Stop!

Look!

Reason!

Written by
G. E. McCay in the interest of New Testament religion.



Presented by

The Church of Christ

Sponsored & Edited by

The Christian Courier
ChristianCourier1Cup@gmail.com
https://1CupHistory.Church

That God expects man to use his reasoning faculties is evident from this scripture, "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord:" Is. 1:18. We are to reason together with the Lord, not Against him. How can we do this? God has placed the result of his reasoning on the pages of the Bible. He expects us to use our intelligence to reason concerning what is in that book. If we reason in harmony with what that book teaches, our conclusion is sure to be correct. Of course you have already seen that I am writing this article for the consideration of men and women who believe that the Bible is a Divine revelation. It would require a separate article for the one who does not believe the Bible divine.

In order to understand the plan of salvation contained in the Bible, it is necessary for us to know how to study and rightly divide the Word. The apostle Paul, writing to a young preacher, Timothy, said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Tim. 2:15.

No preacher need be ashamed who rightly divides the word and teaches it as he can read it.

As to the division of the Word, God made two Wills (Testaments). The first was the Old Testament and the second is the New Testament. As it is a principle of law that two wills (testaments) can not be in force at the same time, and that the last will supersedes all other wills, so the New Testament supersedes the Old, and only the New is law to govern God's people today. Turn with me to Heb. 10:9-10 "[9] Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first (Will, he is discussing the two wills), that he may establish the second. [10]By the which will (the second or the New Testament) we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This should satisfy every reasoning being that the New Testament is the one which we must obey to have divine assurance of going to heaven. Matt. 7:21 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter in to the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

We do the will of God when we obey the commands contained in that will. Heb. 10:10 says we are sanctified by the second will. The Saviour in John 17:17 asks God to sanctify the disciples through the Truth. The New Testament is called Truth, John 1:17 "For the law was given by Moses, But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." But we must Obey the commands contained in the truth that was given us by Jesus Christ if we are to be pure or sanctified. 1 Pet. 1:22 "Seeing ye have purified your souls in Obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

We may pause here to consider who can Do the Will of God. Only persons who can be taught to understand the commands of that will. Can infants? We all know they can not reason with God while they are infants. What then will become of them if they die in their infancy? Let Christ answer. Matt. 18:3 "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." When grown persons are converted (changed) and become as little children they are fit for the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 19:14 "...for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Some of our friends say that all children are sinners. Let us reason a little. If all children are sinners then the Saviour's statement in Matt. 18:3 would mean this, "Except ye be converted and become as Sinners (if children are sinners) ye can not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Little children are Safe until they are old enough to know right from wrong as revealed in the New Testament, then they are accountable and need

to do God's will.

What things must the responsible person do in order to have God's promise of heaven? Matt. 28:18-20 "[18]And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." What were they to teach and why were they to teach it? Mk. 16:16 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." So we are to preach the gospel. We are to preach it to create faith. Rom. 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." We can believe evidence concerning facts. The facts of Christ's life are recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They are recorded so that persons who read may believe. John 20:31 "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Faith

Without faith we can do nothing that will please God. Heb. 11:6 "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." But faith alone will not save. James 2:19-20 "[19] Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. [20] But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" Ver. 24 "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Also whatsoever we do in our religious work; if it is not of faith, it is wrong. Rom. 14:23 " . . . for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." But some one may say that only includes the eating of meats. Not so. It is true that Paul was discussing the eating of meat. He said that if a man eats meat when he doubts that eating meat is right then he is damned. Why? Because WHATSOEVER is not of faith is sin. And if eating meat is not of faith it is included in the WHATSOEVER and therefore is a sin. But how does faith come? Rom. 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." What part of the word of God produces our faith? The Old Testament or the New? That which came through the teachings of Christ. Heb. 12:2 "Looking unto Jesus the Author and the Finisher of our faith." Faith is contrasted with the Law in Gal 3:23 -26 "[23] But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. [24] Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. [25] But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. [26] For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Now one more scripture to show that God does not instruct us how to be saved by the Old Testament. Heb 1:12 "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

As all the faith that we have concerning the plan of salvation is based upon the teachings of the New Testament, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin; therefore whatsoever is not taught in the New Testament is wrong for all professed followers of Christ to do. We will go farther into this point later on in considering another scripture.

Repentance

What is repentance? Matt. 21:28-29 "[28] But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. [29] He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went." He changed his mind and went. Repentance is a change of mind. It will lead to a change of life. Is it necessary? Hear Paul, Acts 17:30 "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." If a man has lived only for the pleasures of this life, and through the reading or the hearing the gospel changes his mind about what he will live for, he has repented. If he follows that repentance through life he will live for eternal things and not only for those which are temporal.

Confession

A confession of faith in Christ is as necessary as faith itself. Matt. 10:32 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven."

