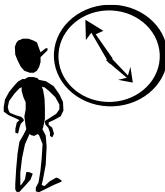


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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
Worship	10:00 a.m.
Worship	5:00 p.m.
(every other week)	

Wednesday:

Bible Study	6:30 p. m.
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The Will of My Father

By Jefferson David Tant

The words of the title of this article are taken from a familiar Biblical passage found in Matthew 7:21-23: *“Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'”*

Now consider the implications of what Christ said. He spoke of people who believed in Him and called Him “Lord.” But He said that calling Him Lord and believing in Him was not enough to secure their entrance into heaven. And what was the problem? He said they practiced “lawlessness.”

With respect to lawlessness, those who practice it follow some laws, but not all. They are, in a sense, a law unto themselves. The people of whom Christ was speaking believed in God and certainly would have been following some of the commands God had given, for they recognized Jesus as “Lord” and cited various things they were doing that were good and of a religious nature.

But evidently, they were not following all of what had been commanded of them. Therefore, they were guilty of sin and, in that condition, would be denied entrance into heaven.

Now, consider the situation concerning civil law. One day, you are pulled over by a policeman who clocked you, driving 60 miles per hour in a 20 miles per hour school zone. You are given a ticket and go to court to plead your case. “Your Honor, I am an American citizen. I respect our government and try to be a good citizen. I stop for red lights. I give to charities, pay my taxes, and give to the poor. I respected the

building code when I added an addition to my house. Therefore, I think I should be freed from the penalty for my speeding ticket.”

And what do you think the judge would say? We would agree that he might commend you for the good you had done, but the penalty would remain. As citizens, we are not free to decide which laws we will obey and which laws we will ignore.

Question: Is obeying all of what God has said any less important than obeying the laws of the land?

Do you remember an answer Christ gave to one of Satan’s temptations? “*But He answered and said, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'*” (Matthew 4:4). Does that give any indication that we are free to choose which commands to follow and which to neglect?

John vividly describes what will transpire on the Day of Judgment, when our world will end and we will stand before our Judge, God.

“And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:12-15).

So, we will be judged by “*the things which were written in the books.*” What books was John writing about? Maybe the Baptist Manual, the Methodist Discipline, the Catholic Catechism, or the Book of Mormon? I don’t think so! We would agree that the “books” were the documents that contained God’s Word, His revelation to mankind.

The truth is that every church creed, manual, or book of doctrine contradicts something that is written in the Scriptures that God inspired. If they said the same things written in the Bible, we wouldn’t need them, for God has already given us all we need to obey Him.

Various scriptures warn against adding to or subtracting from God's word. “*Do not add to His words, or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar*” (Proverbs 30:6).

Note what Paul wrote to Timothy concerning what God has revealed. “*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work*” (II Timothy 3:16-17).

When reviewing various denominational creeds, notice some things that contradict what God has revealed to us in His Word, the Bible.

Baptists

Hiscox Standard Manual for Baptist Churches: “CHURCH MEMBERSHIP – It is most likely that in the Apostolic Age when there was but ‘one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act, constituted him as a member of the church. . . In that sense, ‘baptism was the very door into the church’ . . . Now it is different. . . The churches therefore have candidates come before them, give their ‘experience,’ and then their reception is decided by a vote of the members. . .” (page 16)

Question: Who said it was now “different?” My Bible reads the same as it did when it was written thousands of years ago. Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians, “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Galatians 3:27). What does it mean to be in Christ? Doesn’t that mean that they were in His body, which is His church?

Methodists

The Methodist Discipline makes an interesting claim in the copy I have on page 2: “We have, therefore, expected that the DISCIPLINE would be administered, not merely as a legal document, but as a revelation of the Holy Spirit working in and through our people.”

So, we have a new revelation from God? This doesn’t seem to agree with what John said in Revelation 22:18-19: “*I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*”

Roman Catholics

The Roman Catholic Church forbids the marriage of priests, bishops, etc. The Church has established impediments that block the validity of marriages attempted by those who have been ordained. Canon 1087 states: “*Persons who are in holy orders invalidly attempt marriage.*”

But when I turn to God’s Word, I read the qualifications of those who serve as leaders. “*This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach...*” (I Timothy 3:1-2, KJV) The text goes on to say that the bishop must be the father of good children, proving his leadership qualities.

