

What Determines Right?

NOT REASON: “For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching (message preached) to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. 1:21). “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa. 55:9).

NOT CONSCIENCE: “Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day.” (Acts 23:1). (This said by Paul, even though he had persecuted Christians).

NOT CUSTOM or TRADITION: “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?” (Matt. 15:3). “Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” (Col. 2:8).

NOT “AUTHORITIES”: “And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your RULERS”. (Acts 3:17).

NOT THE MAJORITY OR THE MASSES: “Enter ye in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.” (Matt. 7:13).

BUT RATHER THE WORD OF GOD: It is reasonable, will make the conscience good, is God’s “tradition”, authoritative and intended for all.

- by *Bill Crews*

Are You A Tree or A Post?

A tree and a post stood side-by-side. At first the tree was small and slender and could have been broken very easily. The post at that time was large and solid and strong. It supported a fence.

Then the forces of nature began their work. The post rotted and in time fell down, causing the fence to be spoiled. At the same time the tree grew, little by little, until it was large, sturdy and very strong.

What was the difference between the post and the tree? Well, one was dead and the other was alive! Being dead, the post grew weaker. Being alive, the tree grew stronger.

Now what about those of us who claim to be Christians? Are we like the post or the tree? If our religious qualities are dead, then we are surely growing weaker each year. If we are truly alive in Christ, then each year will find us stronger than ever before.

As Christians we have been made alive by the regenerating power of the blood of Christ. Afterward, real spiritual life in us is maintained by fellowship with God, with Christ and with the Holy Spirit (see 1 John 1.1-7).

- by *Leslie Diestelkamp*

Why Some Are Not Asked

Happy is the person whose conduct does not raise a question in the minds of others as to where he stands. Some people never have to answer the question, “Will you have a drink with me?” There is a reason. Some young people are never subjected to certain temptations to which others are frequently subjected, and there is a reason.

When your conduct raises a question as to where you stand or as to what you might do, the devil will make you answer that question. Every person who raises a question mark in the mind of people has to defend himself or surrender.

- by *R.L. Whiteside*

The Failure of End-Time Predictions

When political matters 'flare up' around the world (as they often do) the end-time prognosticators go to work at a fever pitch. They claim that current events are a sure sign that Armageddon is at hand, the Lord's return is imminent, and the 1000 year kingdom on earth will soon be established. These self-professed "prophecy experts" explain how we are witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecies contained in Daniel and Revelation.

In the face of all this wild religious speculation, we should be reminded of several things:

- 1 - No one knows and no one can successfully predict the time of the Lord's return. At least three times the Scriptures refer to the Lord coming "as a thief in the night" (Mt. 24:43,44; 1 Thess. 5:2-4; 2 Peter 3:10). Obviously, a thief does not give advance warning. Likewise, the Lord has given no indication of when He will return.
- 2 - Jesus has no plans to establish a physical kingdom on earth. He never had such a plan (John 6:15; 18:36). The truth is that the Lord is presently reigning over His kingdom which is already in existence. The Lord's kingdom is the church. (See Acts 2:29-33; Mark 9:1; Col 1:13.)
- 3 - Daniel and Revelation both contain some highly figurative language, and must be understood in light of that fact. Daniel's prophecies involved things leading to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD (Dan. 12:6,7). The book of Revelation discussed "things which must shortly come to pass" in the 1st Century (Rev. 1:1). Any interpretation which fails to take these facts into consideration is seriously mistaken.

- by Greg Gwin