How is this confession made? Rom. 10:10 "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

What is the confession that is to be made? Ver. 9 of this same chapter tells what is to be confessed. "That if thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Where do we have an example of making that confession? Acts 8:35-38 "[35] Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. [36] And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? [37] And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. [38] And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

In this short scripture we have briefly stated the whole work of making a Christian of an individual. The first thing was to preach Jesus to the man to create faith. After he heard the preaching he changed his mind (repented) about how he would live from then on. Then he confessed his faith in Christ and was baptized. He went on his way rejoicing because he had become saved.

Baptism

Baptism is the last step to be taken to become a new man in Christ.

It is as necessary as faith or repentance. The Bible teaches all that we need to know about it.

Who is subject to baptism? Not people who are not capable of believing. Mk. 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Faith, repentance and confession are steps toward salvation and come before baptism. Baptism is the last step and puts one where there is salvation. Webster says the word Unto or To means toward a state or condition. Now note these passages of scripture: Rom. 10:10 "For with the heart men believeth UNTO righteousness and with the mouth confession is made UNTO salvation." 2 Cor. 7:10 "For godly sorrow worketh repentance TO

salvation not to be repented of..." A man then Believes toward righteousness. He Repents toward salvation. He confesses toward salvation but is not yet saved.

Baptism is the step that puts one into the place where salvation is. Gal. 3:27 "For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ have put on Christ." Here the Holy Spirit did not use the word Unto as indicating that baptism was a step Toward Christ but the word INTO showing that when a person is baptized he is completely in Christ. Now if Christ is where salvation is, then we are saved when we are in him. Turn to Col. 1:13-14 "[13] Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: [14] In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:" If we have forgiveness of sins in Christ, and if baptism puts us into Christ, then we have forgiveness of sins when we are baptized.

That is why the Holy Spirit speaking through the inspired preacher as recorded in Acts 22:16 said, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and he baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." That baptism does save and that it is water baptism is evident from this scripture; 1 Pet. 3:20-21 "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by Water. 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."

Now this teaches that eight souls were saved by WATER. And that this salvation by water was a figure of the baptism that now saves us. So we are compelled to conclude that it is water baptism. But some say that this scripture teaches that we have a GOOD conscience before baptism. It says the answer of a good conscience is baptism. Before we have an answer we always have a QUESTION. The word OF often means CONCERNING. A history OF the US is a history CONCERNING the US. Then baptism is the answer concerning a good conscience. The question of a good conscience was asked on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2:37. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, (their conscience hurt them and they wished to clear it) and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" There was the QUESTION. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Repentance and baptism were included in the ANSWER. So Peter said baptism was the answer of a good conscience toward God.

How is that baptism administered? Paul calls it a BURIAL. Rom. 6:4 "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It requires Much water. John 3:23 "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem because there was much water there." It requires a going down into the water. Acts 8:38 " . . . and they went down both into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." When Christ was baptized he went into the water and came up out of it. Matt. 3:16 "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

Baptism is not a pure English word but is a changed form of the Greek word baptizo. Wherever the word is translated from the Greek it is translated: dip, plunge, immerse, bathe, or dye as to dye clothe by dipping it in colored water. In the Living Oracles translation of the New Testament

and in the Emphatic Diaglott which gives both the Greek text and the literal translation, the word immerse is used instead of baptize. If Christ had wanted us to be sprinkled he would have used the Greek word Rhantidso.

Paul says in Eph. 4:5 "There is one baptism." He says in Rom. 6:4 that it is a burial. Are we satisfied with what the word of God says on the question, or would we rather take the doctrine of men? The worship that is in accord with the doctrine of men will be in vain and will not give us eternal happiness. Matt 15:9 "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The Church

We come now to the question of the church. Is it necessary to be a member of a church to have the divine promise of going to heaven? If it is necessary, which church is the right one? In the second chapter of Acts we have a record where three thousand who were baptized were added to the church. Ver. 47 "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." This one verse proves that those that should be saved were added to the church. Then if those that should be saved were added to the church those that were not added to the church should not be saved. It proves that the divine recorder considered church membership necessary to a promise of salvation.

Which church is the one to which the Lord added the saved? It had to be in existence at that time or the Lord could not have added the three thousand to it. Then any church that came into existence hundreds of years after that time could not be the right one. But says some one, "Are not all the churches right?" I am writing this article for those who profess to believe that the Bible is God's word. Then to the Bible we must turn to find if more than one church is taught therein. Turn to Eph. 4:4 "There is one Body and one spirit." Eph. 1:22-23 "[22] And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, [23] Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." 1 Cor. 12:27 "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." These three references teach One Body; that body is the Church and it is the Body (church) of Christ.

In Matt. 16:18 the Saviour said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." It is Christ's church; the one he purchased with his blood. See Acts 20:28. Is it right to call it by any other name than the one used in the book? Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

But some one says, Are we not all going to heaven, but traveling different ways? Let us appeal to God's will. John 14:5-6 "[5] Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? [6] Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

The writer wishes that all mankind would be saved; but believing the Bible is God's revelation to man I dare not teach differently from what it teaches on any Bible subject.

