

# Anchor Of The Soul

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## The Lamb of God

By Andy Mitchell

John saw Jesus and said, “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” (Jn. 1:29). Why is Jesus called the “Lamb of God” and what does a lamb have to do with taking away sin?

**The Need for Sacrifices:** One might ask, “Why were animals sacrificed under the old law?” To answer this, we need to understand the problem of sin. God is all good and will have no part with sin (1 Jn. 1:5). Sin separates us from God (Is. 59:1-2). We “*all have sinned*” (Rom. 3:23). But God desires to dwell with us. Do you see the problem? You see, for God to dwell with us, sin must first be removed. Sin cannot be removed “*without shedding of blood*” (Heb. 9:22).

**Unblemished Lambs:** It was an abomination to God to offer an animal that had a blemish (Deut. 17:1). “*And if there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.*” (Deut. 15:21).

**Multiple Sacrifices:** Under the old law, sacrifices were offered daily (Num. 28:3), weekly (Num. 28:10), monthly (Num. 28:11), and yearly (Heb. 9:25). So we might conclude that the sins were, in a sense, pushed forward. “*But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.*” (Heb. 10:3).

**A Better Sacrifice:** “*It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*” (Heb. 9:23). Jesus was “*without sin*” (Heb. 4:15). Hence, he is the ultimate “*lamb without blemish and without spot*” (1 Pet. 1:19). He meets the need! “*We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*” (Heb. 10:10). There is no more need for a daily offering (Heb. 7:27). “*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*” (Heb. 10:14).

ARE YOU WASHED IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB?

# Harmonizing Grace & Obedience

By Casey Head

“Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I’m found, was blind, but now I see.” The longer I serve in the kingdom of God, the more I appreciate and cherish these sweet words! As I study the Bible, I learn of God’s amazing character, and as I study the ways of men, I see the sinful practices that put Jesus on the cross at Calvary. I am constantly reminded of my own inadequacies. Yes, I am a child of God, but I didn’t *earn* a place in the kingdom. God never owed me salvation, nor will He ever owe me anything. I am what I am by the grace of the Lord, and for that I am thankful.

At the same time, I recognize that God requires every ounce of my being. He demands not only the affections of my heart but my obedience as well. I must diligently serve the Lord each and every day. Every decision that I make must be according to the will of God and the principles of His word. As a husband and father, as a citizen of this country, as a man, I must consult and humbly follow the plan of God. If I fail to obey the teachings of the doctrine of Christ, then I have drawn back unto perdition (Heb. 10:39). It is necessary for me to be obedient and faithful unto death.

Some religious people today will readily acknowledge that grace is necessary for salvation, but they do not see the *need* to obey. At the same time, other religious people see the need to obey God and to engage in “works” but they fail to truly understand and appreciate the grace of God. There are Calvinists and Protestants who say “grace only” and others (especially those of the Catholic persuasion) who say “works only.” Why do men run to these extremes? Why can they not see that both grace and obedience are necessary, and that there is no contradiction between the two?

I am in no way saying that we are saved by the works of the old law (Gal. 2:16). Nor am I saying that we are saved by our own works of righteousness (Titus 3:5) or works of which we can boast (Eph. 2:9-10). We cannot *earn* salvation. But at the same time, God does demand our obedience (Heb. 5:9) and faithfulness (Rev. 2:10).

As you live your life, prayerfully consider the “amazing grace” of God. Always remember that God loves you and has made it possible for you to be forgiven through the precious blood of His Son. The more you study and appreciate God’s grace, the easier it will be to obey His will and the happier you will be in His kingdom!

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## Bible Trivia

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## Lightning Lesson

We are told in 2 John 9, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." When we transgress the law of God, we sin (1 Jn. 3:4), and the result is a loss of fellowship with God. Now, let's apply this to the division that exists in the religious world today. Let's say that a Baptist teaches immersion and a Catholic, sprinkling? Are they both right? What does the doctrine of Christ teach? Clearly, the one in **error** here has transgressed the law and fails to have fellowship with God. Let's say that a Missionary Baptist church teaches the impossibility of apostasy while a Free-Will Baptist church teaches that a child of God can sin so as to lose their salvation. Are they both right? What does the doctrine of Christ teach? One **must be guilty of transgression**, and according to 2 Jn. 9, the one in error is not in fellowship with God! We could go on and on looking at different examples, but the point is this: "unity in diversity" may sound good, but it just doesn't measure up! It does matter what you believe!