Have the Bible qualifications been changed because of the Catholic rules? I don’t think so.

Denominations Accepting Homosexuality

There are quite a few denominations that accept homosexuals into the ministry as well as into membership. These include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Episcopal Church in the United States, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the Church of Scotland.

Now, even the Catholic Pope has given his authority to priests to bless same-sex couples. Not married same-sex couples but same-sex couples living together in an adulterous relationship. Unbelievable!

Homosexuality is becoming widely accepted in the world. Does this mean that God has changed His mind about this? I find no evidence of this when I turn to the revelation of the mind of God as revealed to us in *“the will of My Father.”*

Notice the inspired Apostle Paul’s statement about homosexuals and others. *“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God”* (I Corinthians 6:9-11).

Note that all those mentioned were sinners, unrighteous, but they had been cleansed and justified when they had been washed (baptized). Some claim that homosexuals cannot change, but God’s Word indicates they can change in the same way that drunkards or swindlers can change. They have changed from doing Satan’s will to doing God’s will.

The Church of Christ Scientist

Among the doctrines of this church founded by Mary Baker Eddy is the following: “One of the notable things about the Mother Church in Boston is that partaking of the Lord’s Supper is forbidden. “Article XVIII. COMMUNION. No more Communion. Section I. The Mother Church of Christ, Scientist, shall observe no more Communion Seasons...” (Church Manual, p. 61).

Then we turn to God’s Revelation, the Bible’s New Testament, and read what Christ told the disciples as they were partaking of the Passover meal: *“And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me”* (Luke 22:19). So Christ says “Do this” and Mary Eddy says “Don’t do this.” I believe I’ll follow Christ rather than Mary. Which do you choose?

The Salvation Army

William Booth founded the Salvation Army in 1865. The question has been asked why the church does not practice baptism or partake of The Lord’s Supper. In re-

sponse to questions about this, it appears that the simple answer is that because the Salvation Army does not view baptism or communion as requirements for salvation, they are not practiced at all.

So, with the stroke of a pen, we can cancel or erase what God has commanded. Christ had something to say about those who would do this. *"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 5:18-19).

Dear Reader, consider whether we should follow the doctrines of men or the doctrines of God. God's Word is very clear about what we should choose if we want to go to heaven. Consider the following chart and what it portrays. I didn't have room to portray the doctrinal books of the 42,000 so-called "Christian" denominations, but the ones pictured portray the problem of following the doctrines of men rather than the doctrines of God.

God has given us the right to choose. Now, honestly, do you think the thousands of denominations that teach and practice things that differ from one another as well as differ from the Bible, God's Word, are the product of the mind of God, or are they the product of the mind of Satan, the great deceiver? To me, the answer is pretty obvious. Satan was a deceiver from the beginning when he deceived Adam and Eve, and they suffered the consequences.

Let us live in this life and serve God's will for us so that on the Day of Judgment, we can truthfully say, *"I have done the will of my Father."*

Convict the World of Sin

By Terry Wane Benton

The Holy Spirit used the revelation He gave to Peter to *"convict the world of sin"* (John 16:8; Acts 2:22-37). When they *heard* the convicting truth, they felt a need to be *saved*. Without telling the world of **sin**, no one feels a need to be saved. Everyone thinks they are fine until you point out what **sin** is.

Society affirmed the Corinthians until someone pointed out the sins of adultery, homosexuality, sodomy, thievery, drunkenness, covetousness, etc. Then, they wanted to be justified, sanctified, and washed from these sins (I Corinthians 6:8-10). Someone could easily have told the church that they ought not to speak about these *political* issues, but these were moral issues of **sin**, not political issues to avoid discussing. If no one knows they have cancer, they will never seek to be saved from it.

Cooperate with the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin so they can desire the remedy God offers in Christ.