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# Fulton County Gospel News

*Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World*

**"... Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23**

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## LIFE AFTER DEATH

By Richard England  
(Co-Editor 1962-1967)

One of the reasons many fear death is that they do not have an understanding of life after death. We have heard the word "ghost" so much and connected it with those who have departed this life that we have an idea that life after death is a mysterious, vapor-like type of existence, in which we float around in nothingness. This is not what God tells us of the time to come. If we could comprehend the reality of life and existence after death, we might feel as Paul did that it would be better to depart and be with Christ (Phil. 1:21, 23).

Consider the reality of this life we now have. We are beings with a body, consciousness, feelings, able to enjoy good things, able to experience happiness, having knowledge of the things and circumstances about us, loving and being loved. Many other things could be said to signify the reality of our being, but these will suffice to be used to show the reality of life after death.

If you think this life is worthwhile, notice what the Bible says about these same things in the life to come. The very things which one would list as making this life unpleasant at times will all be erased and the qualities that make us want to hold on to this life will be ours in a greater measure. Concerning the body, Paul says: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come! Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and

bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15: 35-44). Through the remainder of the chapter he shows that we will have a new body that will far excel this present body. He does not give us the idea that we will not have the reality of a body, but rather that we will have a much better body in the resurrection than that which we now have. Whereas this body is weak and decays, the new body will be strong and eternal. In fact, we shall have an existence like unto that of Jesus Christ Himself. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). The absence of the unpleasant things of this life is promised in Revelation 21: 4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Paul says in Galatians 6:8 that, "he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." In the book of Hebrews the writer gives a long list of faithful men who did many things "that they might obtain a better resurrection." He further says that God has provided "better things for us." Paul felt that he was ready to die and receive the "crown of righteousness," which God would give him and all other faithful (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

This type of life is given to us through the love of God and Christ. This love goes beyond that which we have even for those who treat us well. God loved us when we were rebellious toward Him.

The things of this life that are pleasant make us want to hold on to it with all our power. If we fully realized the greatness of the life to come we would be more interested in securing it than any thing pertaining to earthly existence. Jesus said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-20). Paul said: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:1-4). In order to lay up treasures in heaven, and to set our affection on things above, we must deny self, give this life as a living sacrifice, take up our cross, follow (obey) Christ (Luke 9:23; Rom. 12:1-2). Study your Bible carefully! It is God's message to you as to how to obtain this greater life after death.

[FCGN - June, 1964]

**BIBLICAL AUTHORITY BY  
IMPLICATION &  
EXPEDIENCY**  
By Bob Winton

### AUTHORITY BY IMPLICATION

Sometimes the Bible tells us what to do or not to do by making direct statements; in other cases, it provides us with examples to imitate. Another

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method is by **implication**. To say that something is "implied" is simply to say that it is required by the evidence. For example, suppose someone had two sacks of grain, each weighing the same, and having a total weight of two hundred pounds. Given this information, we could of course know, by implication, that each sack weighed one hundred pounds. The information provided did not state this fact, but that conclusion is plainly implied. The same logical principles are to be applied in the study of the Bible.

The Bible does not expressly say that the people who heard Peter's sermon on Pentecost day (in Acts 2) believed that Jesus is God's Son. But given the knowledge that one cannot be saved without that faith (John 8:24), and knowing that these people were saved (Acts 2:36-47), we can deduct that they believed on the Lord. This we know by implication.

Likewise, the Bible does not expressly say that Saul of Tarsus repented during his conversion (Acts 9), but knowing that one must repent to be saved (Luke 13:3), and knowing that Saul was saved (Acts 22:16; 1 Tim. 1:13), we can therefore know by implication that he repented.

The Bible does not expressly say when Christ's church was established. It was not before Matthew 16 and not after Acts 2,

because prior to the events of Acts 2 the church is spoken of as being still in the future ["I will build my church" - Matt. 16:18]. But it was established by the end of Acts 2 for people were added to it on that occasion (Acts 2:41,47). Therefore, by implication, we can know that the Lord's church was established on the Pentecost day of Acts Chapter Two.

The Bible does not say that Crispus heard the gospel (Acts 18:8), but since the Record says he "believed," we know he was taught the gospel beforehand, because belief comes only through learning the gospel, God's word (Rom. 10:17; Acts 15:7).

When an action, fact or teaching is absolutely demanded by Biblical information, without being specifically stated, then that action, fact or teaching is an implication. What is taught by a genuine implication is just as binding as those things which are taught by direct statement. But much caution must be exercised to make sure that conclusion is absolutely demanded by the facts, otherwise the *implication* is only an *assumption*.

