

The Bible Means What It Says

BY: Marvin L. Weir

ONE NEEDS AUTHORITY FOR WHAT TO DO WHEN WORSHIPING GOD.
OUR AUTHORITY DOES NOT COME FROM THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURE.
NEITHER DO WE FOLLOW OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES FOR OUR WORSHIP TODAY.

The story is often told of the Bible class teacher who reads a verse of Scripture and someone asks, "What does it mean?" The teacher quickly replies, "It means what it says." This answer may not be suitable for every question that is raised, but it does cut to the heart of the matter regarding some verses of Scripture.

Most religious groups today teach that baptism is not necessary for one to become a child of God. The question asked on Pentecost was easily understood and so was the answer, "*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 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*" (Acts 2:37-38). What does Acts 2:38 mean? It means what it says. Baptism is required for one to have remission of his sins.

Jesus said to the apostles, "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:15-16). This verse clearly states that the Gospel requires one to be baptized in order to be saved. It means what it says!

Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, "*And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:15-16). Is it not easily understood that baptism is necessary in order to wash away one's sins? The verse means exactly what it says.

Another popular false doctrine today is that a child of God cannot sin so as to be lost. Many folks believe in the "once saved, always saved" dogma in spite of what the word of God clearly states. Paul said to the Galatians who had obeyed the Gospel, "*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace*" (Galatians 5:4). How can one "Fall away" from grace if he were never saved?

Peter warns, "For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy *commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow*

that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2:20-22). What do these verses of Scripture mean? They mean exactly what they say. It is possible for a child of God to choose a life of sin and fall from grace of God after they have obeyed the Gospel.

Another popular false doctrine today is that one is saved by "faith only." The Bible teaches, however, "*ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*" (James 2:24). To make sure there is no misunderstanding the Holy Spirit continues in saying "*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*" (James 2:26). These verses mean exactly what they say - one cannot be saved by faith only.

Can one who desires to go to Heaven really attend the church of his choice? Jesus said, "*And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18). This verse means what it says. Christ promised to build His church (Singular). The apostle Paul teaches that there is only "*one body* (Ephesians 4:4) and that God *...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, Which is the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all*" (Ephesians 1:22-23). These verses mean exactly what they say. There is only one body over which Christ is head and it is the church that He built!

What does it mean to "*seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*" (Matthew 6:33)? What does it mean when it says, "*not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together*" (Hebrews 10:10-25)? What does it mean to "*love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*" (Matthew 22:37)?

Does the Bible mean what it says when it commands Christians to sing songs of praise to God? "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*" (Eph. 5:19). "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*" (Colossians 3:16).

One needs authority for what to do when worshiping God. Our authority does not come from silence of the Scriptures. Neither do we follow Old Testament examples for our worship today. Read the Scriptures: Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26, 1 Corinthians 14:15, Hebrews 2:12, James 5:13. God commands the child of God to sing - not to make music! The command to sing is specific and not generic. Neither the apostles nor the early church used instruments of music in their worship to God, nor neither should we.

Can the Bible be understood? Yes! And yes, the Bible always means what it says!