

# *The Keys Of The Kingdom*

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***Editor: J.F. Miller***

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## ***Our Writing Staff***



**Jim Miller**

Jim Miller: Preacher at the Gray, church of Christ semi-retired, publisher, writer, editor. A member of the Lords church since 1985. Preached in NC, TN, Ky, and Maine. Two years Co-hosting Bible Talk Radio. Owner of Keys Of The Kingdom magazine and website.



**Tim Bench**

Tim Bench: Member at Hillcrest Church of Christ, Abilene TX. 1990 graduate of Abilene Christian University. Speaker, teacher at numerous churches in and around Abilene and West Texas.



**John Maybrey**

John P. Mabrey: Preacher at the Hilham Church of Christ, Hilham, TN since July 2007. Has been a guest of the Gospel Broadcasting Network (GBN) "Bible Round Table." Attended Freed Hardeman University for two years.



**Eric Farrior**

Eric Farrior: Gospel Preacher for the church of Christ in Freeport, Florida for the past 3 years. I have one daughter, Jaeda. It is my privilege to preach and teach the word of God in Freeport and have various other opportunities to do so through the use of the internet.



**Scott Crawford**

Scott Crawford: Currently a member at the Roebuck Parkway church of Christ in Birmingham, AL; preaching part-time for the Montevallo church of Christ in Montevallo, AL. Married to Kathy L. (Joynes) Crawford of Elkton, KY for 25 years with 2 children: Attended Harding University from '85 to '89 with concentrations in Psychology, Music, Bible Studies. Currently working on a Master's Degree in Theology through the Trinity Collage of the Bible and Theological Seminary.



**Doug Post**

Doug Post: Has been in full time ministry for 15 years, preaching in Indiana and Connecticut. Received his BA in Communications, UCONN; MA in Biblical Studies, Southern Christian University; New Testament Theology and New Testament Greek, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Theological University of America. Doug is married to Debbie, his wife of 22 years.

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# Voices From The Past

## The Man and the Plan

P.J. Casebolt  
Paden City, West Virginia

Several years ago, a fellow preacher told me of an incident in which he had been involved. He went to preach for a rural congregation one Lord's day, and while there he preached that an individual did not need to know why he was being baptized, only that the Lord had commanded it. The preacher could not understand why the brethren "took him to task" for this statement.

First, I told him that I thought the brethren had done right. Then, I asked him how a person could know that Christ had commanded baptism without knowing the purpose of baptism, since the same passage (or passages) of Scripture which taught one fact also taught the other. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38.) He said he hadn't thought much about that. Next, I asked him where he received his theory, and he replied that while in college his professor (also a brother in Christ and a preacher) had taught it in a Bible class.

Recently, from the same area where this young preacher attended college, the theory has been advanced that people are not saved by "a plan" but rather by "a man." Or, to put it another way, we should preach Jesus (the man) and quit preaching repentance and baptism (the plan). Now, I understand why the young preacher preached what he did. He had preached his version (as he understood it) of "the man and the plan" theory.

Actually, the idea that we are saved by the man (Jesus) and not by a plan (obedience to specific commands) is just another version of salvation by "faith only." If we have faith in Christ, we will be moved to obey his commands. (Lk. 6:46; Jno. 14:15, 23.) Also, if we are to obey commands from the heart, we must have faith in the one who gave the commands.

We always seem to go back to Acts 2, and that is good, for "repentance and remission of sins" (the plan) was to be preached in Christ's name (the man) beginning at Jerusalem (Lk. 6:46-49). Here we have apostolic guidance in what it takes to save people. Let us see what happened.

First, we are told that the apostles received the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-2-), and Jesus had already promised them that he (the Spirit) would guide them into all truth (Jno. 16: 13). Next, Peter preached Christ and him crucified (the man) by declaring that God had raised the crucified Christ to sit on David's throne (w. 22-36). These facts caused the people to ask: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (v. 37.) It was then that Peter gave the plan: "Repent, and be baptized . . ." (v. 38.) Three thousand who believed in the man Jesus obeyed the plan. (v. 41.) Then they continued in the plan that would assure them continued favor in the Lord's eyes. (v. 42.)

Evidently, the Lord thought this was the way the gospel should be preached and obeyed, for he endorsed (bound, Mt. 16:19) this procedure by adding to the church those who were being saved. (v. 47.) If preachers preach anything other than that preached by the apostles, they will be "accursed" (Gal. 1:8,9). If people refuse to obey the gospel preached by the apostles, they will be lost (2 Thess. 2:7-9). I would rather hear a man call me a "legalist" because I obey the letter of the law than to hear Christ say: "Depart." I would rather abide in the doctrine of Christ and have the praise of God, than to transgress the doctrine of Christ and have the praise of men (2 Jno. 9-11; Jno. 12:42,43). I'm sure that you would too.

December 1965

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# *The Congregation*

**Jim Miller**

Gray, Maine

The first thing we need to clarify is that the congregation is **YOU**. The church the assembly the congregation is made up of individuals. Most of the work Christians are commanded to do is individual work.

In New Testament we find no other organization through which members can work other than that of the local congregation. Most of the work of a Christian is, and rightly ought to be, individual work.

Like the deacons we are to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Often times there are those in the hospital that need encouragement their families may need help with meals or even child care. Of course we are all under the great commission to preach and teach the gospel it all creation. Congregations are made up of individuals, and the whole congregation is benefited by the work of its members.

In all actuality there is little for the congregation to do as a whole other than assemble for worship and study. The real power you might say is the work of the individual outside the assembly. We need to understand individual responsibility to God is one thing that is emphasized in the New Testament.

Far too often congregations do absolutely nothing more than what you might call "house keeping." Members faithfully attend public worship services, and engage in all the proper acts of worship, and then go home "till the next time they meet." When these members are asked why the congregation is not growing, they blame everything but themselves. We can not simply say to the world "Here is the gospel come and get it our doors are open." When do this we only give lip service to the Lord and when others do not show up for worship services, we can not somehow feel that our duty has been discharged

simply because we open the building doors. Jesus said, "Go into all the world." He did not say, "Invite the world and if they don't come, you are excused." Our responsibility is to take the gospel out of the building to the world around us. It is called evangelism.

I have always thought that "the gospel meeting" was designed to win the lost to Christ. Today we seem to meticulously schedule these meetings so that they will not be in conflict with other meetings in the area or with secular events like ball games or premiers of new movies and the like. My question is (Why?) Is it because we think those in the world will not come if other meetings are being conducted the same time or that some worldly event will overshadow it?

Today it seems our meetings are only filled with those from near by congregation and this should not be. The gospel meeting is meant to draw the lost not the saved. So here is another work for the congregation go out bring those in the world into the tent help them realize their lost condition and give them hope through Christ. Have forgotten our primary purpose in having a "gospel meeting?"

Numerous passages can be cited on the way God's people work. A study of the scriptures reveal that the greatest portion of God's intended work for the Christian is to come from the individual doing their personal work. No one can do this work for us. The local church can only do so much as a whole and it can not relieve us of the personal responsibility we have to the Lord. Please pay close attention to the following verses.