**AUTHORITY BY EXPEDIENCY**

God expresses his authority through the Bible by making direct statements, by giving examples for us to imitate, and in providing clear implications. Bible authority can also be established by the principle of *expediency*. An "expedient" is anything which assists in the carrying out of our spiritual obligations without changing the nature of those obligations or the end results. It speeds up, or aids, in fulfilling a God-given duty. There is no expediency where there is no obligation. A matter of expediency cannot be made a matter of law. It is as great a sin to make an optional matter required as to make a required matter optional. Christians have the obligation to assemble for worship, but the New Testament makes no requirements as to the place of assembly. When God does not specify how or when a command is to be carried out, it becomes a matter of human judgment, a matter of expedience.

Hebrews 10:25 makes assembling necessary. Other passages make the first day of the week the day to assemble (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). The time on the first day of the week to meet and the place of assembly are not specified, thus are matters of expediency. We could meet in a

private home (Col. 4:15), in a public building, or in the open. The building is an optional expediency which is authorized by the passages which require us to assemble. We are commanded to preach the gospel to the lost (Mark 16:15). Printed material, radio and television, public teaching, and private studies are all expedients to that end. We are told to baptize penitent believers (Acts 2:36-38), thus a baptistry is an expedient to that end. We are told to teach the church (Matt. 28:20); it is expedient to teach different age groups separately, hence we regularly study the Bible in classes.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17). "In the name of" Christ means "by the authority of" Christ. We **must** have Bible authority for all we believe and practice in spiritual matters. If we believe or practice an item without Bible authority, we go beyond the teachings of Christ (2 John 9). To operate without this divine approval is to invite the wrath of God (Rev. 22:18,19; Heb. 20:26-31). The only ways to establish Bible authority for religious beliefs and acts are by (1) direct statements, (2) Bible examples, (3) clear implications, and (4) by expediency. Anything that is not authorized by one or more of these ways is an addition, and thus is forbidden.

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**UNDERSTANDING  
 THE BIBLE**

By Marvin Rickett

The above title implies that the Bible can be accurately understood. It also implies that it may be misunderstood. It can be wrested, either unintentionally because of poor methods, or intentionally to defend preconceived ideas. Peter talked of those who were unlearned and unstable, who wrested the scriptures unto their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). One may understand the Bible's message. If he is not accurately obtaining that message, he is not understanding it. If we do not understand the Bible alike, were are not understanding it. What are the requirements for understanding the Bible?

(1) **Proper attitude.** We must approach the Bible with an

attitude of respect. It is inspired of God: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20,21). For instance, Paul did not speak or write out of his own interpretation of what God wanted, but as the Holy Spirit guided him (1 Corinthians 2:13). Paul affirmed that "All scripture is give by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). Even if one first approaches the Bible before believing it is inspired of God, he should be willing to let it testify of itself and accept whatever conclusion the evidence warrants. It claims inspiration for itself and sets forth adequate evidence to prove it.

- (2) **Read.** In order to understand the Bible, one must read it for himself. There has been too much speculation and criticism of the Bible by those who have never adequately read it. It takes time to read it. One must expend the necessary time. It takes more than a superficial skimming or pronouncing of words. There must be some deliberation and meditation. Understanding comes from reading: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand" (Ephesians 3:4).
- (3) **Exegete.** This sounds like a complicated word, but it really is not. Exegesis simply means to "draw out" the original meaning the author of the passage intended. This is not difficult to do when one studies the passage in its context. It does require study. Nehemiah called it "giving the sense" of the scripture (Nehemiah 8:8). This is the first duty of the Bible student after reading it. It comes before attempting to interpret the passage. Many "Bible handlers," attempt to "thrust in" a meaning that will support a religious notion they are already determined to hold to. This is called "eisegesis." Our basic concern must be: "What one message did the writer intend to convey to the reader of the passage?" This is exegesis.
- (4) **Interpret.** Interpretation is the next step after exegesis. It means to explain the meaning as one

understands it. Each student has the right to interpret for himself. But it must be based on correct exegesis, or the interpretation will be a misunderstanding of the Bible rather than an understanding. No one has the right to issue an official interpretation for anyone else, whether he be the pope, a church council, or a modern translation of the Bible. Many of the modern speech translations interpret instead of translate. Interpreting is not the prerogative of translators, but of the individual readers. When interpretation is based on correct exegesis, we will all "see" the Bible alike.

- (5) **Apply.** Understanding the Bible includes proper application of its message to one's individual faith and practice. The Bible message is one that is not merely held mentally, but one which must be acted upon. It does one very little good to have a mental understanding of the Bible without doing it. It must be applied to our lives.

You **can** understand the Bible. Our God did not give us a message which is beyond the grasp of His human creature. But you must apply some natural rules and expend some effort to obtain an understanding of it. And you **must** come to an understanding of it if you are to be saved from your sins and receive eternal life, for it is only through an understanding of the scriptures that you can know what to do to inherit eternal life.

