

Anchor Of The Soul

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“It is Written Again”

By Byron Smith

In the temptation of Jesus (Mt. 4:1-11) the devil attempted to persuade Him to jump from the pinnacle of the temple by saying “**It is written**” and then quoting an Old Testament passage in which God promised protection for His people (Ps. 91:11-12). Imagine that! **The devil quoted scripture.**

In response to this, Jesus in His infinite wisdom and knowledge, said to the evil one, “**it is written again**” and then correctly quoted and applied another Old Testament passage (Deut. 6:16). In essence, Jesus said, **there is more** in God’s law that relates to the issue at hand than the Scripture quoted by the devil.

What an invaluable lesson we learn from Jesus’ use of the Scriptures- **we must take all the Bible says on any given subject and then draw a conclusion.** We must not take one verse out of context and misconstrue that verse to make it teach something it was not intended to teach. Often, men quote from the Scriptures to support their manmade theories and doctrines. Sometimes they **misapply** a passage by ignoring its **context**. Other times they refer to one passage **while ignoring other passages that give additional information** on the same subject.

Simply because someone quotes a Bible verse is **not** a guarantee that the person is speaking the truth. The devil misused the Scriptures in tempting Jesus, and he has countless “false teachers” (2 Pet. 2:1) who are capable of tactfully misusing Scriptures today, many of whom have their seminary certificates and doctorates in theology. Beware! Your soul is too precious to place in the hands of men (Ac. 17:11).

Jesus had already said in response to a previous temptation, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Mt. 4:4). Indeed, the devil shows us how to misuse the Scriptures. Many have learned it well. But Jesus shows us how to use them properly. Let us learn the “it is written again” principle.

Moses Wasn't Complaining

By Edwin Crozier

To our modern sensibilities, it just does not seem fair. Moses had been a great leader. Then one day, he let his temper get the better of him and did one wrong thing. In Numbers 20, the Israelites were complaining again. They had been delivered by the Lord repeatedly, but still they complained, "If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord!" In vs. 8, God told Moses to take his rod and Aaron and go "speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water." Despite God's clear instruction, Moses did not speak to the rock, he struck it. God responded in vs. 12, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

We know the rest of the story. In Deuteronomy 34, Moses went to the mountaintop, was allowed to see the Promised Land and then died before the Lord without entering Canaan or enjoying its fruit. That does not seem fair. One mistake and no Promised Land. However, though Moses faced consequences for his sin, he did not face eternal damnation. He was forgiven. Moses learned from God's chastening and clearly repented.

Fast forward about 1500 years to the next time we see Moses. In Matthew 17:3, Moses appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Do you think he was complaining about never living in Canaan? Keep in mind, he had spent the previous 1500 years in the presence of God in paradise. I do not think Moses was complaining.

We often have a skewed view of what is fair and what is important on this side of death. However, when we enter eternity our perception will clear up. On this side of death, we get upset about facing consequences of sin, thinking it is somehow not fair. We are upset for the person who has to remain single or get out of an unlawful marriage because of past sin. We think it is unfair when someone got pregnant or caught a disease the one time they committed immorality. We wonder why God let's the one who got drunk only once have a car wreck and lose their legs. To us it just does not seem fair.

What we must remember is the one who learns from God's chastening instead of complaining about how unfair it is will live through eternity with God. I venture to say no matter how unfair we thought things were here, when we enter heaven, we will not be complaining anymore. As Romans 8:18 says, we will learn that heaven is worth it all.

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Bible Trivia

New Testament Teachings on Baptism:

1. According to Mark 16:16, what do faith and baptism yield?
2. What does Acts 8:38 tell us about the mode of baptism? Is it accomplished via immersion, sprinkling or pouring?
3. Baptism is compared to what in Romans 6:3-5?
4. Galatians 3:27 tells us that we are baptized into _____.
5. Why is baptism compared to circumcision in Colossians 2:11-12?

First Century Martyrs:

6. After his death, this man's clothes were laid at Saul's feet.
7. This man was killed by the sword (John's brother).

Challenge Question:

8. Most agree that drunkenness is sinful, but what about social drinking? Is it wrong to drink a few beers with your pizza or a few occasional glasses of wine with your spouse?

Evidence of God and the Bible:

Certain common sense laws tell us that there is a God. For example, life cannot come from non-life, and design demands a designer. If you were walking through the forest and stumbled across a computer, would you conclude that it had a designer, or that it just evolved? Designer!

