

Anchor Of The Soul  
P.O. Box 401  
Spruce Pine, NC 28777

# Anchor Of The Soul

Vol. 2, Issue 5

May 2008

## “God Hath Chosen the Foolish Things”

By Casey Head

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty...that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

In other words, the commands of God will not always make sense, and they will certainly be unpopular at times. Let’s consider a few examples of the “foolish” commands of the law of God.

The New Testament teaches that water baptism is essential for salvation (Mk. 16:16; Ac. 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-8; 1 Pet. 3:21). When you inform most denominational people of this simple truth, they call you a “waterdog” and claim that you are teaching “works salvation” (as if baptism earns salvation). But if the scriptures teach that it is essential, then it is essential and we must accept it and practice it!

We are also told that there is “one body” (Eph. 4:4). Again, this flies in the face of conventional wisdom. People would rather say, “Join the church of your choice,” but is that what the Bible teaches? In the first century, the same thing was taught in every church (1 Cor. 4:17), and when doctrinal error was taught, it was dealt with (Ac. 15:1-2) not tolerated. There is just one church and one faith! As difficult as that may be to accept, and as “illogical” as it may seem, it is what the Bible teaches, and therefore, we must accept it!

What about the command to “love your enemies” (Mt. 5:44)? We want to return evil for evil, but God expects us to return *good* for evil (Rom. 12:21). Christians ought to be gentle, peaceable and forgiving. Certainly, this “confounds the wise.”

When you are trying to determine truth, don’t ask, “Does this make sense?” Instead ask, “Is this what the Bible teaches?”

# The Heart

By C.R. Sutton

Many people confuse the physical heart within their chest cavities with the spiritual heart that is more frequently discussed in the Scriptures. Some of this misunderstanding may be cleared up if we consider what it does. Here are some things it does.

1. **THINKS.** Proverbs 23:7 says: "for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Esther 6:6 says: "Now Haman thought in his heart..." Mt. 9:4 says: "And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" Jesus also said: "...for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts..." (Mt. 15:19).
2. **UNDERSTANDS.** Isaiah 32:4 says: "The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge..." Also see Job 38:36.
3. **KNOWS.** Joshua 23:14 says: "...and ye know in all your hearts..." Prov. 14:10 says: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness..."
4. **REASONS.** Mark 2:6 Says: "But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts". In verse 8 Jesus asked them: "Why reason ye these things in your hearts?"
5. **BELIEVES.** Romans 10:10 says: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness..." Also see Acts 8:37.
6. **DESIRES.** Romans 10:1 says: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."
7. **PURPOSES.** Paul said: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give..." (2 Cor. 9:7).
8. **DEVISES.** "A man's heart deviseth his way..." (Prov. 16:9).
9. **LOVES.** Jesus said: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (ML 22:37).
10. **PRESUMES.** Esther 7:5 says: "...Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?"
11. **DESPISES.** 2 Samuel 6:16 Says: "...And she despised him in her heart."
12. **OBEYS FROM THE HEART.** In Rom. 6:17-18 Paul said: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
13. **LIVES FOR EVER.** Psalms 22:26 says: "...your heart shall live for ever."

NOTE: These texts show that the "heart" of the Bible is the mind (CH).

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## Characteristics of Bible Miracles (No. 2)

By John Isaac Edwards

A good way to see that miracles have ceased is to observe differences in Bible miracles and “miracles” purported today. **(NOTE: This is a continuation of an article in last month’s newsletter.)**

6) Not Done For Money. We read where the lame man of Acts 3 was expecting to receive alms of Peter and John, but where do you find Peter and John expecting money or charity from the lame man? Today’s “faith healers” have it backwards! I suggest that when the money stops pouring in that the “healing power” will stop flowing out! Why do “healers” today beg and plead for money, when healing in New Testament days was not done for money?

