

## THE BIBLE DOES NOT "CONTAIN" TRUTH!

In praying for His apostles and all who would believe on Him because of their word, Jesus asked the Father to "Sanctify them in the truth, Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We know that God's word is truth, which it is a lamp and a light (Psalm 119:105), and that it is a comfort and shield (Romans 15:4). It is a sword (Ephesians 6:17) and a judge (John 12:48; Hebrews 4:12). But in speaking collectively of God's word, of His truth, sometimes we err when we refer to the Bible as "containing truth." The Bible does not **merely** "contain" truth, as though there is some part of the Bible that is not true. The Bible does not **merely** "contain" truth as if there were other "writings" which were inspired of God, thus "contained" truth also. The Bible **IS THE TRUTH**, the **only** source for spiritual truth for mankind today.

Knowing the power and ability that the word of God has, we must know where to find that word of truth. Paul declared that the word of truth is the gospel (Colossians 1:5). That gospel is the gospel of our salvation (Ephesians 1:13). Salvation is found only in Christ (II Timothy 2:10) and in His word (James 1:21). Where then is that record of inspired truth that will save those who hear and obey it? Why, in God's book, of course! The Bible does not "contain" Scripture, it **IS** Scripture. Thus, it is that to which Paul refers in II Timothy 3:16,17. Notice he states **ALL** Scripture is inspired of God. Therefore, he made clear that it is **not** so that the Bible "contains" some truth, but all within it is the truth, the gospel, the doctrine of Christ. These are the things written (I Corinthians 4:6) beyond which we dare not go lest we lose God (II John 9).

## Indoctrination: What Saith The Scriptures?

Although this word has generally a bad connotation, it simply means "to instruct, especially in fundamentals or rudiments; to teach." To teach, then, is to "instruct in basic principles, inform, enlighten or train."

Some years ago, I read some "findings" from a conference hosted by ACU regarding teenagers in select "Churches of Christ" (their capitalization, not mine, rh). A series of tapes was produced from their "Youth and Family Conference." Their findings, if taken at face value, were frightening! The bottom line of their "findings" was simply: *if we do not make some drastic changes in the Lord's church, introduce "special music" and women in leadership positions, our young people will continue to leave the church.* Allow me to hasten to point out a fact they seemed to have overlooked: **some young folks have always left the church**, long before the "change agency thinking" became popular. I doubt that will change much. To paraphrase the Lord, "the unfaithful ye have with you always."

Now some might think that all we have done is to "indoctrinate your people into believing your old, legalistic traditions." Such a statement, as it stands, is fairly accurate except for the definitions of their words. By their thinking, when they say "indoctrinate" they mean "brain-wash." This is not true. The word "doctrine" appears some 51 times in the Bible. It must be rather important. It is used both positively and negatively. Of course, we are concerned about its use when referring to what God has taught us through Christ and His apostles. Paul told Timothy, "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing" (I Timothy 6.3,4). I hope that we continue to "indoctrinate" our people and all who would come to worship with us as visitors.

Again, such critics will claim that what we teach is "ours." Yet again we must plead guilty. Why? Because we have done what the wise man instructed us: "Buy the truth and sell it not" (Proverbs 23.23). Like the beloved Gaius, we have made truth our very

own (III John 3). Remember, to indoctrinate means to teach the rudimentary principles. So, as the Hebrews writer wrote, "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God" (Hebrews 5.12). It is proper to teach these things so that we may continue to grow (see Hebrews 5.13-6.1; II Peter 3.18).

When liberals say that what we teach is "old," we ought to be thankful that they recognized that we want to stick with a 2,000 year old message! Let us always be willing to be accused of doing what the prophet said, "Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6.16).

Are the things that we teach "legalistic"? Once again that depends upon how one defines that term. It usually gets a negative reaction. But consider, would you rather be seen by God as legal or illegal? Legalism refers to "abiding by law." Let us remember that "we are under law to Christ" (I Corinthians 9.21). And what about "traditions"? We are not ashamed to follow traditions since that is what Paul told the brethren at Thessalonica to do. He told them "So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours" (II Thessalonians 2.15).

By all that I can see, our young people are doing great! Which one or ones (who are Christians) are *not* active in the Lord's service? They all take part in leading singing, prayers, teaching, Bible classes. Can they (we) improve? Sure. But is the church here in danger if we don't make unauthorized changes? Not at all. I'd say our people have learned that "the ways of Jehovah are right" (Hosea 14.9), and are willing to "continue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine" (Acts 2.42). Let us continue to teach "the things that we have heard from God among many witnesses and commit the same to faithful men and women who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2.2, paraphrased by rh).

# RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

November 1, 2009

Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

### Wednesday's Wisdom:

*"We must prepare to deal with this world, and run the race faithfully!"* Hubert Wiley

What a beautiful fall we have had this year. Colors have really been nice...nicer than last year. The planned **Hocking Hills Hike** has once again been postponed until this coming Saturday, 11/7, 10am at the Cantwell Cliffs parking area, if the weather will allow.

**Question/Answer night** will be this month, 11/29. I have a few questions already turned in (three, I think), and could use a few more.