Answers:

1. Salvation; 2. Immersion, they went *down into the water*; 3. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ; 4. Christ; 5. Both involve a surgical operation, only in baptism, the operation is spiritual and our sin is cut away by God; 6. Stephen (Ac. 7:58); 7. James (Ac. 12:2).

Challenge Question ANSWER From December 2007:

While not all dancing is inherently sinful, much of *modern dancing* is. This is the kind of dancing that takes place at school dances and in night clubs, and it is intended to be sexually stimulating. In Galatians 5:19, the word "lasciviousness" means "immodest bodily movements," and can certainly be applied to modern dancing. Also, this is the kind of dancing that Herodias' daughter performed in Mark 6:22 that "pleased Herod." No child of God should engage in modern dancing!

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Jehovah's Witnesses are WRONG (No. 4)

By Casey Head

As we conclude this short series of articles on the error of the Watchtower Society, let us focus our attention on their teaching that there is no soul distinct from the flesh.

Initially, this doctrine may sound strange to you. If you are like me, you were raised to believe that there are two parts of man. There is the physical, fleshly part of man that is mortal, and then there is the soul/spirit of man that is made "in the image of God." But Jehovah's Witnesses deny this, saying that the flesh and soul are the same. If this is true, it means that there is no such thing as eternal punishment. After all, if the flesh and soul are the same, then physical death simultaneously results in the death of the soul and total non-existence.

Jehovah's Witnesses often turn to Genesis 2:7 which says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; *and man became a living soul.*" They use this to teach that physical man is a soul. But is that what God meant when He said that "man became a living soul?" Of course not! We know based on other verses that the soul is distinct from the body. For example, Matthew 10:28 says, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy *both soul and body* in hell." Clearly, there are two aspects of man- the physical and the spiritual! So what is Genesis 2:7 saying? Not that the flesh and soul are one and the same, but rather that man possesses a soul.

Another common argument used by the Watchtower Society revolves around "the valley of the son of Hinnom" (Jer. 7:31) which is later used by Christ as a synonym for hell (Mt. 5:29-30). The valley of the son of Hinnom (Gehenna) was a trash dump where waste was burned and destroyed. Jehovah's Witnesses therefore conclude that the word "hell" is simply used in reference to complete destruction, not everlasting punishment. It is true that the trash dump of Hinnom was used as a physical representation of hell, but the word "Gehenna" evolved to refer completely to hell and eternal torture. Passages like Mt. 8:11-12 and Mt. 13:49-50 speak of hell as a place where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Certainly, much more could be said about the many false teachings of the Watchtower Society, but I hope that these short articles have helped you. Call me at (828)467-1463 if you have any questions or if you would like to request additional (free) material.

Believe in Jesus, Believe What He Said!

By Andy Mitchell

If you really believe in Jesus, then you should believe his words! Do you believe that he meant what he said?

His Words Have Value! When many of his disciples discovered that some of his words were hard to swallow, they stopped following him. Jesus then turned to the rest, and said, "*Will ye also go away?*" (Jn. 6:67). "*Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*" (Jn. 6:68). His words can make you free (Jn. 8:32) and sanctify you (Jn. 17:17). So how valuable are his words?

To Reject His Words Is To Reject Jesus Himself! Listen to his words. "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*" (Jn. 12:48). If you reject his words, his words will reject you.

Hear ALL That He Says! When Moses prophesied of Jesus, he said, "*Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*" (Ac.3:22). Are you listening to Jesus? Or are you listening only to what you want to hear?

Observe ALL His Commandments! Are you one of those people who follow His words when it's convenient, but dismiss them as unimportant when you don't like what it says? Jesus commanded, "*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" (Mt. 28:20).

Live By EVERY Word! Jesus said to Satan, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*" (Mt. 4:4)

Teach All The Words! Paul kept back nothing that was profitable (Ac. 20:20), and did not shun to declare all the counsel of God (Ac. 20:27). Could your preacher say that?

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:1)

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“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. Below, you will find our meeting times and the location of our building.

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. If you turn onto 226 South from Hwy 19, drive past Don Smith Ford/Subaru to the top of the hill. McHone Road will be on your right. Once you turn onto McHone Road, we are the second driveway on the right. You will see the sign on the top of the hill.

