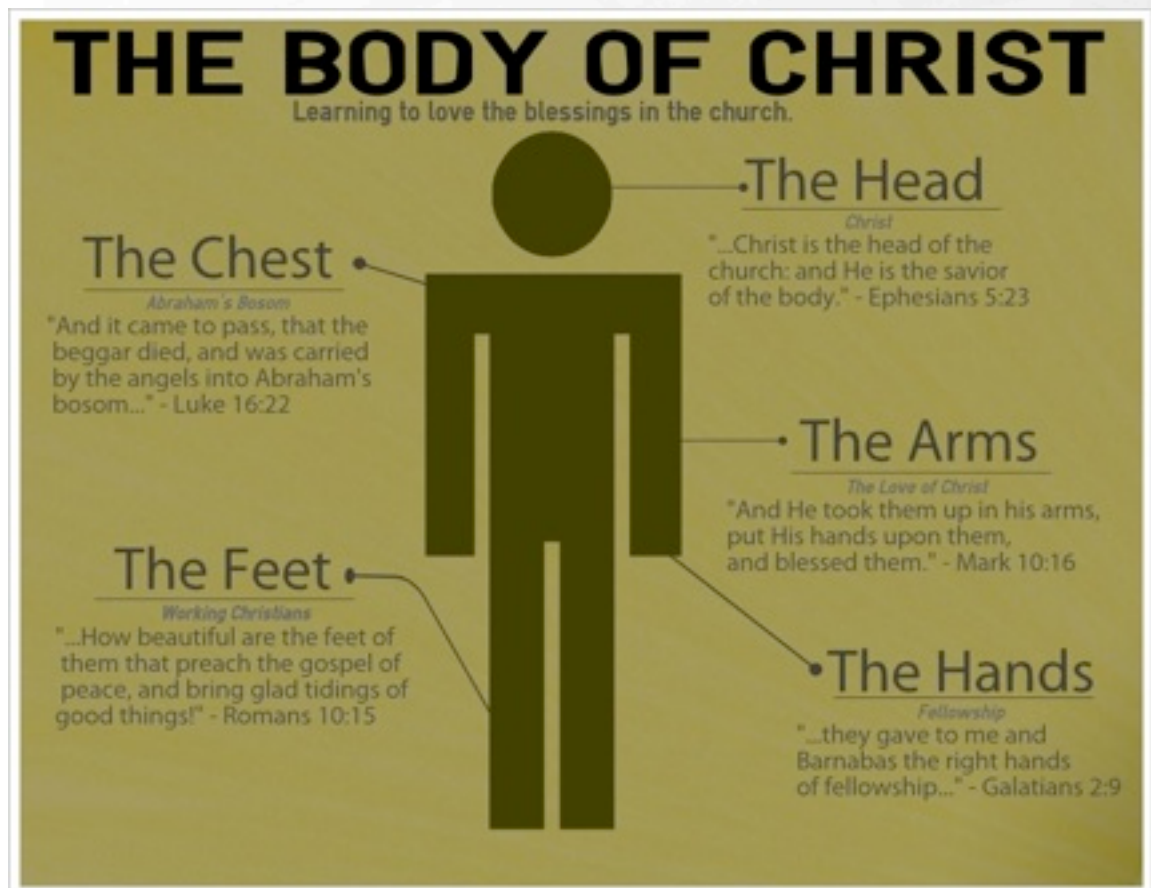
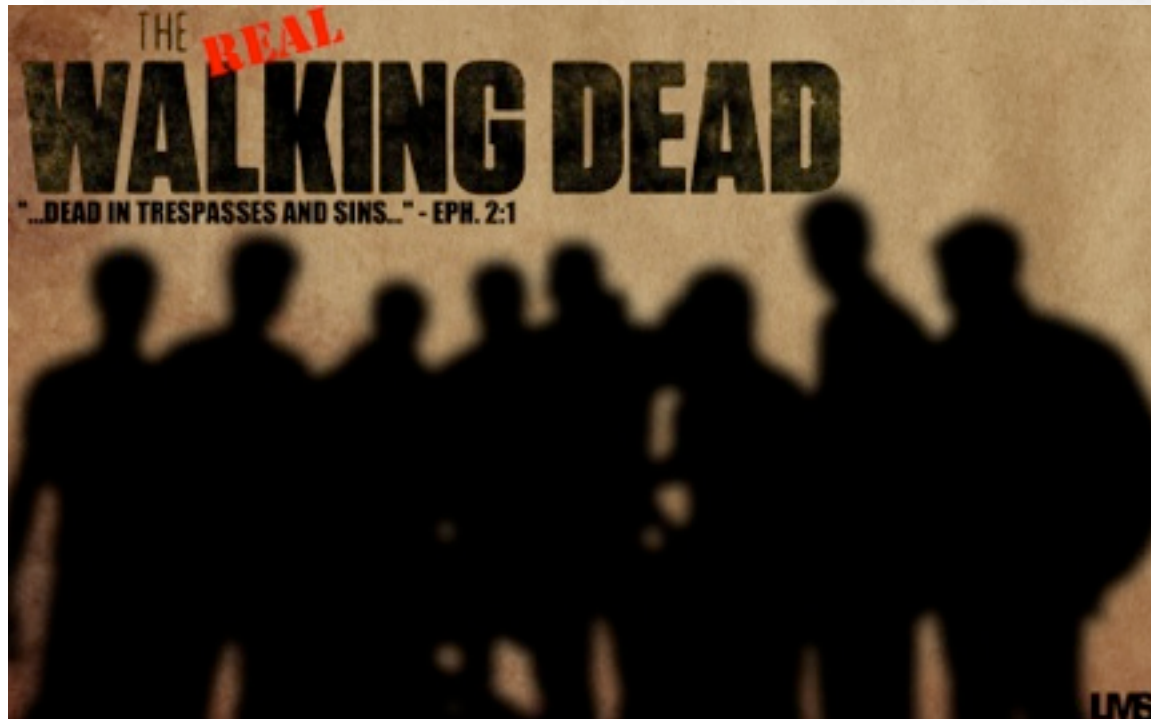
It is time to quite straddling the fence! It is time to commit to being ethically “ekklesia.”

