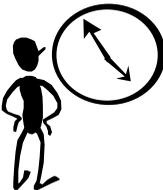


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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.
Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

The Bible: Dare We Leave It?

By Dee Bowman

It is amazing how much of religion in general has left the Bible. Catholicism bears little resemblance to the Bible anymore, nor does denominationalism. In fact, some of the congregations who wear the name “Church of Christ” are quickly abdicating biblical principles in preference for what the people want instead of what the Bible says.

Is it because the Bible is no longer relevant? Is it outdated, no longer relevant? Have we reached a point in time where there is no longer a need for scriptural precedent for what we do. Have we become so “mature” that we no longer need the “thou-shalts” and the “thou-shalt-nots” so prominently displayed in the Bible? And is our “new hermeneutic” better than the original hermeneutic which called for direct command, approved apostolic example, or necessary inference?

Is it possible that we have reached the stage in modern religion where we have bought into the Old Roman philosophy that says *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, “the voice of the people is the voice of God”?

It’s scary to note where we’re headed.

Why the Bible? Well, first of all, because it works. People have not changed. Technology has changed, Communication has changed, Medicine has changed, Transportation has changed, but man has not changed. Not one wit! He still has the same old problem with sin—too much pride, too much lust, too much acquiescence to the moods and fancies of the day, too much “whatever” when it comes to defining morals. In the midst of it all, God’s word is “profitable for doctrine,” what we are to believe about who we are, where we came from and where we’re going, “for reproof,” to point out our imperfections, “for correction” to get us back on course again,

and for “instruction in righteousness” so as to keep us going straight even in the midst of all sorts of pressures to get us off course. It is sufficient for all our needs; it thoroughly furnishes a man “to every good work.” (Read [II Timothy 3:16-17](#))

But it only works if we use it. And to use it we must become familiar with its information, its warnings, its promises of peace and hope. And so we are admonished to “study to show thyself approved unto God.” There must be a conscious effort to make the word of God a consistent part of our lives; and that requires a diligent concern for all that it says—not just part of it—but all of it. And it won’t provide what God wanted when He gave it if it’s up on a shelf somewhere gathering dust, pressing funeral flowers, wedding invitations, and other such memorabilia. (Read [II Timothy 2:15](#))

The Bible identifies sin. It shows us the need for a Savior. It shows us the Savior. How dare we neglect it? (Read [Jeremiah 10:23](#); [Isaiah 55:8-9](#))

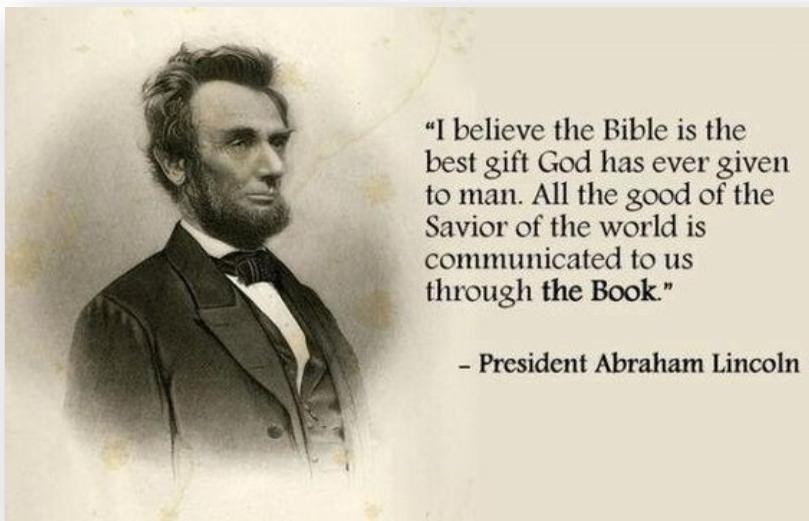
“It is appointed to man once to die and after this the judgment.” “Let us hear the conclusion to the whole matter: fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.” The Bible sets forth the truth about man’s destiny. It answers the question “if a man die shall he live again?” It speaks to the condition of man at his death as being the most important consideration of his life. *“Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess unto God.”* How can we possibly neglect to consider – and that most carefully – these and many other references to man’s destiny? And how can we dare be so pompous as to change or alter what the Maker of the Universe says? (Read [Hebrews 9:27](#); [Ecclesiastes 12:13-14](#); [Romans 14:11](#))

Finally, the Bible brings heaven into focus. Hope comes alive for those who subscribe to the Bible.

The resurrection becomes a manner not of if, but when to the serious Bible student.

(Read [I Corinthians 15:55ff](#); [Philippians 3:20-21](#); [II Thessalonians 1:7-12](#))

So, do you want to take a chance on changing what God has said? Not me, sir! (Read [II John 9](#))



“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good of the Savior of the world is communicated to us through the Book.”

– President Abraham Lincoln

The Accuser of Our Brethren

By Steve Wallace

In [Revelation 12:10](#) Satan is referred to as "the accuser of our brethren." The word "accuse" is defined, "(1) to charge with, or declare to have committed a crime, (2) to find at fault; to blame . . ." (Webster 14). Sometimes a person is justly accused. However, that is not what is spoken of here.

Do we have any examples of Satan accusing "*our brethren before God*" ([Revelation 12:10](#))? Yes, we find such in [Job 1:6-11](#); [2:1-6](#). Job was a good man! God himself testified to this fact. However, it did not matter to Satan. He accused Job anyway. Here we see a true picture of Satan as "*the accuser of our brethren*." Satan also tempts mankind. Hence, people can become "accusers of our brethren" and share in the devil's work.

