

# The Good Tidings

“...I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God...” (Luke 4:43)

---

Vol. 1, No. 2 - November 2004

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER  
OF GOD UNTO SALVATION  
(Romans 1:16)

A monthly e-journal of New Testament Christianity published in portable document format and sent free to interested individuals via email. Its primary purpose and goal in publication is to “preach the gospel to the whole creation” (Mark 16:16). Subscribers are encouraged to assist us in this effort by forwarding *The Good Tidings* to all their email contacts and by printing out copies for folks who do not have access to email. Send articles and subscription requests to the Editor.

**Editor:**

**Michael Willey**  
**mbwilley@yahoo.com**  
**419 Lynn Drive**  
**Nashville, TN 37211**

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

Hear the Word of God

John 8:45; Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ

John 3:16; 8:24

Repent of your sins

Luke 13:3, 5; II Peter 3:9

Confess Jesus is the Christ

Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37

Be baptized for the remission of  
your sins

Acts 2:38; 22:16

Live faithfully everyday

Matthew 10:22

## THE LORD LOOKS ON THE HEART

In 1 Samuel 16, we read that God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be the new king. When Samuel saw Eliab, the oldest son, Samuel thought Eliab would be the king. But in verse 7, we read, “But the Lord said to Samuel, Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

Because the Lord looks on the heart of each of us, we can hide nothing from Him. It is impossible to hide from God. Adam and Eve tried to hide from God in the Garden of Eden and failed (Gen. 3:8). Rather than go to the city of Nineveh, Jonah tried to flee from the presence of the Lord (Jon. 1:3) and failed. “Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him? says the Lord; Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord” (Jer. 23:24).

Our lives are like an open book before God. “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, And He ponders all his paths” (Prov. 5:21). The Psalmist wrote, “You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance” (Psalm 90:8). We would all do well to remember the words of Solomon: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil” (Eccl. 12:13-14).

A faithful Christian does not have to worry about trying to hide from God. “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (I John 1:7).

Have you obeyed the Gospel plan of salvation? If so, are you a faithful Christian? If you have not obeyed the Gospel, why do you wait? God looks on the heart of each of us. What does He see in yours?

—Michael Willey

## YOU BETTER ASK GOD FIRST

Nathan was a great prophet of God. He lived during the reigns of David and Solomon. It was he who rebuked David for his sin with Bethsheba (II Sam. 12:1-10). To rebuke David, Nathan used the parable of a rich man taking a poor man's "little ewe lamb." With the statement "thou art the man," Nathan brought David to his knees.

Nathan was a good man but he learned you had better ask God first. He told David what to do before he inquired concerning God's will. "Now it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under tent curtains. Then Nathan said to David, Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you. But it happened that night that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell My servant David, Thus says the Lord: You shall not build Me a house to dwell in" (I Chron. 17:1-4).

David felt bad about living in a nice house while God was worshipped in a tent. He desired to build a house for God. Without asking God what He wanted, Nathan told David to do what was in his heart. He should have asked God first. God said to Nathan, "Go and tell My servant David, Thus says the Lord: You shall not

build Me a house to dwell in. (I Chron. 17:4). When it comes to religious matters, we had better ask God first. Let us consider the importance of asking God first:

**Before you say that one God is as good as another you had better ask the true God first.** God, the Father Almighty is the Creator of heaven and earth. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:1-2). What less than Almighty strength could bring about the creation? There are many that are called God, but to us there is but "one God." "For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live" (I Cor. 8:5-6). There is, "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6).

**Before you say that the Bible contains errors, you had better ask God first.** The Bible says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7). Jesus said,

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). How could we know truth if the Bible is full of errors? Paul reminded us that, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17). You can have total confidence that the Bible is God's revelation and that it is correct.

**Before you say that the church is not important you had better ask God first.** The Bible tells us that Christ purchased the church with His own blood. Paul told a group of elders to, "take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28). The church is Christ's house. The Hebrew writer spoke of "Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end" (Heb. 3:6). The church is Christ's "own house." The greatness of Christ's love for the church is revealed in His giving Himself unto death for the church. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave

Himself for her” (Eph. 5:25).