WORKS CITED

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (Merriam-Webster, Inc. 2004. Springfield, Massachusetts).

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10 THINGS TO REMEMBER
FROM THE BOOK OF LUKE'S LAZARUS COME BACK TO IT

Luke 16:25 records Abraham telling the rich man to "remember."
BUT...
What was the rich man told to remember?

1. The **PLEASURES** of the Past - v. 19
2. The **PITIFUL** Lazarus - v. 20-21
3. The **PROCESSION** of Your Funeral - v. 22
4. The **PAIN** of Being There - v. 23
5. The **PARCHMENT** of Your Tongue - v. 24
6. Your **PAST** Opportunities - v. 25
7. The **POSITION** of Your Soul - v. 26
8. The **PERIL** of Your Family - v. 27-28
9. The **POWER** of God's Word - v. 29-30
10. The **PURPOSE** of Everything

SAY WHAT?

with Tony Clay

The word predestination is a word that makes us raise our eyebrow and question what the speaker is saying, but actually, it is a scriptural idea. The truth is... we are predestined! If you were to ask your friends who are members of a denominational sect they might tell you that God chose them before the world began and that He unchangeably predestined them to be saved. The part that they leave out is that not all people are predestined or “elected” by God. Thus we have Calvinism demonstrated in two tenants, “Limited Atonement” and “Unconditional Election” For our purposes this issue, let us focus only upon what the Bible says about predestination.

First off, Paul had interesting things to say concerning predestination in Romans 8:28-30:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

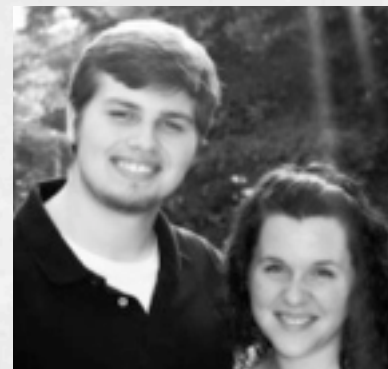
This is one of the “run of mill” passages that are used to teach the Calvinistic view of predestination. Commonly, what would be heard concerning this would be something to the effect of: “God’s blessing is great that He will work everything out in our lives. We don’t have to worry about anything because he has chosen us and has given us His Holy Spirit to make us conformed to His son.” This is a view that takes away free will from an individual and asserts that God ignores free will and makes up our mind for us, which would be an error of His justice and does not harmonize with God’s nature. We can determine of a certainty from this passage that God’s elect (predestined people) are: conformable to the image of Jesus, Justified people (saved), glorified people (on their way to heaven). In an effort to harmonize this passage with other passages let’s consider other places where predestination is discussed.