*"Every tree is known by his own fruit" (Lk. 6:44), and "every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away" (Jn. 15:2). "Let every man prove his own work, . . . for every man shall bear his own burden" (Gal.4:5). The burden of doing the works of God is upon every Christian. Paul "exhorted and comforted and charged every one" of the Thessalonians how to "walk worthy of God" (1 Thess. 2:11). To the Colossians he was "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom,, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28). Why? Because every man must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10) to give account of himself to God (Rom. 14:12) who shall judge "according to every man's work" (1 Pet. 1: 17; Rev. 20:12-13),*

*rewarding them accordingly (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6).*

The question now is answered the Christian must be involved personally in God's work. It is a must! When and if we **fail** to do the work required of us on a personal basis it is a disastrous situation (Matt. 25:4, 18, 45-46), ignorance of this work is unacceptable. God ordained the works and he has made them known to us (Eph. 2:10; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

*All scripture quoted is from the KJV unless other wise stated.*

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Contact me at [jfmiller61@gmail.com](mailto:jfmiller61@gmail.com)

# Outline of the Book of Romans

Eric Farrior  
Freeport, Florida

I recently finished preaching the book of Romans verse by verse in expository lessons. The book of Romans is one often misunderstood by folks. This is unfortunate because the book of Romans is not written in “parabolic form” as the Lord often taught (cf. Mt. 13:34-35). Neither is it written in apocalyptic language as the book of Revelation was—No, indeed this was “plain teaching” (Jn. 16:25)! The reason many folks misunderstand this book is because of “eisegesis”, which Merriam-Webster defines as “the interpretation of a text (as of the Bible) by reading into it one's own ideas”.

You see, they read into the text ideas that are not actually taught (faith only, grace only, Paul's alleged conflict with James, etc) because of their preconceived notions. Rather than objectively study for themselves, they rely upon “what Mama believed” or “what the pastor teaches”! Folks, neither Mama nor the pastor can get you to heaven, you have an obligation to study for yourself! This series of articles is designed to help the reader understand the teaching of the book of Romans. While each verse was covered in the sermon series; the main points of the chapters will be touched on, rather than each individual verse. It needs to be understood that these articles are NOT authoritative in and of themselves, rather are prepared so that you may read them and compare the teaching to scripture (Acts 17:11, 1 Thes. 5:21)!

Paul opens the books and closes it with one concept: “*obedience to the faith*” (1:5) and “*the obedience of faith*” (16:26). It truly baffles me that any bible student can come to the conclusion that Paul advocated some kind of “faith only” nonsense! The concept of obedient faith is one that permeates the book of Romans and it MUST be understood that any mentioning of “faith” in an approved sense must be done with the verses mentioned immediately above! The faith that saves is the faith that obeys (cf. Jms. 2:18-26)!

The entire book is themed in Rom. 1:16-17. The gospel of Jesus is God's exclusive means of saving man! No man walking this earth will be saved any other way! It is through the gospel that God makes man “righteous” (v17), this is so because obedience to the gospel is the means by which God forgives man of

his sins (Acts 2:38, 41,47). Notice the difference between the “*righteousness of God*” (v17) and the “*wrath of God*” (v18). Man brings upon himself the wrath of God because of his own sins (cf. 3:23, 6:23); yet God makes man righteous when he submits to Him in the obedience of faith!

We can all learn a lot from the remaining verses in this chapter. Specifically, we ought to learn that when man is left to his own devices, he will serve himself and likely indulge himself in every desire of his deceitful heart! (cf. vv. 21-31, Jer. 17:9). This chapter closes with an important principle for us to understand. Not just those who engage in such wickedness are guilty; but also those who APPROVE of them doing such (v32)! Hello, America; this ought to get your attention when the masses approve of killing babies and homosexuality; yet God said long ago “*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil*” (Is. 5:20a). The majority vote will not change the truth of this matter, for inspiration said this long ago: *For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven* (Ps. 119:89).

Chapter 2 speaks primarily of the nation of Israel and the fact that by and large, they stood guilty before God because of their own failure to keep the law given to them! v13 illustrates this quite plainly. How sad it was indeed for those who “rested in the law” but did not “keep the law”! (Rom. 2:17, cf. Mt. 23:3). They “know”, “are confident” and “were instructors” of the law, yet never really learned it themselves (vv. 18-22)! They boasted in a law that they did not even keep, thus giving those outside of that covenant reason to blaspheme (vv. 23-24). This brings Paul to the reasonable conclusion that mere “ritual” did not make one approved of by God, but the inward motivation to serve and love the Lord; that is a “*faith which worketh by love*” (Gal. 5:6) pleases God.

Chapter 3 basically sums up Paul’s argument over the previous 2 chapters. Namely that all stand condemned before God based upon their own power (vv. 9-10). There has never been a man that lived without any law (rule of action) from God (cf. Gen. 2:16-17, 22:1, et al.); therefore, every man (based upon his own “merits”) stands guilty before God, for all accountable men either give into temptation (Jms. 1:13ff) or fail to do right (disobedience to God is a sin! cf. Jer. 18:10) at some point. This is Paul’s point in Rom. 3:19, that every man has lived under law, whether it be “patriarchal” or “Mosaic”, and that every man has to answer for his actions in contrast to the law under which he lived. *By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight* (v20). It is very likely that this verse (as well as most of the other verses in the book of Romans) that use the phrase “the law” is speaking specifically of the law of Moses. Paul has the exact same sentiment in Gal. 3:11 (A major theme of the book of Romans, after all, is

the superiority of the gospel of Jesus to the law of Moses!). Notice that there is a stark contrast between the “righteousness of God” and “the law” (vv. 21-22). Now, do not assume that the “righteousness of God” is void of any law, as some liberals claim, rather understand that the way that God makes man righteous is through the gospel of Jesus, a LAW of liberty (from sin! cf. Jms. 1:25). The law of Moses was a standard that should have taught those under it to look for the “mercy” and “rest” from the one that could save them (Mt. 11:28, Gal. 3:24)! It is of some importance as well to remember that the phrase “righteousness of God” or similar is basically a reference to the gospel of Christ in the book of Romans. The use of the phrase in this verse proves this point. The gospel of Jesus was witnessed by the law and prophets (cf. Deut. 18, Is. 2, Jer. 31, Mic. 4, et al.). It is “apart from the law”; that is, it is distinct from it (cf. Heb. 8:8-13). Jesus’ blood was the blood of the New Covenant (Mt. 26:28, 13:20). Jesus could not have been a priest under the Law of Moses (Heb. 7:12-14) and since the priesthood changed, the law had to change (Heb. 7:12)! This phrase means the exact same thing here as it did in chapter 1:16-17! This “righteousness of God” is “by the faith of Jesus” (the definite article is in the greek here- cf. YLT). That is the system of faith established by Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 2:16). The latter part of v22 is parallel to Rom. 1:17 in the scope of WHO is amenable to it.

The gospel is for every man; whether jew or greek. It is a good thing that the gospel is for all, since all sin (v23)! What is the result of obedience to the gospel? *“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (v24). It is worthy to notice a few things regarding this verse:

#1- The gospel “justifies” man (this means that man is “just as I’ve never sinned” because man is forgiven of sin, Rom. 5:1, cf. Mt. 26:28, Acts 22:16)

#2- The system by which man is justified is said to be “free” in way of contrast to “earning it” (cf. Rom. 4:4). This does NOT mean that nothing is required of man, however, for man’s obedience to truth directly correlates to him being made “free from sin” (Rom. 6:16-18)!