### Books of the Bible:

1. The book of Acts was written by a doctor named \_\_\_\_\_?
2. What two books of the Bible were named after women?
3. The book of Lamentations was written by which prophet?
4. Which two minor prophets addressed the sins of Nineveh?
5. The first five books of the Bible are often called the \_\_\_\_\_?

### True or False:

6. Asa and Nadab were the first kings of the divided kingdom.
7. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.

### Challenge Question:

8. What New Testament principles can be applied to gambling?

### Evidence of God and the Bible:

Why is it that humans are so much more advanced than every other species on this planet? If evolution were true, we would find other species that were at least comparable to us, but we do not! Furthermore, human beings can act morally, which points to divine origin, and we all have an innate religious inclination. Every civilization that has ever existed has worshipped a higher being. Clearly, there is a God!

### Answers:

1. Luke (Ac. 1:1 → Lk. 1:1-4); 2. Ruth and Esther; 3. Jeremiah; 4. Jonah and Nahum (Jon. 1:2; Nah. 1:1); 5. Pentateuch; 6. False, Rehoboam and Jeroboam were the first kings of the divided kingdom (1 Kin. 12); 7. False, Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:5, 12-17).

### Challenge Question ANSWER From January 2008:

Is social drinking wrong? The emphatic answer is "YES!" The process of getting drunk is condemned in Ephesians 5:18, as seen in the Greek word "methusko." We also see the negativity that is connected with alcohol in the book of Proverbs (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35). Furthermore, when we examine how the word "wine" is used throughout the Bible, we learn that while grape juice (wine) was indeed consumed by the people, fermented and intoxicating wine was never permitted. Those wanting to serve God must refrain from the consumption of alcohol.

## “I Don’t Like His Attitude”

By David Thomley

Two preachers were preaching about baptism. The first preacher carefully explained several passages of scripture. He was obviously concerned with truth, and he ably conveyed that same concern as he spoke. The listener, whether he agreed or disagreed, could sense both love and sincerity in the message being presented.

The second preacher used the same scriptures about baptism as the first preacher. He was, however, quite different in demeanor. His presentation was full of sarcasm. He took every opportunity to insult and belittle those who disagreed with his understanding of baptism. Only by exercising great patience and determination could a listener come to appreciate the biblical teachings on this subject. Most of his audience would, understandably, be “turned off” by such an attitude.

As disgusted as one might be, however, or as legitimate as his dismissal of the lesson might be, one ought to be aware of the danger in “turning off” a lesson, sermon or criticism merely because it was improperly delivered. The denominationalist might leave with justifiable feelings of frustration after listening to the second preacher’s tirade; but if he leaves without being baptized (Ac. 2:38; Mk. 16:16), he leaves without forgiveness. **Bad attitudes, however inexcusable, do not change the truth!**

There are occasions when someone is going to challenge some basic tenets of the Christian’s faith; or someone is going to come along and question some worship practices or fellowship matters which have not been questioned for years (maybe never before). How will the Christian react? Too often, when the words inflict painful wounds and stir the emotions of saints, he is tempted to simply dismiss the point of contention with one of those “I-don’t-like-his-attitude” statements.

Yes, the challenger may be self-righteous and arrogant; he may be seeking to hurt rather than to heal...but all that is another matter. When a question is raised concerning TRUTH, and the Christian reacts to the attitude, he fails to address the real issue. While the attitude of the critic may well affect HIS eternal destiny, it is the truthfulness of his criticism - not his attitude - which will affect the Christian’s eternal life.

