

If the church has been restored (and it has) why tiptoe around the Truth? Why not make the plain statement that, "We **are** simply Christians," instead of, "...**striving** to be?" Why can't we say, "We **have left** man-made religion behind and follow the Bible," instead of, "Our **goal is...**"? Why can't we say, "We **are the same church** described in the New Testament," instead of, "We **strive to be...**"?

There are so many uncertain sounds among professing "churches of Christ" today that it is nearly impossible for the world to hear the clarion call of New Testament Christianity. We need to emulate Paul and, "use great plainness of speech" (2 Cor. 3:12). How hard is that?

—Jerry Brewer
Elk City, OK



The Northpoint Lighthouse

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THAT YOU MAY KNOW...

Let us pray for...

- Tonya Thatcher**—difficulty with pregnancy
- Judy Reid**—treatment for auto accident injuries (sister in NJ, planning to move here)
- Mike Mallett**—fighting leukemia (faithful brother in Evant, TX)
- Ken Chumbley**—fighting cancer and other physical problems (Gospel preacher)
- Janice Ruffner**—fighting various physical issues
- Ann Henderson**—fighting cancer (Sheri Woodall's aunt)
- Brian Ritter**—fighting rare autoimmune disease (son of Rick Ritter, Gospel preacher)
- Tim Smith**—fighting chronic physical problems from auto injuries (Gospel preacher)
- Richie Aidoo**—Joshua Aidoo's 8-year-old son (fighting seizures)
- Samuel Bagsangi**—Gospel preacher in Philippines we help support
- Joshua Aidoo**—Gospel preacher in Ghana we help support

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Classes	15
Sunday AM Worship	15
Sunday PM Worship	15
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	17
Contribution	\$1,009.00
Contribution average (2014)	\$837.09

Internet Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast, beginning at approximately 10:45–10:50 a.m. and 1:12–1:15 p.m., via Internet through our Website, www.northpointcoc.com.

Assignments...

Bible class teacher for October	Rick Beauchamp
Chairman of Men's Meetings (October–December)	Phil Smith
Preacher, <i>The Lighthouse</i> editor	Dub McClish

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Sunday

Bible Class	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Worship	1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship	7:00 PM
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Christian Evidences

The Study of "Christian evidences" is the study of facts and issues that give substance to the claims of the Gospel and its principal figure, Jesus Christ. Scholars and students commonly divide studies of such evidences into two major fields:

"Internal evidence" is one of these major fields of proof. By this term we refer to things within the Bible itself that indicate that it is the product of God, because mere men could not possibly have produced it. Internal evidence includes the Bible's (including both Old and New Testaments) complete self-harmony (i.e., it does not contradict itself), its historical, geographical, and scientific accuracy, its amazing prophetic utterances and their fulfillment, and much more. Since the New Testament is the "seed of the kingdom" (Luke 8:11) and Christianity is all that it produces when faithfully followed, to establish the authenticity of the Scriptures (particularly the New Testament) is to authenticate Christianity itself.

"External evidence" is another major field of proof. This term refers to things outside the Bible that confirm what is in the Bible. Archaeologists have repeatedly unearthed artifacts that have confirmed what the Bible had said long before they were discovered. Furthermore, archaeological finds have never contradicted Biblical statements, whether historical, geographical, chronological, or otherwise. Also, in the sphere of external evidence is the argument from design. Even paperclips do not spontaneously or accidentally spring into existence. They are obviously the product of design. There is no "design" without a "designer." If this is true about something as simple as a paperclip, it could hardly be less true of the vast universe and even of our human bodies. The only rational explanation of how our world and all living creatures began is that an all-powerful and all-wise Designer created it all. Just such a Designer the Bible reveals and describes as the true and living God.

“Practical evidence” might be considered a third field of proof. By this I refer to the effects of Scripture when it is faithfully obeyed. Without the slightest doubt, true Christianity has influenced civilization for the better – never for the worse – wherever it has gone. The influence of the Gospel has all but conquered the awful blight of slavery, compared to ancient times. Women have been elevated immeasurably by the ennobling power of New Testament Truth. The spirit of individual liberty that gave birth to our nation, making it the envy of the world, is rooted in the Bible. However, perhaps even more powerful than these are the changes wrought in individual lives. Indeed, this is the way the Gospel has its widespread effect – as leaven in the “dough” as it permeates the hearts of men (Mat. 13:33). It affects one individual after another until the many are affected. It turns the murderer into an apostle, puts the lazy man to work, sobers up the drunk, and causes the thief and the fornicator to abandon their evil ways. Such is indeed a powerful form of “Christian evidences.”

–Dub McClish
Denton, TX

One Number Off

We had a little excitement at the church building on a recent Wednesday evening! Someone (who will remain anonymous – but he knows who he is!) unlocked the door and proceeded to turn off the burglar alarm. At least that's what he thought he was doing. However, he put in the wrong code and the alarm sounded. Fortunately, I came in right behind him and was able to put in the correct code and turn it off, but not before the monitoring service had been alerted. We did find out how quickly they respond and that the sheriff's department does come by to check. However, the alarm should not have sounded. After all, he was only one number off. Surely, that wasn't important. However, it was – and is – important; if the wrong code is entered, the alarm system will sound.

This principle is important in many areas of life and especially when it comes to doing God's will. If God is to be pleased and we are to be blessed of God, being “one number off” will not work. Man has no right to change what God has commanded in any way.

A good illustration of this principle is found in the account of Nadab and Abihu, recorded in Leviticus 10:

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace (vv. 1-3).

They were only “one number off.” They used fire, but the **wrong** fire and we see that they perished because of their failure to honor God and do as He had commanded.

Another Old Testament illustration is found in 2 Samuel 6:

And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God (vv. 6-7).

Now what was so wrong with that? Uzzah was only steadying the ark so that it would not fall. Why did the Lord slay Uzzah? After all, he was only “one number off”! God had instructed that when the ark was moved, it was to be carried by the Levites (1 Chr. 15:2); no others were authorized to carry it or to even touch it. The Israelites did not have authority to move the ark in any other way.

Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:19). Thus we cannot change what He has said, even by “one number” and be accepted by Him. It **does** make a difference whether or not we obey the teaching of God's Word. We have no right to change one thing with respect to the conditions that He has made regarding salvation and entry into His church. Neither do we have the right to change those things that God has authorized for the work and worship of the church or to add to or take away from that which He has authorized. “One number off” does make a difference!

–Ken Chumbley
Belvedere, SC

“Striving To Be...”

If you went to the website of a surgeon and it said, “I am striving to be a surgeon as taught in medical school,” would you have much confidence in that his ability to perform surgery on you? I wouldn't. I would rather go to a surgeon who says, “I am a graduate of _____ Medical School.”

The statement that, “We are striving to be...” or “Our goal is...” indicates that we are not yet what we are striving to be. Yet churches use that silly terminology all of the time on their websites. Perhaps that's their way of not “being judgmental.” But I see it as the liberal philosophy preached by so many college professors that, “Our heritage is the Stone-Campbell Movement.”

I visit a lot of websites of churches of Christ and always cringe when I see things like this from the Kingfisher, Oklahoma church: “We are striving to be simply Christians who are following Christ and the Bible in belief and practice.” Or like this from the Southwest church in Ada, Oklahoma: “Our goal is to leave behind man-made religion and follow the Bible.” Or like this from Southern Oaks in Chickasha, Oklahoma: “**We strive to be the same church described in the New Testament.** It is our purpose to be identified with the Christians of the first century.”