#3- His grace, as it pertains to redemption, is found only in one place: IN CHRIST! Folks, there is only one way to get “into Christ” and that is baptism for the remission of sins (Rom. 6:3-5, Gal. 3:26-29, cf. Lk. 24:47, Acts 2:38)

#4- These glorious spiritual blessings are found only “In Christ”. (Eph. 1:3-7) Verse 25 teaches that Jesus Christ is the “propitiation” for our sins. In the

Septuagint, the greek translation of the Old Testament, the word for the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant was a very similar word that we see here as “propitiation”. It means that Jesus is the means by which atonement is made for man (Rom. 5:11). He is our appeasement (1 Jn. 2:1-2). He is the “how” that man can be reconciled to God (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17-21).

I believe that the teaching of v26 is vital to a proper understanding of God and unfortunately our denominational friends have missed it! This verse teaches that God CAN only justify certain folks. God can only justify those who “have faith in Jesus” (ASV). What kind of faith you ask? I will send you back to Romans 1:5 and forward to Romans 16:26 to see that this required faith is an obedient faith! Since God is “just”, He will not “acquit the wicked” (Nah. 1:3), but will punish the rebellious with “everlasting destruction” (2 Thes. 1:7-9). Thus, it is not wrong to take God at His word, we know He cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and He will only justify those who “do the will of the Lord from the heart” (Eph. 6:6).

Verse 27 continues to emphasize the vital element for man to be justified: faith! Man is not justified by the “works of the law” but “by the law of faith”! As was noted earlier, there has never been a man that has not lived under law. There has never been a man that has been justified without expressing faith in God by obedience to the law under which he lived (Deut. 10:12, Hab. 2:4, Heb. 10:38)! Regardless of what law man lived under, if he was just in the sight of God, he lived by “the law of faith”! Thus the argument of v28: Man is justified by faith, not by works of the law (of Moses). To be “justified by faith” (v28) = abiding by “the law of faith” (v27b) These are some of the most potent arguments for an active, obedient faith that inspiration provides and Paul is about to give you a great example of this “obedience of faith” in the next chapter with the Patriarch Abraham!

(All scripture from the KJV unless otherwise noted)

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## Nero (Part 4)

**Tim Bench**

Abilene, Texas

It would be the Great Fire of Rome which would reveal him as not only a monster in terms of generally-accepted morality, but as perhaps the ultimate earthly nemesis of Christianity.

On the morning of July 19<sup>th</sup>, 64 AD, a fire erupted in the shops (filled with “merchandise of a combustible nature”, as per Tacitus) in Rome near the famous Circus Maximus. Strong winds fanned the flames and the fire quickly spread and became deadly, engulfing the Circus and moving across Rome and the nearby hills. Rome was home to some one million people and some 7000 vigiles (or firemen) and citizens were unable to check the progress of the fire, which would rage for 6 days and burn to the ground 3 of the 14 districts of Rome and heavily damage 7 other districts. Buildings destroyed included the Temple of Jupiter Slatoor, The Temple of the Vestal Virgins, the Domus Transitoria, and perhaps most importantly, Nero’s palace. Fires were relatively common (the city would suffer likewise from large fires in 69 AD and 80 AD) but the 64 AD fire would be the one most remembered.

Always theatrical 17, both Suetonius and Cassius Dio claim that Nero sang the “Sack of Ilium” in full stage costume while the city burned. Nero had particular obsessions with the arts and his own musical “abilities” ....15 thus, legend has it that Nero was playing a fiddle at the time of the fire (hence the term “fiddling while Rome burned”), while Nero was indeed known for playing a lyre, not a fiddle, during his performances.16

“Nero had the wish---or rather it had always been a fixed purpose of his---to make an end of the whole city in his lifetime. Priam he deemed wonderfully happy in that he had seen Troy perish at the same moment his authority over her ended. Accordingly, Nero sent out by different ways men feigning to be drunk, or engaged in some kind of mischief, and at first had a few fires kindled quietly and in different quarters; people, naturally, were thrown into extreme confusion, not being able to find either the cause of the trouble nor to end it; and meantime met with many strange sights and sounds. They ran about as if

distracted, and some rushed one way, some another. In the midst of helping their neighbors, men would learn that their own homes were blazing. Others learned, for the first time, that their property was on fire, by being told it was burned down. People would run from their houses into the lanes, with a hope of helping from the outside, or again would rush into the houses from the streets seeming to imagine they could do something from the inside. The shouting and screaming of children, women, men, and gray beards mingled together unceasingly; and betwixt the combined smoke and shouting no one could make out anything.

All this time many who were carrying away their own goods, and many more who were stealing what belonged to others kept encountering one another and falling over the merchandise. It was impossible to get anywhere; equally impossible to stand still. Men thrust, and were thrust back, upset others, and were upset themselves, many were suffocated or crushed; in short, no possible calamity at such a disaster failed to befall.

This state of things lasted not one day, but several days and nights running. Many houses were destroyed through lack of defenders; and many were actually fired in more places by professed rescuers. For the soldiers (including the night watch) with a keen eye for plunder, instead of quenching the conflagration, kindled it the more. While similar scenes were taking place at various points, a sudden wind caught the fire and swept it over what remained. As a result nobody troubled longer about goods or homes, but all the survivors, from a place of safety, gazed on what appeared to be many islands and cities in flames. No longer was there any grief for private loss, public lamentation swallowed up this---as men reminded each other how once before the bulk of the city had been even thus laid desolate by the Gauls.

While the whole people was in this state of excitement, and many driven mad by calamity were leaping into the blaze, Nero mounted upon the roof of the palace, where almost the whole conflagration was commanded by a sweeping glance, put on the professional harpist's garb, and sang "The Taking of Troy" (so he asserted), although to common minds, it seemed to be "The Taking of Rome".

From Dio Cassius on Nero and the Great Fire 64 A.D., Roman History, 62.16-18.

“...It began in the Circus, where it adjoins the Palatine and Caelian hills. Breaking out in shops selling inflammable goods, and fanned by the wind, the

conflagration instantly grew and swept the whole length of the Circus. There were no walled mansions or temples, or any other obstructions, which could arrest it. First, the fire swept violently over the level spaces. Then it climbed the hills - but returned to ravage the lower ground again. It outstripped every counter-measure. The ancient city's narrow winding streets and irregular blocks encouraged its progress.

Terrified, shrieking women, helpless old and young, people intent on their own safety, people unselfishly supporting invalids or waiting for them, fugitives and lingerers alike - all heightened the confusion. When people looked back, menacing flames sprang up before them or outflanked them. When they escaped to a neighboring quarter, the fire followed - even districts believed remote proved to be involved.

Finally, with no idea where or what to flee, they crowded on to the country roads, or lay in the fields. Some who had lost everything - even their food for the day - could have escaped, but preferred to die. So did others, who had failed to rescue their loved ones. Nobody dared fight the flames. Attempts to do so were prevented by menacing gangs. Torches, too, were openly thrown in, by men crying that they acted under orders. Perhaps they had received orders. Or they may just have wanted to plunder unhampered...".

From Annals, Tacitus, see "The Burning of Rome, 64 AD" at [www.eyewitnesstohistory.com](http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com).

"In the year 64 A.D., a devastating fire occurred in Rome. The Emperor, who was at Antium, on learning of the conflagration, returned to the city and undertook relief measures. He threw open his gardens and public buildings to the dispossessed populace and brought in grain from the neighboring towns. But, according to Tacitus, "his measures, popular as their character might be, failed of their effect; for the report had spread that, at the very moment when Rome was aflame, he had mounted his private stage, and, typifying the ills of the present by the calamities of the past, had sung the Destruction of Troy."