Just because someone speaks with love and compassion does not mean his message is necessarily true. And, just because someone speaks with an improper motive or disgusting attitude, does not mean his message is necessarily false. As seekers of truth, our first obligation is to evaluate the teaching presented, not the attitude of the one presenting it.

## Does Talent Authorize an Action?

By Larry Ray Hafley

*(Introductory Remarks: A young preacher from out west was confronted with the argument that we are to utilize our talents in serving God; therefore, if one is a skilled musician, he should be allowed to exercise his talent in worship. He requested my comments on the argument which appear below.)*

1. Where does the Bible authorize any worship activity, based on the talent of the worshippers? Whenever anyone makes the "talent" argument, he shows he has no "Bible" for his activity. If he did, he would simply cite book, chapter, and verse and be done with it.

2. If the thing is authorized, talent does not matter. Singing is authorized, though I, personally, am a terrible singer. My talent, or lack thereof, has no bearing on the scripturalness of singing. So, of mechanical instruments.

3. Is the authority for the act of preaching itself based on the talent of the speaker (Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:47; Titus 1:3)? One’s talent may or may not play a part in his decision to preach, but preaching is authorized whether one can do it or not. So, of singing. Now, where’s the authority for playing on the mechanical instrument? We are back to square one--the need for scriptural authority!

4. A man is a gifted school administrator, superintendent, and teacher. Though he is single, should he be appointed to serve as an elder, bishop (overseer, superintendent), because of his ability in that area? Likewise, would a successful businessman’s talent be sufficient to put the church into the business world (to raise money, support preachers)?

5. David and others danced in praise and worship. If a talented dancer or showgirl is converted, should we utilize her dancing talent in our worship? David did. If the talent argument works for one, it should work for the other!

Hope this helps some. Just remember that every such argument reveals an opponent’s weakness; namely, he has no Scripture, else he would use it and not his appeal to one’s talent. (The scriptures authorize singing in the church: Rom. 15:9; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12.)

builds a gymnasium or sponsors a trip to Disney World. Never do they ask, **“Where is the scriptural authority for such practices of the church?”** If the people want “feel good sermons” that ease the conscience and soothe the soul, that is what they get. “Preachers” candy-coat their sermons lest they anger the sinners. In effect, they fail to “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2). Doctrinal error in these churches is not only tolerated but propagated. Why? Because “unity-in-diversity” (ecumenicalism) is esteemed higher than the truths of God’s word. When people say, “It really doesn’t matter what you believe” they are affirming the “have it your way” mentality.

To say it concisely, these churches are **unscriptural** in name, worship, organization, teaching and practice. If you want to have it your way then go to Burger King, but when it comes to your effort to serve God, **do it God’s way!** Jesus said, “And in **vain** they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Mt. 15:9).

“Anchor Of The Soul” is distributed monthly by the **Spruce Pine church of Christ**. We are a non-denominational church whose primary goal is to follow the New Testament pattern.

Meeting Times

**Sunday**  
 Bible Class.....10:00 AM  
 Morning Worship.....11:00 AM  
 Evening Worship.....6:30 PM

**Wednesday**  
 Bible Class.....7:00 PM

Directions

Our building is located at 36 McHone Rd just behind the Mitchell Veterinary Clinic in Spruce Pine. Call (828)467-1463 if you need a ride to services or have any questions about the church.

## Errors in the Baptist Manuel

By John Isaac Edwards

*The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches* by Edward T. Hiscox strikes a discord with the Book of truth. Consider a few errors in the Baptist manual.

1) **The Lord's Supper Observance.** The Manual says, "As to the time, place, and frequency, no Scriptural directions are given. These are left optional with the churches. They are usually observed on Sundays, but not necessarily. As to the Supper, our churches have very generally come to observe it on the first Sunday of each month." Contrary to what the Baptist Manual says, Scriptural directions have been given as to the time, place, and frequency of the Lord's supper. "Upon the first day of the week" is the time (Acts 20:7), "in the kingdom" which is the church (Mt. 16:18-19) is the place (Mt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-34), and every first day of the week is the frequency as Acts 20:7 implies.