**Before you say that one church is as good as another, you had better ask God first.** Christ built and preserved only one church. Jesus said, “I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). God is glorified through “the church.” “To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph. 3:21). The seat of God’s praise is the church. The seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11) does not produce different kinds of churches. We are called in “one body” or “one church” (Col. 3:15; Eph. 4:4).

**Before you say that baptism is not essential to salvation, you had better ask God first.** Saul was told, “and now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Saul was told to join himself to the Lord by baptism. At baptism one is embracing Christ, the Christian religion, the privilege and responsibilities of it. Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16). In our baptism we are “calling on the name of the Lord” for our salvation.

**Before you say that**

**Christians can use mechanical instruments of music in worship you had better ask God first.** We cannot be guided by the mind of Christ and use instrumental music in worship. The New Testament clearly instructs Christians to sing. Paul wrote, “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). Singing is a vital part of our worship and it must be done God’s way. God’s way is simple. “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” (Col. 3:16). The Hebrew writer wrote, “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You” (Heb. 2:12). The mechanical instrument is simply out of place in Christian worship. In singing, we worship God with a divinely created instrument – the heart.

To be saved from sin, a lost person must hear something and do something as a result of what he has heard. The lost must **hear** of Christ and His kingdom (church). They must then be **baptized** as penitent believers in response to the gospel message (Acts 8:5-13; Acts 8:26-40). For the lost to be saved there must be the preaching of the gospel message (I Cor. 1:21), **faith** is required (Mark 16:16),

**repentance** is a command (Acts 17:30), faith becomes known through our **confession of Jesus** (Rom. 10:9-10); and then the act of **baptism** results in forgiveness and entrance into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). In Christ we must be sure our actions are governed by God’s will. Always remember to ask God first.

---Charles Box

### **WHO WAS THE FOUNDER OF ISLAM (MOHAMMEDISM)?**

Mohammed was the founder and head of the Islamic religion. He was born in 570 A.D. in Mecca, Arabia. It is claimed he was the last great messenger of God and stands as the crowning glory and foundation of prophethood. Islam believes everyone must confess that God is one and that Mohammed is his prophet.

The Holy Scriptures (inspired of God) clearly show that Jesus of Nazareth, born in Bethlehem at the beginning of the first century, is the divine and only begotten Son of God (John 1:18; 3:16,18). Jesus, existing in eternity with God and as God, became a man to live in the flesh to redeem sinful men (John 1:1-3,14; Philippians 2:5-8). The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, a virgin in Nazareth, and said, “...behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall...be called the

Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:31-35). “...They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23). Jesus is the chief corner stone of God’s house (Ephesians 2:20; Mark 12:20; Acts 4:11).

**Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the ONLY founder and ONLY head of the church of Christ** – the body of the redeemed, the saved. God “...hath put all things under **his** feet, and gave **him** to be the **head** over all things to **the church**, Which is **his body**...” (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). “...Christ is the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23). He promised to build his church (Matthew 16:18) and did so on the first Pentecost after his resurrection (Acts 2:1-47). Thousands repented of their sins and were immersed in water for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38; cf. Mark 16:16; Romans 6:1-18; 1 Peter 3:21). All who desire today to be saved do exactly what they did in the first century.

There is no salvation in the name of Mohammed. Salvation is found in Jesus and Him alone. “Jesus saith...**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.** (John 14:6; cf. Luke 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 13:23). Jesus “is the saviour of the body” which is the church (Ephesians 5:23; 1:22-23). He is “...the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ”

(Philippians 3:20; 2 Timothy 1:10). It is in Jesus’ name that men are saved. No other name under heaven has anything to do with salvation (Acts 4:11-12).

—Garland M. Robinson

## Infant Baptism

There are some churches who sprinkle water on babies and call it baptism. Is infant baptism from heaven or from men? We will show in this article why infant baptism is wrong.