Suetonius, writing at almost the same time, tells the story as if it were a fact, changing the details as follows: "Viewing the conflagration from the tower of Maecenas ... he sang the whole of the Sack of Ilium in his regular stage

costume."

from "'Nero Fiddled While Rome Burned" by Mary Francis Gyles.

“Among other diabolical whims, he ordered that the city of Rome should be set on fire, which order was executed by his officers, guards, and servants. While the imperial city was in flames, he went up to the tower of Macaenas, played upon his harp, sung the song of the burning of Troy, and openly declared that 'he wished the ruin of all things before his death.' Besides the noble pile, called the Circus, many other palaces and houses were consumed; several thousands perished in the flames, were smothered in the smoke, or buried beneath the ruins.

This dreadful conflagration continued nine days; when Nero, finding that his conduct was greatly blamed, and a severe odium cast upon him, determined to lay the whole upon the Christians, at once to excuse himself, and have an opportunity of glutting his sight with new cruelties. This was the occasion of the first persecution; and the barbarities exercised on the Christians were such as even excited the commiseration of the Romans themselves.”

From “The First Persecution, under Nero, AD 67” at [www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com).

As per Tacitus, Nero was in Antium during the disaster and rushed back to Rome to organize and coordinate a relief effort for those now homeless, hungry, and desperate, and in fact opened his own palaces to provide food and shelter. Nero also unveiled a new “development plan”, with houses spaced out and built by brick, and more importantly, a 30 foot statue of himself to be known as the “Colossus of Nero” (or “Colossus Neronis”). His philanthropic interests in his citizenry would not last long, however.

According to Tacitus, rumors began to fly around the city that Nero himself had been responsible for the fire, in an effort to enact his own buildings and tributes to himself. Nero would react by ordering the wholesale tortures, throwing to wild dogs, crucifixions, and deaths of Christians...

“Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our

procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judæa, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.

Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired”.

From Tacitus, “Annals”, 15.44.

*We will continue with part Five next month.....*

## SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

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# A PRIMER ON THE MEANING OF *FAITH*

Dub McClish

## Introduction

There is hardly a more important subject for mankind to contemplate—and understand—than that of faith. It is a subject (and word) that men widely abuse and misuse. This misunderstanding is especially evident in faith’s relationship to obedience, salvation, and knowledge. The subject of faith is so basic that if one goes astray on it, he will do so to his own eternal condemnation.

### The Place of Faith in the Christian System

Faith is fundamental and basic to the religion of Christ—the beginning point of man’s approach to Deity: “And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him” (Heb. 11:6). Jesus said: “Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:34). Faith is therefore the beginning point of man’s response to God’s message: “He that believeth [i.e., the Gospel, v. 15] and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16).

*Faith* and *belief* are so much the basic response God requires that one or the other is often used as a synecdoche (i.e., a part representing the whole) for all that one must do to be reconciled to God. *Repentance* (Acts 17:30), *confession* (of one’s faith) (Rom. 10:9–10), and *baptism* (1 Pet. 3:21) are all used in the same way.

Advocates of salvation by “faith only” notoriously misapply John 3:16 in an effort to advance their heresy. If this statement includes **only** intellectual

acceptance of the Christ, it excludes all else (e.g., repentance and confession, and a life of faithfulness, as well as baptism—which “faith only” adherents so despise).

Many passages teach salvation by faith, but none by faith **alone**. *Believeth* in John 3:16 simply stands for all that man must do to be saved eternally, for all such conditions are expressions of faith, even as rejection of any of them is a demonstration of unbelief. The report of Paul and Barnabas at the conclusion of their first preaching trip (Acts 14:27) provides an additional illustration of this use of *faith*.

Further, when the jailer in Philippi asked Paul and Silas what he should do to be saved, they first told him, “Believe on the Lord Jesus” (Acts 16:31). A bit more reading reveals that they (1) taught the jailer and his family the Gospel (v. 32), upon which he (2) manifested his repentance by washing their stripes (v. 33a), and was immediately baptized, though it was past midnight (vv. 25, 33b). Only then does Luke describe them as “having believed in God” (v. 34).

Numerous other passages use faith and/or belief to refer to what men had done to be saved and added to the church, all of which conditions are subsumed under one or the other of these words (e.g., Acts 10:45; 13:12; 15:5; 17:12; et al.).

After Pentecost inspired men consistently use *believer* and *them that believe* in reference to those who had **obeyed** the Gospel, had been added to the church, and thereby had become disciples, Christians, brethren, saints, children of God (e.g., Acts 5:14; 1 Cor. 14:22; 1 The. 1:7; 2:10, 13; 1 Tim. 4:12; 6:2; et al.). All such usages of *faith* and *belief* are examples of “subjective” faith—that which comes from within men as they react to the Father, to Christ, and, to the Holy Spirit through the Gospel.

The New Testament often refers to the Gospel as “the faith” in an objective sense. When so used, *the faith* refers to that whole body of doctrine in which men must invest their faith. Note the following illustrations of this meaning (emph. DM):

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to **the faith** (Acts 6:7).

Confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in **the faith**, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God (14:22).

Watch ye, stand fast in **the faith**, quit you like men, be strong (1 Cor. 16:13).

Till we all attain unto the unity of **the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3).

One’s faith in **the faith** is the basis of a life that pleases God after Gospel obedience: “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). The following principle is age-lasting: “But the righteous shall live by faith” (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17). The foundation of the “Christian graces” is faith (2 Pet. 1:15).

Faith is so basic that Paul wrote that Moses’ law was a “law of works,” and the Gospel is a “law of faith” (Rom. 3:27). (Note that Paul depicts the Gospel as “law,” doubtless much to the chagrin of the “all grace-no law” voices among

those who have departed from us.)

### **What Faith Is Not**

*Faith*, like many other good words, has been misdefined.

Some equate faith with wishful thinking—“pie in the sky by and by.” In this misconception, “faith” has no reality upon which to rest. The existence of God, Christ, the Bible, and Heaven are all things one **wishes** to be real and **wants** to believe in so badly that one convinces himself that they exist.

Some completely sunder faith from knowledge. To them “faith” goes beyond knowledge, taking up where knowledge ceases. To these misdefiners, “faith” is the proverbial “leap in the dark.”

Many conceive of saving “faith” as merely intellectual acceptance of certain Biblical facts (e.g., the existence of God, the Deity of Christ). Although such acknowledgement of Bible teaching is the **beginning** point of saving faith, it is far from its **end** (as earlier noted).

Some view faith as believing in things that may **possibly** exist.

Accordingly, some allege that, while we cannot prove God’s existence empirically, yet His existence is more probable than improbable. This misapprehension of faith constitutes agnosticism.

Others conceive of believers as those who ignore evidence with which they disagree. Skeptics often thus view Biblical faith. However, the better demonstration of this aberration of faith is the evolutionist, who defies, denies, and denigrates the huge body of evidence that validates the Bible and combats his irrational hypotheses.

While not exhaustive, the foregoing list is representative of the major misunderstandings of faith.

### **What Faith Is**

Biblical faith has to do with the elements of belief, trust, confidence, assurance, and conviction. Hebrews 11:1 helps us see the true nature and meaning of faith: “Now faith is assurance [the substance, KJV] of things hoped for, a conviction [the evidence, KJV] of things not seen.” *Assurance, substance, conviction,* and *evidence* are strong terms of certainty. An assurance or certainty undergirds the reality of the things for which we hope, although we cannot now physically see them. This certainty and assurance imply evidence sufficient to convict one that the things for which we hope are fact rather than fantasy.

