

## **Let The Bible Be Your Guide**

We have nothing to offer but the word of God. We have no Catechism, no Manual, no Confession of Faith; in short, no creed book of any kind but the Bible. If someone were to ask a member of the church, "What do you believe?" he would hand him a copy of the Bible! If the question were more specific, then the Bible would be opened to those passages that deal with that particular problem.

Our plea to each of you is, let the Bible be your guide. There probably has never been a time in modern history when the need for a return to the Bible has been more critical. There is religious division on every hand. Confusion abounds and honest, sincere people don't know which way to turn. A prophet in the Old Testament cried, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Man can fly to the moon and walk on the ocean floor, but he lacks the ability to find his way to heaven. How desperately we need to open our Bibles and let the Lord tell us what is right.

It would be incorrect to say that the Bible is a guide. The reason? The Bible is THE guide! There is no other! 2 Tim. 3:16-17 tells 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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This passage either states the truth or it does not. If it does not, then the Bible is not reliable. If it does state the truth, then the Bible is all any person needs to go to heaven because it will make him perfect and completely furnish him to all good works!

And so we plead, let the Bible be YOUR guide.

**- by Aude McKee**

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## **Muddy Water**

A few years ago our family decided to leave the helter-skelter of big city living and relocate on a small Missouri farm, seven miles south of nowhere. Because of some business obligations which kept me in Phoenix for a few weeks (and some adroit footwork), my wife drew tile responsibility of finding our "dream home" and making the necessary arrangements for the move. One of the "vital" requirements of the "new place" was that it have a good fishing pond not far from the back door. (I'll let you figure out whose requirement that was.) As usual, my better-half performed the impossible and found the ideal home on a few acres with a nice pond (the house even had indoor plumbing ... I think). Now about the pond . . .

This little body of water was about fifty or sixty feet wide and you could see the bottom for about three feet from the shoreline, then the water was muddy towards the center. When the kids and I fished we always cast our lines to the middle because - as all great fishermen know - the big ones are in the deep water. Summer came and went and the Missouri cold cast its lid of ice over our little fishin' hole. The kids soon wanted to play on the ice, which caused us "city slickers" some concern. What if the ice wasn't thick enough? What if they fell into the deep water? So we waited, and we waited until the weather had frozen virtually everything (including me) and then gave our permission to go and play on the pond.

The next spring the ice melted and my adventurous son decided to see just how deep the water was. To all our surprise, he waded across our miniature Lake of the Ozarks without even getting his hip pockets wet. We had made a false assumption that led to all kinds of uncalled for actions and concerns. We figured that the water was deep because we couldn't see the bottom.

Now the point! This story reminds me of some preaching I've heard. Because I couldn't see to the bottom, I thought it was deep. But, you know what? It might just have been muddy! The Bible is a marvelous book. It is designed to be understood, not to be deep just for the sake of depth. There isn't one single piece of information in the Bible which is necessary to salvation that cannot be understood by the common man. That is why Mark 12:37 says, "the common people heard Him gladly." When some preachers infer that to be faithful you must become experts in Greek, Hebrew or the like, just take a step back and beware. When you hear men say, "I know that is what it says, but the Greek changes the meaning," don't you believe it! Ask yourself, "Would God give us a commandment upon which rests the destiny of our soul and not provide us the clear

means of understanding?" The old adage about the Book remains true: "It says what it means and means what it says."

- by Ken Leach

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### ***What Needs Changing?***

When you look into the mirror and your face appears dirty, it is your face, not the mirror that needs attention. The Bible is the mirror of the soul. It reveals our imperfections and shows us how to make corrections. However, some try to rework the Bible instead of reshaping their lives. Don't make that mistake. When you look into the "*perfect law of liberty*", continue in it. Don't be a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work (James 1:25). Don't try to change the word; let the word change your life.

- by Lloyd Atherton

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### ***"Why don't you use instrumental music?"***

Frequently we are asked about our practice of observing *a cappella* music in our worship services. Folks are curious. They want to know why we don't have instrumental music. Our practice is different - we're not like the majority of other religious groups. What is the reason? People really want to know. So they ask, "Why don't you use instrumental music?"

With no intention to be flippant, we might very well respond with a counter-question: "Why should we?" That's fair, isn't it? Those who think that instrumental music is right and proper ought to be able to tell us why they think so. When we ask this question, the typical responses are:

***"We really like instrumental music."*** Be careful here - - remember that our goal is to please God, not men, not even ourselves (Gal.1:10).

***"Well, everyone else is doing it"*** Anyone who thinks that this proves the real acceptability of a thing needs to be reminded that Jesus said the majority of people (even the majority of "religious" people) will be condemned in the day of judgment. Read Matthew 7:13-14, 21-23.

***"God gave certain people musical talent, and they ought to be able to use it"*** If this logic works, then the fella who is a talented mechanic would be justified in rebuilding a car engine during the worship services, too. And the surgeon who wants to glorify God could do an appendectomy before the assembled congregation. Surely we can see the flawed thinking behind this argument.

***"They used instruments in the Old Testament"*** True, but we are no longer under that law (Col. 2:14-16). We need to find our authority in the New Testament - and there is none.

In the final analysis, everything we do religiously must be based on the authority of the Lord (Col. 3:17). If we cannot defend a practice by appealing to the Scriptures, then we ought not to do it. There is simply no New Testament authority for the use of instrumental music in our worship. That settles it!

- by Greg Gwin