We see people carrying out the work of the devil in both testaments. Job's brethren falsely accused him ([Job 4:7-9](#)). The Pharisees falsely accused Jesus ([Matthew 12:22-24](#)). Among the sins characteristic of the "last days" is that some will be "false accusers" ([II Timothy 3:3](#)). If people can become false accusers, then brethren can become false accusers. The danger that brethren might partake in the devil's work evidences the need for this study.

ANYONE CAN ACCUSE ANYONE OF ANYTHING!

The Bible teaches that the above point is true. Job said to his accusers in the long ago, "*I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you and shake mine head at you*" ([Job 16:4](#)). Likewise the Pharisees' accusation against our Lord shows that anyone is able to dredge up any kind of charge against another ([Matthew 12:24](#)).

Today our media has dredged up countless "witnesses" of questionable character and quoted them to the hurt of some public figure. A headline I have before me now reads, "_____ accuses _____ of dishonesty." I have deleted the names as they are unimportant. Experience with our news media tells us that we could place almost anyone's name into the blanks, so rampant is the practice of trumping up charges against others. The danger is that, in such an environment as we presently live, brethren might adopt such tactics. In fact, they have.

Let us note some false accusations that have been leveled among brethren. When brethren opposed church contributions to orphans' homes and "sponsoring churches" in the 1950s and 60s they were accused of being "orphan haters" and "anti-missionary." More recently, when faithful brethren have taught against fellowshiping those in adulterous marriages or those who teach false doctrine on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, some have accused them of not believing in local church autonomy. (What about when

we teach against what Baptists believe about inherited sin? Are we infringing on the autonomy of Baptist Churches?) In the last few years, when some brethren's teaching on fellowshiping error or influence towards that end was called into question, they accused those who differed with them of having an "inferior motive," of being "extremists who have their own cause to promote," and other similarly reckless charges and have therewith stifled Bible study. (Let us all take note that the Bible teaches that only God and the person in question know what motivates that person [[I Samuel 16:7](#); [I Corinthians 2:11](#)].) Accusations have been based on what part of the country a person is from. Some on the West Coast have prejudicially used the label "southern preacher," and the term "West Coast preacher" has at times been too broadly used in light of the faithful men doing the Lord's work in that area of the country. If a brother writes an article that uses Bible teaching to expose sinful practices or erroneous teachings of a brother or brethren in other places, whether in a paper or in the bulletin of the church where he preaches, he is accused of "trying to control the brotherhood" or "trying to make a name for himself."

A major cause of problems among brethren today is unproven accusations and brethren feeling free to make them. Brethren are doing the work of the devil! What happens when brethren so conduct themselves?

THE EFFECTS OF UNPROVEN ACCUSATIONS

Such accusations hurt people.

Even a child is upset when accused of something of which he is not guilty. Job's friends hurt him with their words ([Job 16:1-2](#)). Job felt the inward pain that comes to one who is falsely accused as have many brethren today who have faced such accusations.

Such accusations hurt people's reputations.

It is evident that Paul's reputation suffered in the eyes of some of his brethren in the church at Corinth because of false accusations made by his enemies there ([II Corinthians 10:2, 10](#)). They apparently even turned Paul's refusal of support from the church there into an accusation (cf. [II Corinthians 11:7-9](#); [12:13](#)). This reminds me of a story from modern day America where a public figure was accused of a crime or impropriety and "tried" in the media. He was eventually found not guilty and, upon pronouncement of the verdict, asked the judge, "Now where do I go to get my reputation back?" When we consider what it takes to build a reputation, it is sad to note how a person can be hurt by the false charges of irresponsible people.

Such accusations can result in physical harm.

Our Lord's treatment at the hands of the Jewish authorities shows the truthfulness of the above point. He was accused again and again ([Matthew 12:24](#); [26:59-61](#); [Luke 23:3, 10](#)) and though he was found innocent ([Luke 23:14](#)), they killed him any-

how! The false charges against Jews of being "untermensch" (subhuman) and plotting against non-Jewish people made by the Nazis in Germany in the 1930s resulted in the mass killing of millions of them in the 1940s. In our day, who will deny that the rash of black church building fires in our country is not at least partially fueled by the racist accusations made by hateful people? While all hope that accusations made by brethren today would not lead to the bodily harm of those accused, we must admit the possibility in light of the above facts.

Such accusations can poison the atmosphere among brethren.

We need only look at Paul's relationship with the Corinthians to see that this point is valid. Because of the charges made against Paul by his enemies at Corinth, he was not able to continue with his work of building up the church there. Rather, a large part of his second letter to the Corinthians was taken up with explanations of his conduct and answers to enemies (cf. [II Corinthians 1:12-2:4](#); [4:2](#); [7:2](#); [12:19](#); chs. 10-12). Brethren can come to believe the worst about their brethren simply by hearing and believing false accusations. Brethren can be motivated by the desire to accuse others ([Mark 3:2](#); [John 8:6](#)). False accusations can lead to the severing of relationships among brethren.

CONCLUSION

Such results as we have listed above ought to cause all to think soberly before blasting off with some wild charge against a brother or believing an accusation made by another. Call the brother in question or write him, seek to build bridges, not to destroy them. Remember, anyone can make false accusations about anyone else. God's people should seek what is true and not be led by idle charges. They should treat others as they would like to be treated ([Matthew 7:12](#)) and judge others by their fruits, and not by accusations they have heard ([Matthew 7:20](#); [Galatians 2:14](#)). The devil is "the accuser of our brethren." It is bad enough that he is involved in such activity. God's people should want no part of the devil's work.

**"Whereas it is the duty
of all Nations to
acknowledge
the providence
of Almighty
God, to obey
his will, to be
grateful for his
benefits, and humbly
to implore his protection
and favor.."
- GEORGE WASHINGTON**