The source of adequate evidence of the reasonableness of our spiritual hopes is the Bible: “So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17). How did the message of the apostles and other New Testament prophets engender faith in first-century unbelievers? They presented compelling, undeniable evidence that confirmed their message. The “great salvation” they preached,

...which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will (Heb. 2:3-4).

This principle is evident in the statement of Nicodemus: “We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2).

Since the age of such signs, wonders, and miracles has ceased, how do men develop faith now? The **written** record of the Biblical miracles provides the very same evidence of the authenticity of the message that the **actual** miracles did. The message has not changed, so the miracles that confirmed it until its

completion will effectively confirm it from now on. The words of John are instructive just here:

Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not **written** in this book: but these are **written**, that ye may **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing** ye may have life in his name (John 20:30-31, emph. DM).

Apparently, John was writing for the benefit of those who had not seen any of Jesus' signs. He therefore **wrote** a record of some of those signs so that they might **believe** in the Christ and be saved. If the written record had confirmatory power before the end of the first century, it has the same power indefinitely

Faith is not **beyond** knowledge or **antagonistic** to it, but is actually another **form** of knowledge or means of attaining it. The account of the people in Samaria demonstrates this fact. At first the Samaritans "believed on him [Jesus] because of the word of the woman" (John 4:39). Later, Jesus entered Samaria and taught the people, upon which they said, "Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: for we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42). Evidence created faith and knowledge.

On Pentecost Peter reminded the crowd of Jesus' "mighty works and wonders and signs" (Acts 2:22), proclaimed His resurrection (v. 32), and then caused them to reflect on the powerful signs that accompanied the apostles' baptism in the Holy Spirit (v. 33). Peter also appropriately applied various prophecies (vv. 17-21; 25-28; 34-35).

He then challenged them to believe, on the basis of solid evidence: "Let all the house of Israel therefore **know assuredly**, that God hath made him both

Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified” (v. 36, emph. DM). Some had witnessed some of Jesus’ signs, but those from far-flung nations (vv. 9–11) could not have done so. Perhaps most of these had seen some of the miracles on Pentecost. However, **none** of them had witnessed the resurrection, ascension, of coronation of Christ, but Peter said that they could **know** all of these things **assuredly**. The murderous infidels became penitent believers.

Verse 37 is an implied confession of their **faith**: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter described their newfound **faith** as something they now “**know** assuredly.” God has never asked men to believe in anything or anyone except upon adequate evidence.

### **Conclusion**

We must never cease to emphasize to a world of confused “believers” that saving faith is always obedient faith:

But when they **believed** Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptized**, both men and women (Acts 8:12, emph. DM).

And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, **believed** in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing **believed**, and were **baptized** (18:8).

The only sort of faith that accomplishes anything is one based on Biblical evidence and is a “faith which worketh by love” (Gal. 5:6).

[**NOTE:** I wrote and published this MS for my “Editorial Perspective” in the May 2003 issue of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*, of which I was editor at the time.]

## Learning to Give and Answer (3)

John P. Mabrey  
Hilham, Tennessee

The subject of “authority” is something that every member of the church of Christ should be able to answer when asked.

### Who is in charge here?

As in any organization, someone must have the authority to issue orders. Could you imagine a military unit that functions on the whim of just anyone in the unit? The result would be pure chaos. The military survives to save lives by a strict “chain of command” by which orders are given, and orders obeyed; but a person must be authorized to give such orders.

Webster defines “authority” as: *“the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions; jurisdiction.”* So, as we begin our discussion of “authority” we need to keep these definitions in mind concerning the Lord’s church and her workings. The only way to answer the question of “who is in charge” in the Lord’s church is to turn to the scripture.

When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he compared the church to a body; specifically the body of Christ. *“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”* (I Cor. 12:12-13) As Christians, we are members of his body, the church; of which Christ is the head. *“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”* (Col. 1:18) Now we get to the bottom line as to “WHO” is in charge. Christ has “preeminence” meaning that he excels or surpasses others. But what is the source of his authority?

The heavenly Father, Almighty God, gave this authority to his dear Son. This is confirmed in the scripture more than once. In Eph. 1:22-23 we read there: *“And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.”* Three more times in the book of Ephesians, Paul confirms that Christ is the

“head” of the “body” which is the church: once in Ephesians 4:15, and twice in Ephesians 5:23. Christ is not only the head of the church, but he is the ONLY head of the church. Christ declared the extent of his power after he was resurrected and spoke to his disciples before his ascension into heaven. *Matt. 28:18—“And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”* When Jesus said “all” power, he didn’t mean a little bit of power, nor did he mean most of the power. All means ALL! But what is the meaning of the word “power” in this passage? AUTHORITY! Jesus has ALL authority in heaven and in earth. He is the ruler of all nations. Since he is the head of the body, and the body is the church, and Christ has only had one head, then there is **no other head above him.**

I realize that there is a religious organization that holds to the idea that the head of their church is a man walking in the flesh that they think of as “God on earth.” This man has received his “authority” from man, and NOT God. When God gave Jesus ALL authority, He did not appoint one man to be an earthly head over his church.

In the Lord’s church there are the offices of elders and deacons, and we will discuss these later, but remember; no man, or group of men can overrule the authority of Jesus Christ as the head of his church. He is the authority of ALL. Because he has all authority, it is within his power to forgive sins, as reflected in *Acts 5:31—“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”* Therefore, because he has all authority, He has exercised his power to send men into the world to preach repentance to the world. *Luke 24:47—“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”*

When the gospel is preached today “in his name” that means that it is preached by his authority. Let us therefore submit ourselves to his authority and go forth to carry out that great responsibility with which we are charged.

### **Authority Figures:**

With any organization there is a need for order to be maintained; otherwise the result is confusion. Since we know that “God is not the author of confusion” (I Cor. 14:33) then it behooves us to search the scripture and see what kind of order must be maintained; and what tools God has given us to maintain that

order. We can see in the scripture that God has given instructions for all things to “...*be done decently and in order.*” (I Cor. 14:40), but who is going to assure that things are carried out in a manner well pleasing unto God? In the scripture, God has given the church two human instruments: one for the shepherding and one for the caring of his people. Man has two basic needs: *spiritual* needs, and *physical* needs. Within the church, Christ has authorized two distinct *human* offices to maintain these needs in the form of **elders** (spiritual needs) and **deacons** (physical needs).

## **Elders:**

A man could run for, and be elected to the office of president of the United States of America, and still not attain the highest earthly office ordained by God. There is no higher office attainable on earth for a man than to be appointed as a qualified elder in Christ’s church. The Bible tells us that there is a special crown reserved for those that fill this office in reverence to God. Peter, in his first epistle, writes this concerning elders in I Pet. 5:4—“*And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*” In our discussion of the eldership, we are going to break it down into separate categories. First we are going to discuss *titles*, by which elders are referred, then the *qualifications* required to be an elder, and finally we are going to discuss the *duties and responsibilities* of qualified elders.