Before a person can be baptized, he must be taught. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). A person must also believe before they are baptized. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). It is a command of God that everybody must repent to obey God. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). We must confess Christ in order to be saved. "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" (Matthew 10:32,33).

Can an infant do any of these things? No! Neither does

the infant have any sin which needs to be forgiven. Jesus said, "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). We become sinners when we break God's law. Paul said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We do not have sin until after we transgress the law of God. The apostle John wrote, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Since sprinkling babies (infant baptism) is not from God, it is from man.

## ORIGINAL SIN

Why do people want to baptize babies? It is because they believe babies are born with sin. The Bible does not teach this. Each person is responsible for his own sins. Ezekiel said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18:20). Our spirit comes from God. God does not give people an evil spirit. "And the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Those who go to heaven are to be like little children. If children were sinners, Jesus would not tell us to be like them. "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid

them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

### CONCLUSION

Since a person must hear and understand, believe, repent, and confess his faith in Christ before being baptized, this does not include infants. Also, until they reach the age where they are able to tell the difference between right and wrong, they are safe.

The practice of infant baptism is from man, not God. We do not have the authority to practice it.

—John M. Grubb

### Thirty Reasons Why We Do Not Use Instrumental Music in Worship to God

It can be stated without fear of successful contradiction that there is no command, approved example, or necessary inference in the New Testament (which is the way to establish Truth), for churches of Christ ever, with authority, to use instrumental music in worship. We are not desiring just to be different, nor are we financially unable to have mechanical instruments, nor is our reason for not using this in worship simply that we do not like mechanical instruments. The basic scriptural reason for not placing an instrument in the Lord's church is simply that we have no authority from Heaven.

In the eight scriptures which mention the kind of music to be used in New

Testament worship there is no mention of any kind of music except singing (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13).

Hence, we do not presumptuously place mechanical instruments in worship because:

1. Jesus never taught it (Acts 1:1).
2. The disciples of Christ never practiced nor taught it (Matthew 28:18-20).
3. Peter and the other apostles who had the keys of the kingdom did not authorize it (Matthew 16:19; 18:18).
4. The Holy Spirit never instructed it (John 16:13).
5. One cannot speak as the oracles of God and teach its use in worship (1 Peter 4:11).
6. Instrumental music is not "in truth" (John 4:24; 17:17).
7. It does not pertain to life in Christ and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3).
8. It is not a "good work" in God's eyes (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
9. To preach it use is to teach another gospel (Gal. 1:8, 9).
10. By the admission of most, such teaching is an effort to please the ears of men (Gal. 1:10).
11. It did not come by revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12).
12. It is no part of the counsel of God (Acts 20:27).
13. It is not according to sound words (2 Timothy 1:13).
14. It is not in the better covenant (Heb. 8:6).
15. It is not of faith (Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7). (Where there

is no testimony, there can be no faith!)

16. It is not a blood-sealed practice (Hebrews 10:28, 29).
17. Instrumental music in worship is a doctrine of men (Matthew 15:9).
18. It is an addition to the worship prescribed in the Word of God (Revelation 22:18).
19. It is offering "strange fire" in worship unto God (Lev. 10: 1; 1 Tim. 3:14, 15).
20. To use such is not to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).
21. It is will worship (Col. 2:20-23).
22. It is a substitute for the God-given system of religion (Acts 2:42).
23. It cannot be done in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:16-17).
24. Preaching the use of it is not preaching the Word faithfully (2 Timothy 4:2).
25. It should not be contended for by the faithful (Jude 3).
26. One cannot walk in the light and support its use in worship (1 John 1:7).
27. The practice of such departs from the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Cor. 11:3).
28. Introduction of it causes division (John 17:20-21; 1 Kings 18:18).
29. Its addition constitutes the sin of presumption (Deut. 18:20; Psalms 19:13).
30. The only safe and correct course is to refuse the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God (John 12:48).

—Gary Colley