The Spruce Pine church of Christ wants you to know that we are willing to assist you with any spiritual struggles or Bible questions that you may have. Casey Head and Andy Mitchell, our two evangelists, would be happy to set up a personal Bible study with you in your home, at our meeting place, or at a location that is convenient for you. You name the place and the time, and we'll be there to study with you. Whether you have a topic that you would like to discuss or simply want to learn more about God, we will do what we can to help and encourage you. You may call us at (828)467-1463, email us at NCBibleQuestions@yahoo.com, or attend our services. “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” (Eccl. 12:13)

Entertainment

By Ethan R. Longhenry

Over the past few decades we have seen our society become drenched in entertainment. Billions of dollars are spent annually on television, movies, live theatres, the Internet, and many other venues. Even the religious world has come on board, providing services that are designed to entertain. The impulse to entertain and be entertained, therefore, is extremely strong. What shall we say regarding these matters?

It is not as if all forms of entertainment are inherently sinful. In fact, some forms of entertainment can have value. God never expected man to work without any form of rest; the Sabbath rest for the Jews was given to them to provide them a break from the toils of life (Exodus 20:8-11, Mark 2:27). Therefore, there is no condemnation for people if they desire to rest. Entertainment can even be used to other ends; brethren can "entertain" their fellow brethren in their homes, fulfilling 1 Peter 4:9, and also develop closer bonds by participating in wholesome forms of entertainment with each other. This is also true of the family, between the husband and wife and between the parents and their children. In moderation, therefore, entertainment can provide many benefits.

Some forms of entertainment, however, provide a stumbling block to the Christian. Many movies, television shows, and video games glorify immorality. Violence is so prevalent within modern forms of entertainment that few are appalled at what is portrayed. All kinds of sexual immorality are presented, and many are even glorified as ideal or at least expected. Few are the works of the flesh that are not portrayed in modern entertainment (Galatians 5:19-21). The more often such immorality is portrayed, the more people desire it, giving approval to such deeds (Romans 1:32). Furthermore, there are many forms of entertainment that are sinful through and through-- going to bars and getting drunk (drunkenness), dancing at clubs (revelry), pornography (lasciviousness), and even things such as horoscopes and psychic readings (sorcery; Galatians 5:19-21). Has God called us to approve of such things (Romans 12:1-2), or to expose them (Ephesians 5:11)?

Many forms of entertainment, then, can provide relaxation and a short escape from the normal routines of life. Let us make sure that we are not approving of sin by our entertainment choices, and let us exercise moderation in our enjoyment of moderation, keeping the right priorities first!

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No Provision for Winter or Death

Among the many thrilling stories told in connection with the search of gold in the Klondike is one which impressed me more than all the others. A prospecting party, penetrating far into the country, came upon a miner's hut. All without was as quiet as the grave. Entering into the cabin, they found the skeletons of two men, and a large quantity of gold. On a rough table was a letter telling of their successful search for the precious ore. In their eagerness to get it, they forgot the early coming of winter in that northern land. Each day, the gold was found in more abundance. One morning, they awoke to find a great snowstorm upon them. For days the tempest raged, cutting off all hope of escape. Their little store of food was soon exhausted, and they lay down and died amidst abounding gold! Their folly was not in finding and gathering the gold, but in neglecting to provide against the inevitable winter. Neither are men to be classed as fools today who are diligent in business and successful in the accumulation of property. The folly is in permitting these to so occupy the attention that provision for the greater winter of death, so soon to fall, is entirely neglected.

-W.W. Weeks, in *The Heart of God*

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Lightning Lesson

There are many different ideas and opinions when it comes to how the church should worship the Lord. Some want to continue in the traditions of their particular denomination while others want to follow their every feeling and do what "feels right." I don't have to tell you that this leads to countless patterns of worship. Some worship in a very rigid, ritualistic way with "priests" and "holy garments" and candles. Others worship in a very contemporary way with rock bands and tingly hearts. Some observe the Lord's Supper once a month, while others once a quarter. I could go on and on discussing the different ways that people worship God. But is this what God wants? John 4:24 says to worship in spirit and truth. In other words, we must worship the right way with the right heart. To worship in truth is to worship *according to God's word* (Jn. 17:17). And believe it or not, Jesus also informs us that we worship *in vain* when we follow our traditions instead of God's commands (Mk. 7:7-9). So which is it for you? Are you worshipping according to the doctrine of Christ (book, chapter and verse for all that you do), or is your worship vain?