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### TO JUDGE OR NOT TO JUDGE; THAT IS THE QUESTION By Bruce Stulting

In Matthew 7:1, Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." This passage has been abused by many throughout the years. The phrase, "Now don't start judging me!", is often used to thwart efforts to restore the erring and rebuke false teachers. Many have objected to any criticism of denominational doctrine because of a misunderstanding of the afore mentioned passage. Defense attorneys will often cite this passage in their arguments against prosecution in court room procedures. The failure to properly

understand and apply this passage has caused much strife and led to division in the body of Christ.

In understanding this verse, we must take into account our Lord's words in John 7:24. In this verse Jesus said, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." In efforts to disprove the inspiration of the Bible, infidels have pointed to this seeming contradiction as proof for their proposition. Did Jesus contradict Himself? Was Matthew inspired and not John? Was John inspired and not Matthew? Which is right? To judge or not to judge; that is the question! It there a dilemma? If we say that Matthew is inspired do we make John a liar? If we say that John is inspired do we make Matthew a liar? The answers to these questions are quite simple; there are two kinds of judging. The fact of the matter is, Jesus doesn't condemn every kind of judging. There is a "**righteous judgement**" which is not only **permitted**, but **commanded**. To "judge" means "to hear and decide a case; to determine; to pass sentence" (The American Heritage ® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition Copyright© 1994 by Houghton Mifflin Company). According to Jesus, to judge "righteously" is to do so in keeping with the facts and in keeping with the principles of right; not by "appearance." A judgment based upon "appearance" would be based upon what we see on the surface of things before we really understand the facts involved in the case. This type of judging (according to appearance, regardless of facts) is the basis for our English word "**prejudice**" which literally means to "**pre-judge.**"

The kind of judging which Jesus forbids in Matthew 7:1 is rash, censorious and uncharitable judgments, and that faultfinding spirit of disposition which condemns upon supposition without examination of the charges; forgetful that we also shall stand in the judgment and shall need mercy (cf. Rom. 14:10; James 2:13). The word judge in this context means "condemn" - "condemn not." In the immediate context of Matthew 7:1-5, Jesus was directing his comments to the Pharisees. We must keep in mind the harsh judgments which they made against Jesus. Also, we must see their bitter spirit as they condemned (without mercy) whole classes of their country men, such as the Gentiles, Samaritans, Sadducees,

Publicans, etc. The New Testament is literally filled with examples of their brand of judgment. This faultfinding spirit which looks only on the ill side of people and their actions stands in marked contrast to the "righteous judgment" spoken of by our beloved Savior.

Why is such judging wrong? First, Jesus prohibits it (Matt. 7:1). That in itself is enough. Second, it is dangerous (v. 2). In judging (condemning) others we judge (condemn) ourselves, by incurring the severe judgment of others upon ourselves. We also fail to keep in mind that the Lord will deal with us, in part, as we deal with others (Matt. 7:5; 6:15; James 2:12-13). Third, it is hypocrisy (vs. 3,5). Those who judge harshly and unmercifully are usually the last to see their own sins. This person's faults may be as a "beam" which one cannot see while he is looking for the "mote" in his "brother's eye." Fourth, it is futile (vs. 4-5). We see depicted here both parties having the same trouble or fault. However, the Lord pictures the one who is blind to his own fault endeavoring to correct another who has faults, but to a lesser degree. The beam must go first! No one can help another overcome his sin if he is blind to the same fault in himself (cf. Rom. 2:21-23).

The kind of judgment which Jesus mentioned in John 7:24 is righteous and therefore, proper, Scriptural behavior. Let us consider some of the aspects of "righteous judgment." Note the following:

1. Judging a person by one's "fruit" (Matt. 7:15-20). "... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." A person's conduct and manner of speech indicate his character of life.
2. We are commanded to condemn sin in people's lives (2 Tim. 4:1-4). "... Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Notice some Bible examples of this. (a) Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11); (b) Paul rebuked the church in Corinth for division, carnality and many other sins (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-3; 5:1-6).
3. We are commanded to condemn religious error (Matt. 15:8-9; Rom 16:17-18; Titus 1:13; 1 John: 4:1-3).
4. We are commanded to judge other members of the church when carrying out disciplinary actions. Paul had judged the brother who was committing fornication (1 Cor. 5:3). Paul commanded the

Corinthian church to judge him too (1 Cor. 5:4-5; 12-13). In order to restore unfaithful brethren, we must be able to judge who has sinned (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20).

5. We are commanded to preach to the sinful world (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). We must judge in righteousness (according to God's Word) who is lost and in need of salvation. This may involve religious people as well as infidels (Acts 19:1-7; 17:16-31).

From the foregoing, we can easily see that all human judgments are not wrong. On the contrary, "righteous judgment" is commanded. We must avoid judging (condemning) with the faultfinding spirit. However, that is not the same as judging (drawing conclusions) a brother by the fruits of his life. Let us make sure that we always make "righteous judgments."

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### GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (1 Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

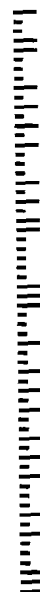
### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

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