*Titles:* Elders are referred to in the scripture by many titles. In addition to being referred to as *elders* (I Pet. 5), they are also referred to as *bishops* (I Tim. 3:1-2, Tit. 1:5,7), *shepherds* (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 2:35; I Pet. 5:2). Many times they are simply referred to as *overseers* (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7).  
*Qualifications:* The qualifications of elders (bishops) are listed in both, I Tim. 3:2-7 and Tit. 1:7-9. Instead of listing all of these qualifications in this lesson, please read these passages along with this article. Suffice it to say that the qualifications of an elder as given in the scripture are very specific. There are three things that I wish to bring to the forefront as given in I Tim. 3:1-7—“*This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*”

First and foremost, before a man is appointed to the office of a bishop/elder, he must:

- DESIRE that office. I fear that too many times, congregations of the

Lord's church adopt the philosophy of "tag, you're it" and appoint men into this office that have no desire to be there. This should never be. A man should have first that firm desire to shepherd the flock of God in the ways which the Scripture prescribe.

- Be the HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE. I know this is a controversial subject in the denominational world today. Denominations are appointing women to the office of elder. Question: How, according to the scripture, can a woman be the "husband of one wife?" Enough said!
- Meet ALL the qualifications listed in this passage (and in Tit. 1:7-9). This is not a pick-and-choose option. Have you ever noticed how I Tim. 3:2 is worded? "*A bishop then must be...*" When this verse is read in its proper context, the word "must" applies to every single qualification that is listed in the following verses.

*Duties and Responsibilities:* Elders of the Lord's church carry an immense responsibility on their shoulders. The writer of the book of Acts cautioned the elders in Acts 20:28 to: "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*" This passage is not talking about physical food; rather it is referring to spiritual food.

Elders are to see that we receive the spiritual nourishment for our souls that we need to grow in the faith. When we begin our walk in "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) we are but babes in Christ. Therefore we are to feed on milk, just as an infant does. Peter wrote in I Pet. 2:2—"As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:" Once we start maturing (growing) though, we cannot survive on milk alone forever. One of the responsibilities of the elders is to teach us to eat meat along with that milk. Heb. 5:13-14 says, "*For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*" In addition to "feeding the flock", elders must watch out for the spiritual well-being of those members who are weak in the faith, and to take disciplinary action on those who would rebel against the authority of both the eldership and Christ, up to, and including disfellowship. (NOTE: Disfellowship should always be used as a last resort.)

Although there may be a few that do not like this thought, the elders do have God given AUTHORITY over the local congregation. I Tim. 5:17 says, “*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.*” I Pet. 5:5 says, “*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*”

Elders have been given **rule** (authority) in the local congregation over which they are appointed. Next month, Lord willing, we shall continue addressing our discussion of authority with “deacons.”

*All scripture quoted is from the KJV unless otherwise stated.*

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# **“DEAVERISM” (Part One)**

## **Refuting Mac Deaver’s False Teaching On The Work of the Holy Spirit**

Doug Post  
Vernon, Connecticut

The Lord’s church has struggled with false doctrine since the first century. One such false doctrine plaguing the church today concerns the role or work of the Holy Spirit. Much of the error found in both the Twentieth and Twenty-First century churches of Christ have one thing in common. The error espoused comes from brethren who believe the Holy Spirit works directly upon the Christian today, separate and apart from the word of God. Coincidence? Hardly! It is said by the likes of Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Rick Atchely, and a host of others, that the Holy Spirit is given to aid the Christian through their Christian walk on earth. The Holy Spirit is said to provide help, give strength, to illuminate Scripture and produce the fruit of the Spirit. Quite simply, the Holy Spirit is provided to supernaturally manipulate the Christian mind, making him or her the person God desires. All of this error comes as a result of misunderstanding and misapplying Scripture concerning the Holy Spirit.

For over twenty years, Mac Deaver has been plaguing the church with his false doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In fact, his doctrine keeps evolving from one extreme to the next. The following are propositions Deaver has affirmed over the past twenty years beginning with the first, which was in 1994:

1. "The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian personally in conjunction with the word of God" (Deaver-Fox Debate in 1994, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma).
2. "The word of God teaches that the Holy Spirit directly helps (in conjunction with the word and never separate and apart from it) the inward man of the faithful child of God" (Deaver-Lockwood Debate in 1998, Robertson County, Tennessee).
3. "The Bible teaches that in addition to His sanctifying influence through His word, the Holy Spirit operates directly to sanctify the heart of the faithful Christian" (Deaver-Moffitt Debate in 2000, Denton, Texas).

4. "The Scriptures teach that when a person becomes a Christian he is baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit" (Deaver-Vick Debate in 2011, Indianapolis, Indiana).<sup>1</sup>

In 1994 Deaver argued that the Holy Spirit literally indwells the Christian – that the Spirit literally, spatially, houses Himself within the flesh of the Christian. That the Spirit literally takes up space within the human body the way our organs reside and take up space. Of course, figurative language is not considered and is rejected out of hand when it comes to the literal indwelling view. However, the dwelling of the Spirit is not our concern in this series. Rather, the work of the Spirit will be our focus.

Several years later Deaver went on to affirm that the Holy Spirit is given to the Christian for the purpose of DIRECTLY aiding the Christian. His idea of “aiding” is that of DIRECTLY interfering, manipulating, altering, disturbing, changing, or controlling the mind of the Christian. That the Holy Spirit DIRECTLY infuses the Christian with supernatural strength to think better thoughts, do and say better things; to overcome temptation and sin, and to do things the Christian is unable to do for himself and from within himself.

At the time of his second proposition, many of my brethren were trying to defend Deaver, saying he was simply arguing that the Holy Spirit helps “*in conjunction with the word.*” In other words, the Holy Spirit helps the Christian as the word says He does, and when He does help the Christian He does not contradict the Word. However, Deaver also used the phrase “*directly helps.*” What does the word “directly” mean? It means: “**in immediate physical contact, without intervening space, next in order, in a straight or direct line from a particular position.**” In other words, the Holy Spirit, without means, supernaturally interferes with the natural processes of the Christian (human being) and manipulates those processes in a favorable manner and in a way the Christian could not so do naturally from his own Free Will.

Deaver is attacking human Free Will. Seemingly, once a person becomes a Christian Deaver teaches that they lose Free Will and must be manipulated by the Spirit in order to remain saved. The Christian now needs to be directly aided by the Holy Spirit because they are too weak and too human to help themselves. For instance, the Christian might read the Bible and not be able to understand some obscure passage of the Bible, but the Holy Spirit will come along and provide supernatural assistance so he or she can finally understand this

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<sup>1</sup> Deaver, Mac: *Except One Be Born From Above*. Biblical Notes Publications. Sheffield, Texas 79781. 2013. Preface – IV-V.

mysterious and secretive passage that no one else can, on their own, understand. But it has to be some “obscure” passage, because the majority of Scripture can be read and understood by just about anyone. Concerning all of Paul’s letters, the apostle Peter says: **“as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, there are some things he wrote that are difficult to understand”** (2 Peter. 3:15-16). Therefore, Peter is actually declaring that MOST of Paul’s writings are not hard to understand. This same principle can be applied to the entire Bible. Some things written might be hard to understand but MOST are easily understood.

Deaver claims that Christians need the Holy Spirit to ILLUMINATE these "difficult" scriptures for them, and without this supernatural “illumination” we could never understand them. But for what purpose is this alleged illumination needed? Simply to know and understand them? Moreover, why is God so concerned with Christians understanding some obscure, difficult passage that has no bearing on one’s salvation? For Trivia Pursuit games? Obviously, Christians have to study and put some diligent effort into knowing all Scripture, including the more difficult ones, but that does not involve some DIRECT supernatural infusion of Holy Spirit power as Deaver alleges.