Secondly, Paul mentions predestination again in Ephesians 1, particularly in verses 4, 5 and 11. But to gain a clear understanding of what is being discussed, verses 1-14 or so. Paul is speaking as a complete thought through all of

the verses meaning that none should be singled out and others ignored. First off, in verses 1, Paul tells the reader the ones to whom he is writing, “to the saints which are at Ephesus.” He is writing to Christians and that is important to know considering the way he will be speaking later on in the passage. Verses 3 attributes every spiritual blessing, of which salvation from sin would be included, to Christ. Paul uses words in verses 4 and 5 like according and having which are words to link back to the previous statement made in verse 3 about the spiritual blessings in Christ. In essence, Paul is saying Every spiritual blessing in heavenly places is found in Christ, just like how we were chosen and predestined. One part of this that flies in the face of the Calvinistic idea concerning this is the placement of Jesus versus the placement of the Holy Spirit. Those of the Calvinistic view will exalt the Holy Spirit to a position that He has not assumed for Himself. The Holy Spirit never claimed to be the one who chooses people and adopts them. Verse 5 would teach that it is by Jesus that people are adopted and made His children. Verse 7 would teach that it is by Jesus’ blood that we have obtained redemption, therefore excluding anything else. Looking further into the passage, verses 11 and following would tell exactly how one is adopted by Jesus, how one is redeemed: It begins by saying that God’s elect are chosen according to the purpose of God, that we should be God’s praise, but how? Verse 13 clarifies, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.” Our predestination hinges upon things that we must do. We must trust in God, hear the word of Truth, the Gospel, and like every conversion in the book of Acts, be converted through belief and baptism.

Predestination is one of God’s greatest blessings to think about. He offers salvation, free to all who will seek him, not a restricted number. God has shown His great love by predestinating the obedient to be the partakers with His son. Chosen before the foundation of the world that He would save those who follow Him and obey the Gospel. We owe everything to Him for His grace that gives the world the opportunity and hope for eternal salvation. May every person endeavor to seek after Him and His adoption into the Heavenly family. To God be the glory!

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PPF.**



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WORSHIP

with
Nathaniel Ferguson

As with the last article the discussion will continue with the comparison of man's doctrine and God's Law. Hopefully in the last article the Truth could be clearly seen as it is represented in scripture. To preface this next discussion the author would like the reader to understand that the true difference in the two positions posed in these articles is the misapplication or proper application of scripture. God does not contradict Himself and therefore the two positions cannot both be right. Rather these articles are geared to help the reader see what Gods Word really does say and how it is different than man's teachings. Now to address the topic for this article the comparison will be made between tithing and giving freely from the heart. Ultimately the question "which teaching is from God and which is from man" will be answered.

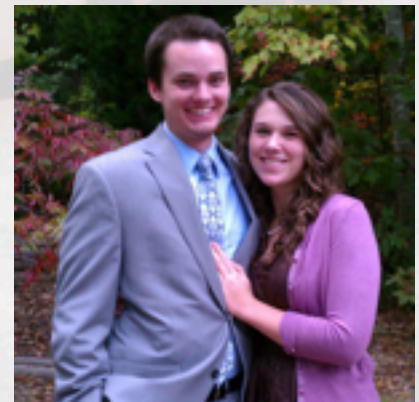
First, the position for tithing will be given. The Basis for this argument can be found in the Old Testament where one can read of the law concerning tithing. God commanded it of Israel as a recompense for all the physical blessing He had given them. The tithing was supposed to go to the Levites according to Numbers 18:21 who were chosen to be priests for God. Also in the Old Testament in Leviticus 27:30-32 the parts of the law of tithing were explained. Based on the scripture under the Old Testament tithing was commanded. Therefore, today the position is held that tithing is still commanded. Many in the religious world today practice tithing and that one must give a tenth of their possessions to the denomination which they attend. This is the strongest and really the only argument made that tithing should be practiced and the authority for tithing is based solely up the Old Testament Law.

Now, the position for giving freely will be examined. In order for this argument to be valid it must also disperse with the arguments of the other position. In order to do that one must realize that Christians today are no longer bound by the Law of

Moses for it was done away according to Hebrews 10:9. This concept can be seen in the New Testament as it pertains to circumcision. Paul writes to the Christians in Galatia that they have lost Christ because they practice laws under the Old Testament according to Galatians 5:1-4. The Law of Moses is no longer in effect today. Instead, there is a New Law in effect today the Law of Christ. This law is the one which people are under today and it has given instructions to give freely out of the heart every first day of the week and not tithe. According to 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 Christians are commanded to lay aside something for God from what He has given them. It is no longer a set amount but the Christian instead is supposed to give liberally from their heart. In 2 Corinthians 9:7 Paul tells the Church in Corinth to give as they have decided in their hearts, not of necessity which means not because they have to give a certain amount (such as 10%) but rather let them do it with a cheerful heart because that is what God loves.

Clearly, one can see in this same type of comparison that the Truth can be found. The doctrine of man that teaches tithing is one that is based in the misapplication of scripture. Christians were never under the Old Law but they are under the New Law which commands them to give liberally but it does not command them to tithe.

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