

It Is Written

*A weekly publication of the
Junction Highway church of Christ in Kerrville, TX.*

Vol. 1

April 14, 2019

No. 15

How To Answer When You Don't Know The Answer

By Greg Gwin

No one likes to be put on the spot. We dread the possibility of being asked questions we can't answer, especially true when the questions are about religion. This fear is one of the biggest hindrances to spreading the gospel. Many Christians feel uneasy about their level of Bible knowledge. Thus, to avoid potentially embarrassing situations, they do their best to sidestep any discussion that might turn to religious themes. This is sad, because it keeps us from many open doors for personal evangelism.

Since no one has all the answers, it is important to know what to do when questions arise that stump us. Here are some suggestions:

Realize, and be ready to explain, that there are simply some pieces of information that we do not have because God has not supplied them. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God" (Deuteronomy 29:29). But, we have "all truth" (John 16:13), and "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2nd Peter 1:3). So, every piece of essential information has been supplied.

When you do not know the answer, it is best to simply admit it. This is much better than trying to bluff your way through. Humbly say, "I don't know", but do not fail to add, "I'll find out and get back to you on that." Following this procedure will actually provide additional opportunities to teach. It keeps the door open to further discussions.

Study, study, study! You will feel less intimidated and more willing to engage in biblical discussions if you build your confidence level by increasing your Bible knowledge. Pay special attention to areas where you presently feel weak in knowledge and understanding. Be well prepared to deal with popular denominational errors. Be ready to explain issues that divide brethren.

Never shy away from a chance to talk about God and His Word. The more you do this, the easier it will become. Every such conversation serves as an opportunity for you to sharpen your sword.

WHY IS BAPTISM HARD TO BELIEVE?

By Bryan Matthew Dockens

If you don't question lifting a rod over the sea to part it (Exodus 14:16), striking a rock to produce water (Exodus 17:6), raising hands to prevail in battle (Exodus 17:11-2), staring at a bronze snake to be healed of venom (Numbers 21:8-9), or blowing trumpets to destroy the walls of a city (Joshua 6:20), but you doubt that God would require submersion in water to obtain forgiveness (Acts 2:38; 22:16), then something is wrong with your thinking.

Every one of these marvelous works was wrought by God, but He did so through the means He specified. His might parted the Red Sea not without Moses' obedience; His grace quenched the thirst of Israel by way of Moses' compliance; His will brought victory over Amalek through the cooperation of Moses, Aaron, and Hur; His power overthrew Jericho when the army of Israel did as He commanded. His might, His grace, His will, and His power will, likewise, save a sinner when that one submits to simple instruction.

SIN IS "AGAINST GOD"

By Robert F. Turner

If you steal my rifle, you will do me a grave injustice. Realizing this, you may decide to return the rifle and ask my forgiveness. You may throw in a new scope to make me happy, but you have not paid your just dues.

Perhaps you think I mean your debt to society. Well, we have obligations to our fellowmen, and the courts may exact a fine, or place you in jail for stealing the rifle. But you could completely satisfy me, wipe clean the records of the court, and still fail the obligations of justice. In fact, we have not yet given consideration to the primary matter.

In the initial act of stealing the rifle you not only did me an injustice, you not only sinned against our society -- far more important, you failed your intended purpose and rejected the authority of your Maker. You have sinned against God! This is the fundamental factor in sin, yet it is the part very often ignored -- both in recognizing sin, and in "making things right". God existed prior to society, and deserves the prior consideration. All sin is against God! David got right to the point when he prayed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight" (PSA.51:4). On this basis God was just in condemning and David looked to God for forgiveness. We need many Davids today.

Christ has the prodigal son confess, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." (LUK.15:21). The order is significant. Twice this statement is made in the parable, and always, "against heaven" first. How differently we might look upon our sins if this order would prevail.

Paul says "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2CO.7:10). It is not enough that we "regret" (see AS) our sins. Such regrets may stem from getting caught. Our sorrow must be in recognition of our failure before God, and our turning in keeping with His will. It is this concept of sin that makes us aware of its depth, and of our complete dependence upon God for forgiveness. Next time you sin don't "look out" -- LOOK UP".

I Corinthians 14:33

By Jarrod Jacobs

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

This statement made by the apostle Paul is simple at first glance, and yet its meaning and application are complex. When we read I Corinthians 14, we see that Paul told the brethren that when they are assembled and someone wishes to speak in tongues, they are to make sure there is someone there to interpret (v. 27-28). In addition, those who prophesied needed to take turns and two or three at a time would be sufficient in the assembly (v. 29-31). God expected things to be done in an orderly manner because He is "not the author of confusion, but of peace."

As I thought about this phrase, I noticed that this principle is true in every other aspect of God's teaching. Since He is "not the author of confusion" it means that what He tells you to do, He tells me to do (and vice versa). When Paul said he taught the same thing "every where and in every church" (I Cor. 4:17), he was living the simple truth we read in I Corinthians 14:33.

In contrast, Satan is the author of confusion. When men call evil good and good evil, we know Satan has worked on them (Isa. 5:20-23). Devilish wisdom breeds envy, strife, confusion, and "every evil work" (Jas. 3:15-16). Notice that this is just the opposite of what God wants.

With God, there is peace, not turmoil, unity, not division, love, not hate, stability of mind, not confusion! When we understand this, why would we want to spend any more time learning the Devil's ways? Let us go to God. Let us be reconciled to Him and let us have the peace of mind that comes by being a child of God and following His will (Phil. 4:6-9)!