Quite simply, Paul told Timothy: **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn’t need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”** (2 Timothy 2:15). Paul did not say, *“Timothy do not worry about studying, the Holy Spirit will zap you and you will simply know everything.”* However, Deaver’s doctrine leads folks to being found *“ashamed”* because if one does not present himself approved to God by diligently working at “rightly dividing” (“handling”) the word of truth, then Spirit, Himself, says they ought to be “ashamed.” We need not be “ashamed” however, if we put ourselves into doing this. However, if we allow someone else to do this work for us, including the Holy Spirit, then we are not doing the work that God has called us to do. If the Holy Spirit must do this work for us, then it is not US who is doing it. On the contrary, we would not be doing this work, but the Holy Spirit would be doing it for us. The question we must ask is, must the Holy Spirit do the work that God has asked us to do for ourselves? Of course, why would God command us to do a work, but then turn around and have the Holy Spirit do it for us? He wouldn’t, and we can apply this principle to every command for the Christian in the New Testament.

Again, Peter said some of Paul’s writings were *“difficult”* to understand, but not impossible to understand. Moreover, Peter did not say because some of Paul’s writings were difficult to understand the Holy Spirit will come to your aid,

zapping your mind so you can understand them. NO WHERE is that concept taught in Scripture.

Of course, if it was the Holy Spirit's job to come along and DIRECTLY aid the Christian, illuminating his understanding, then Peter could not have concluded his thought with:

**“which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they* do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter.3:16-18).**

The word “Revelation” means the disclosing of information. God has made known or disclosed His mind to mankind. He did this by way of inspired men. They spoke for God and then wrote for God. The Holy Spirit DIRECTLY aided and guided THEM, giving them the very words to speak to the people. These inspired men were responsible for revealing God's Will to the people through preaching. The Spirit then guided these inspired into writing down all that had been orally taught, ensuring that a complete and inerrant record was kept for all subsequent generations of people, so that when people read it, they can understand it (Ephesians 3:4).

What was written down was Revelation. God disclosed His mind to inspired men and through the agency of the Holy Spirit these same inspired men revealed God's Will to mankind. God's Will was no longer a secret and no longer a mystery. This means every part of it was made known and every part of it was understandable, including the difficult parts. In every age and generation people can read God's Word and understand it, and in doing so, can know the mind of God through what He has been revealed on the pages of Scripture.

The Deaver doctrine of a DIRECT zapping of supernatural power from the Holy Spirit, interfering with the natural cognitive processes of the Christian, and manipulating the human mind, makes a mockery of God's “Revelation.” God has either made known His entire Will or He has not. According to Deaver, God has not made known His Will to mankind, and it is up to the Holy Spirit to interfere with human Free Will, manipulating the Christian's mind, so he or she can understand a very small percentage of the Bible that has no bearing on salvation whatsoever. Amazingly amazing!!

The Deaver doctrine is a flawed assumption from a total misapprehension of the

process of revelation, along with a total misunderstanding of the guiding or leading of the Holy Spirit. While the Spirit DIRECTLY led specifically chosen, inspired men to reveal God's Will to all other men, the Spirit DID NOT lead inspired men to reveal His Will to all other men, only For the Spirit to DIRECTLY lead all other men (Christian or not) into understanding His Will – the very purpose God gave the apostles in the first place – as Calvinism, Arminianism, and Deaverism teach.

The Spirit has always led all people (Christian or not) through the teaching of the apostles or other inspired men found on the pages of Scripture. We have the teaching of the apostles in writing, and all people (Christian or not) are led by the Spirit when they read and submit to His words found in the Scriptures (2 Tim.3:16-17). When we have read the Scriptures and through study have understood them, then the Spirit has led or guided us, NOT DIRECTLY, but indirectly through the Scriptures. The Spirit has already done His leading and guiding through His completed and revealed Word. When we do as He teaches in the Scriptures, we are led. To suggest the Holy Spirit must illuminate what He has already illuminated is an abject absurdity.

The implication of the Deaver doctrine is that there is one hermeneutic for sinner and one for the saint. The poor sinner (non-Christian) must use his own reasoning skills to be able to understand Scripture in order to be saved, but once he is saved, he no longer needs study, reason, or logic, he just waits for the Holy Spirit to think and reason for him, providing him with all that is necessary to remain sanctified. So, for the sinner there is the hermeneutic of logic and reason, while for the saint there is the “check your brains at the door” hermeneutic.

As the Carpenters once sang, “We have only just begun.” We will address the 4 Propositions Deaver has affirmed in greater detail throughout this series. I pray you will thoughtfully consider what is being said, and I pray you the reader will have a better understanding of “Deaverism” and the work of the Holy Spirit.

End notes: Deaver, Mac: Except One Be Born From Above. Biblical Notes Publications. Sheffield, Texas 79781. 2013. Preface – IV-V.

*In light of the recent ruling by SCOTUS we ask that you pray for our country and its leaders who seem to want to run us into the ground and destroy our country from within. Remember the word of James... **Jas 5:16** Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

*We also want to invite you to watch the 40<sup>th</sup> annual Bellview Lectures on the false doctrine of Preterism. Please follow this link to watch them all and learn.*

**[Click Here to Watch](#)**

*Or paste this link in your browser  
[http://graychurchofchrist.com/?page\\_id=125](http://graychurchofchrist.com/?page_id=125)*



# ***Travel directory of churches of Christ***

*Since we cannot attest to the soundness of any given assembly, we suggest you call ahead and speak with the Elders or Preacher.*

**Remember: always make plans to worship God, even on vacation, or just out-of-town for the weekend.**

## ***Alabama***

**Montevallo Church of Christ:** 830 Vine St, Montevallo, AL. 35115

Sunday Bible Class: 10 AM \*\*\*Morning Service: 11 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 PM\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 205.665.7579 \*\*\***Preacher: Ray Brunner; Scott Crawford; & John Hutchinson**

**East Huntsville church of Christ:** 801 Humes Ave Huntsville, AL. 35801

Sunday Bible Study: 9:00 am\*\*\*Sunday Worship: 10 am & 1 pm\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm  
[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 256.534.4001 \*\*\***Preacher: Bill Cantrell**

**Riverchase Church of Christ:** 1868 Montgomery Hwy, Birmingham, AL 35244

Sunday Bible Class: 9:30 AM\*\*\*Morning Service: 8:30 & 10:30\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 205.988.5808\*\*\***Preacher: Dewayne Spivey**

**Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ:** 400 Roebuck Pkwy, Birmingham, AL 35206

Sunday Bible Class: 9 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 10 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 5 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 205.833.1400\*\*\***Preacher: Jason Moon**

**Austinville Church of Christ:** 2833 Danville Rd. SW Decatur, AL 35603

Sunday Bible Class: 9:30 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 10:30 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 5:30 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone 256.353.4256\*\*\***Preacher: Mark N. Posey**

## ***Arkansas***

**Letona Church of Christ:** P.O. box 141 Letona, Arkansas 72085

Sunday Bible Study: 10 am\*\*\*Sunday Worship: 11 Am\*\*\*Sunday Evening: 5 pm\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study: 6 pm\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 501.230.1201 \*\*\***Preachers: Sid Scudder, Jack Meredith**

**Newton Street church of Christ:** 412 Newton Street Paragould, AR. 72450

Sunday am Bible Study - 9:15\*\*\*Sunday Morning Worship - 10:00\*\*\*Sunday Evening Worship - 5:00