How may persons today know which is the right church? If you were looking for an individual of whom you had a perfect description and knew his name how would you know when you had found him? You certainly would not accept a person as the proper one who did not have the right name and was not exactly like the description. The Bible describes the Church of Christ perfectly. It gives its organization. It gives its name. It tells everything it taught and practiced. When you have found a church that has the same organization the New Testament Church had, and teaches and practices as the New Testament church taught and practiced, that church is the Church of Christ.

Any church that does not meet these requirements has no right to claim it is the Church of Christ.

The early church had only two sets of officers; bishops and deacons.

The Evangelist was not an officer but was a general preacher who had charge of a congregation until officers were chosen.

Now let us consider what the early church taught and practiced in its work and worship. Acts 2:42 "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer" Here are four acts of worship or work that it says they did stedfastly and continuously. The apostles' doctrine was the teaching of what the Holy Spirit taught to the apostles. That teaching is recorded in the New Testament and when we meet and teach the same teaching we are doing as the early Christians did. The fellowship was the partnership in the work and embraced the raising and disbursing financial aid. The contribution was upon the first day of the week and was a free will offering according as they had been prospered. 1 Cor. 16,1:2 "[1] Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. [2] Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." They never asked support from any one but the members gave as they were able.

The "Breaking of bread" was the communion or partaking of the Lord's supper. Read carefully 1 Cor. 11:23-29. This too was on the first day of the week. Acts 20:7 "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight."

Then another part of their worship as taught in the verse which we have been concerning was prayer.

In the Holy Spirit's instructions to the church at Ephesus we read; Eph. 5:17-19 "[17] Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. [18] And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; [19] Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

No matter how much you may search the New Testament, you will not find that the early Christians did more than these five things in the worship; teaching, praying, singing, having the communion and giving of the means to help the poor. Can we do more than these and still be true disciples of Christ?

Hear Christ in John 8:31 "Then said Jesus unto those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." If in our work or worship we do more than Christ's word teaches, we do not continue in his word and we would not be his true disciples. But many other scriptures teach the same fact. 2 John 1, Ver. 9 "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." The doctrine of Christ is contained in the New Testament.

Transgress is a combination of two Latin words; Trans - 'beyond' and Gressus - 'to go'. When we do what is not taught in the teachings of Christ we have gone beyond them and do not have God. Is it safe to not have God?

Let us consider another scripture. Col. 3:17 "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him." This is a divine command and is a part of the "Will of the Father," which Christ says we must do if we would enter into the kingdom of heaven. See Matt. 7:21. "In word," would be in what we teach. "In

deed," would be what we practice.

Then whatever we TEACH or PRACTICE we must do it in the name of Christ. Webster defined, "In the name of," as meaning, "By the authority of." Then if we do that which Christ has not Authorized we disobey a direct command of God's will. There are only two ways anything may be authorized: either by PRECEPT or EXAMPLE. If Christ or his apostles did not teach a thing, we can not teach it by his authority. If they did not practice a thing, we can not DO it by his authority.

Let us notice two other scriptures in their proper connection: Rom. 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Also Rom. 14:23 "... for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Our conclusion from these two scriptures has to be: whatsoever we can not read in God's last will is a sin for us to do in our Work or Worship. Friends, many things practiced in the many churches today are without divine authority. They are the result of men's opinions, and the worship of those who follow men's teachings will not take them to heaven. Hear the Saviour, Matt. 15:9 "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Friend, will your worship be in vain? Many popular things in the churches today are not authorized in the last Will of God. The Church of Christ in the time of the Apostles never worked through human societies or used instrumental music in the worship. And the real Church of Christ today is the same as it was then. It could not be the Church of Christ if it did not do as they did in the time of the Apostles.

Around the 1880's some members of the Church of Christ, not being satisfied with the simple New Testament worship, and desiring to be more like their religious neighbors, introduced instrumental music into THEIR worship and organized societies to aid in religious work. They were generally known as the "Christian Church." Quite recently some of them came back to the NAME Church of Christ but still retain practices of the Christian Church. Naturally when they give up the practices that made them the Christian Church, they will again become the Church of Christ.

But they could not possibly be the Church of Christ while practicing that which the Church of Christ did not practice in the time of the apostles.

Some may wonder if the Church of Christ is the only one that does not use instrumental music in its worship.

The Greek Catholic church, with about one hundred million members, has never adopted its use. The reformed Presbyterian church is opposed to it.

God himself pronounces a woe against them who use it. Read Amos 6th chapter to the fifth verse "Woe to them . . . that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick like David."

Friend if you will take the trouble to study the history of instrumental music in the worship you will find that practically every church of today, excepting those not yet a hundred years old, at one time worshiped without it. John Wesley the founder of the Methodist church opposed it. Adam Clark the greatest scholar of the M.E. church ever had wrote against it.

The teachings of Christ and his apostles do not sanction it. And if we add to their teachings, God will add to us the plagues mentioned in his word. Rev. 22:18 "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."