2) **Baptism.** The Manual has baptism as a church ordinance. "It is common to say that baptism and the Lord's supper are the only ordinances appointed by Christ to be observed by his churches." The Bible nowhere teaches such. Baptism is not a church ordinance, but rather puts one into the church (1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:24). Further, the Manual teaches baptism is non-essential. "Baptism is not essential to salvation, for our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of baptismal regeneration; but it is essential to obedience." Jesus and the apostles taught baptism is essential to salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21). If baptism is not essential to salvation but is essential to obedience, then obedience is not essential to salvation! Yet, Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9).

3) **Grace Only, Faith Only Salvation.** On page 61, the Manual has salvation "wholly of grace." On the very next page, it has salvation "solely by faith." This is a contradiction. It can't be "wholly of grace" and at the same time be "solely by faith." Neither statement is true. The Bible says, "saved by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8-9).

This shows the Baptist Church is contrary to the Bible.

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## “Lie By Till Morning!”

The steamship *Central America*, on a voyage from New York to San Francisco, sprang a leak in mid-ocean. A vessel, seeing her signal of distress, bore down toward her. Perceiving her danger to be imminent, the captain of the rescue ship spoke to the *Central America*, asking, “What is amiss?” “We are in bad repair, and going down. Lie by till morning.” “Let me take your passengers on board NOW,” said the would-be rescuer. It was night, and the captain of the *Central America* did not like to transfer his passengers then, lest some might be lost in the confusion, and, thinking that they would keep afloat some hours longer, replied, “Lie by till morning!” Once again the captain of the rescue ship called: “You had better let me take them now.” “Lie by till morning,” was sounded back through the night. About an hour and a half later, her lights were missed! The *Central America* had gone down, and all on board perished, because it was thought they could be saved at another time. While salvation is offered you, now, do not delay to receive Christ!

-Leslie Greening  
in *Gospel Herald*

## Burger King Churches

By Byron Smith

Though I do not often visit Burger King, I happen to be familiar with their catchy motto, “have it your way.” This is a policy of service that has its appeal. If I want a plain burger, I can get it at Burger King. If I want a burger with bacon, lettuce, and tomato, “hold the ketchup,” I can get it at Burger King as well. I get to choose, and when it comes to a burger, that’s the way I like it. Burger King accommodates choice, selection and variety. Is there anything wrong with this Burger King policy of service? Certainly not, as long as we keep it out of religion (Col. 3:17). Let me illustrate with a biblical example from the Old Testament.

Jeroboam became king of the northern ten tribes of Israel when the kingdom divided with Judah after the death of Solomon (1 Kin. 11-12). Jeroboam had the potential for great success as a king if he would simply place his trust in God and obey Him; if he would only do things God’s way (1 Kin. 11:38). This Jeroboam did not do. Because of his fear of losing the kingdom he created a religious system foreign to that which God had revealed for His people (1 Kin. 12:25-33). Jeroboam made golden calves for the people to worship and placed them in Dan and Bethel. He also made priests from different tribes of Israel. This was a violation of the law of God. Furthermore, he “devised in his own heart” a feast day that would rival the one celebrated in Jerusalem. **Jeroboam did things his own way.** He thoroughly disregarded the will of God, and the consequences of Jeroboam’s sin were dreadful and far-reaching. Ultimately, it led to “disaster on the house of Jeroboam” (1 Kin. 14) and set a precedent of sinfulness for the kings who would follow him. Jeroboam had devised a “Burger King religion.” Yes, it accommodated the people, but it was sinful.

What about today? Do we witness anything in our modern religious world comparable to the religion of Jeroboam? Yes, it is all around us in the various denominations of men. **People are doing things their own way** (cf. Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12). Some churches even conduct surveys to see what people want, and whatever people want, that is what they get (Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4).

If the people want a band, the church gives them a band and the people are entertained. If the people want food and frolic, the church builds a kitchen or fellowship hall and the people have their bellies filled (cf. 1 Cor. 11:22, 34). They make the church into a social club comparable to the YMCA. If the people want recreation, the church... →