Wednesday Bible Study – 6:30\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone 870.378.5551\*\*\***Preacher: Joshua Dement**

### ***Connecticut***

**Tolland County Church Of Christ:** 24 Hyde Ave (Rt.30) P.O. Box 3201 Vernon, CT 06066

Sunday Bible Class: 9 A.M.\*\*\*Morning Service: 10 A.M.\*\*\* Evening Service: 12:45 P.M.\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 P.M.\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone 860.810.9833\*\*\***Preacher: Douglas Post**

### ***Florida***

**Bellview Church of Christ:** 4850 Saufley Field Road Pensacola, Florida 32526

Sunday Bible Class 9:00 A.M.\*\*\*Morning Service: 10:00 A.M.\*\*\* Evening Service: 6:00 P.M.\*\*\*  
Wednesday: Bible Class 7 P.M.\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 850.455.7595\*\*\***Preacher: Michael Hatcher**

**Freeport Church of Christ:** 17003 Highway 331 SouthPO Box 66 Freeport, Florida 32439

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:00 am\*\*\* Sunday Worship: 11am\*\*\*Evening Service: 6pm\*\*\*Wednesday Bible study: 7pm\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 850.835.4640\*\*\***Preacher: Eric Farrior**

**College Avenue church of Christ:** 337 DeFuniak Springs, FL. 32435

Sunday Bible Class: 9 am\*\*\*Sunday Morning Worship 10 am\*\*\* Sunday Evening 6 pm\*\*\*Wednesday Bible study 6 pm\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*850-892-5384\*\*\***Preacher:Robert Alexander**

**Midway church of Christ:** 7226 Tamiami Tr. Sarasota Fl. 34243

Sunday: Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.\*\*\*Morning Service: 10:30 A.M.\*\*\*Evening Service: 6:00 P.M.\*\*\*Tuesday: Ladies Class: 10:00 A.M.\*\*\*Wednesday: Bible Class 7 P.M.\*\*\*No Website at this time\*\*\*Phone: 941-355-6785\*\*\***Preacher: Jack Pinckert Jr.**

### ***Georgia***

**Hartley Bridge Road church of Christ:** 3465 Hartley Bridge Road, Macon, GA. 31216

Sunday Bible Class 10 AM\*\*\*Sunday Worship 11 AM\*\*\*Sunday Evening 6 PM\*\*\* [Church Website Click Here](#) \*\*\*Phone: 478.781.1818\*\*\***Preacher: Steve Waller**

### ***Kansas***

**Parsons church of Christ:** 2900 Briggs Ave., Parsons, Kansas 67357

Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM\*\*\*Morning Service: 10:45 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 6:00 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00 PM\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 620-421-1497\*\*\***Preacher: Cloyd "Ben" Frock, Jr.**

## ***Kentucky***

**Mt Moriah church of Christ:** 181 Mt. Moriah Rd. Dunmor KY 42339

Sunday Bible Study: 9 AM\*\*\*Morning Service 10 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study: 6PM\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 270.934.2007\*\*\***Preacher: Rick Shutt**

**Sturgis church of Christ:** 801 N. Monroe St. Sturgis, KY 42459

Sunday Bible Class: 10:00 AM\*\*\*Morning Service: 11:00 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 6:00 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 6:00 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: (270) 333-4371\*\*\***Preacher: Audie Cherry**

## ***Maine***

**Gray Church of Christ:** 13 Liberty Ave, Gray Maine, 04039

Sunday Bible Class: 10 A.M.\*\*\*Morning Service: 11 A.M.\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 PM\*\*\*Thursday Bible Class: 6 P.M.\*\*\* [church website click here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 207.299.0454\*\*\***Preacher: James Miller**

## ***Michigan***

**Ridge Road Church of Christ:** 1770 Ridge Road; Ypsilanti, MI 48198;

Sunday Bible Study 10:00 a.m.\*\*\* Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.\*\*\*Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m.\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone 734-485-293  
**Preacher: Leonard J. Whit**

## ***Nebraska***

**Kearney church of Christ** 1004 East 16th St. PO BOX 643 Kearney NE 68848

Sunday Bible Class 9:30 a.m.\*\*\* Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.\*\*\* Wednesday Bible Class 7:00 p.m.  
[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 308.240.4622\*\*\***Preacher:John Shafer**

## ***North Carolina***

**Eden church of Christ:** 250 the boulevard, Eden NC 27288

Sunday Morning Bible class 9am\*\*\*Sunday Worship 10am\*\*\*No evening service\*\*\*Thursday Bible class 7pm\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 276-340-2653\*\*\***Preacher: James Oldfield**

## ***Ohio***

**Wolf Creek church of Christ:** Malta, OH (Rt. 78-West of town)

Sunday Morning Bible Class 9:45\*\*\*Morning Worship, 10:30 AM\*\*\*Evening Worship 7:00PM\*\*\*  
Wednesday Bible class 7:00PM\*\*\*No Website\*\*\*Phone: 740-962-3363\*\*\***No regular preacher**

## **Tennessee**

**Sevierville Church of Christ:** 208 Hicks Dr, Sevierville, TN 37862

Sunday Bible Class: 9 AM\*\*\*Morning Service: 10 AM\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 PM\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study: 7 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 865.453.8009\*\*\***Preacher: John Daniels**

**Cullom church of Christ:** Hwy 84 & Collins Cove Rd, Livingston, TN 38570,

Sunday Bible Study 9am\*\*\*Worship 10 am\*\*\*Sunday Evening 6pm\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Study 6pm\*\*\*[Chuech Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*No phone\*\*\***William H. Sowder Sr.**

**Central Church of Christ:** 112 Hay Long Avenue Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474

Sunday Bible Study: 9:30 AM\*\*\*Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM\*\*\*Sunday Evening: 6:00 AM\*\*\*Wednesday Study: 6:30 PM\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone Number: (931) 325-3040\*\*\***Preacher: Danny Douglas**

## **Texas**

**Oldham Lane Church of Christ:** 5049 Oldham Lane, Abilene Texas,

Sunday Bible Class: 9 A.M.\*\*\*Morning Service: 10 A.M.\*\*\*Evening Service: 6 P.M.\*\*\*Wednesday Bible Class: 7 P.M.\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 325-695-0055\*\*\***Preacher: Chris McCurley**

**Northpoint Church of Christ:** 908 Imperial Dr. Denton, TX 76209

Sunday Bible Class 9:30 AM\*\*\*Sunday Worship 10:30 AM\*\*\*Sunday Evening 1:00 PM\*\*\*Wednesday B.C./Worship 7:00 PM\*\*\*Scripture Cache [www.scripturecache.com](http://www.scripturecache.com)\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 940.387.1429\*\*\***Preacher: Dub McClish**

**Central Church of Christ:** 507 Park Ave. Weatherford, Texas 76086

Sunday Bible Study: 9:30 AM\*\*\* Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM\*\*\* Wednesday Study: 4:30 PM\*\*\* No Website\*\*\*Phone 817.304.3615\*\*\***No formal preacher: David Calvert**

**Leonard church of Christ:** 204 East Fannin St. Leonard, TX. 75452

Sunday AM B/S- 9:00-9:40\*\*\*Sunday AM Worship- 9:45\*\*\*Sunday PM Worship- 6:00\*\*\*Wed. Bible study- 7:00\*\*\*[Church Website Click Here](#)\*\*\*Phone: 903.587.2229\*\*\***Preacher: Bob Lewis**

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