7) Presence Unnecessary. The one doing the healing and the one being healed did not have to be together for the miracle of healing to take place. A good example is when “God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them” (Acts 19:11-12). Let’s see the “miracle men” and “wonder workers” do this today. If you have some handkerchiefs or aprons of healing, we have some with diseases we would like to see depart from them.

8) Public. Apostolic miracles were so public that the conferring council could say of the apostles Peter and John, “...for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem” (Acts 4:16). If such miracles are being performed by men today, why is it that we do not know about it? Why not perform a notable miracle manifest to all that dwell in (Spruce Pine)?

9) Complete Healing. Through Bible miracles of healing, lame men were given “perfect soundness” (Acts 3:16) and impotent men were “made whole” (Acts 4:9). The healing was total and absolute. There was no partial healing, nor was there any relapse. Why is this not true of “miracles” today?

10) Undeniable. The council of Acts 4 could not deny the miracle of healing performed by Peter and John (Acts 4:16). The fact that “healing miracles” of today are denied is proof that they are not genuine, bona fide miracles.

Characteristics of Bible miracles are not characteristic of “miracles” alleged today. This one truth sets them aside as faked, forged, and feigned. Dear reader, do not be deceived by “deceitful workers” by “lying wonders” (2 Cor. 11:13; 2 Th. 2:9).

“Anchor Of The Soul” is distributed monthly by the **Spruce Pine church of Christ**. We are a non-denominational church whose only 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.

### Ten Reasons to Assemble With Us..

1. Our sermons are completely Bible based.
2. Our classes are informative and uplifting.
3. We have Bible classes for all ages.
4. Our worship is in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).
5. Our worship is meant to glorify God, not man.
6. We make all of our visitors feel welcome.
7. We are truly a spiritual “family.”
8. We will do everything we can to help you grow closer to God (as we do the same for one another).
9. There are people of all age-groups, including many young families with children. You won’t feel out of place.
10. We are not “just another denominational church.” We have many things to offer that no church in the immediate area is currently offering.

## Are Works of Obedience Necessary to Receive Salvation?

By Byron Smith

A member of the Baptist denomination stated in the local news-journal, "Works of obedience are not necessary for salvation, but are the evidence of salvation." Is this a true statement substantiated by Scripture? As this question is considered, keep in mind that the focus of this study is not whether we **earn** salvation by works of obedience (i.e. obeying the commands of God). **Certainly we do not!** In fact, Jesus said, when "you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, '**We are unprofitable servants.** We have done what was our duty to do'" (Lk. 17:10). Works of obedience do not **earn** one's salvation from sin. It is "by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Man is not saved by works of merit or works by which one can boast. God does not owe any man salvation simply because he has obeyed Him. However, does this mean that works of obedience are non-essential to **receive** salvation? Does salvation by grace preclude man's obligation to receive the gift? The answer is an emphatic "No!" God requires that man comply with His stated stipulations of salvation. This is how one **receives** the gift of salvation that God gives. Jesus said, "Not every one who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Mt. 7:21). Despite the assertions of men with preconceived ideas, Jesus says salvation is **conditional! You must obey God in order to receive it!** Carefully read Heb. 5:8-9; 1 Pet. 1:20 and Rev. 22:14 in this connection. There are things man "must do" to be saved (Ac. 9:6; 10:6). So, obedience not only follows salvation, but precedes salvation as well.

Evidence of this conclusion is further seen as one considers the specific requirements stated in Scripture: 1) **Faith**-- Can one be saved without faith? Certainly not (Heb. 11:6)! That makes faith a condition of salvation. Who has to have that faith? Man does (Jn. 8:24; Ac. 10:44)! That means that man has a requirement to meet in order to receive salvation. He must believe, and that comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17)! Please note that Jesus specifically called believing a "work" (Jn. 6:28-29). It is not a work of merit, but a work of obedience. 2) **Repentance**-- Can one be saved without repentance? Definitely not (Lk. 13:3)! That means that salvation is not by faith only, but is in conjunction with repentance. Man is required to repent; it is something

## Bible Trivia

### Who said:

1. "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel: and for a sign which shall be spoken against."
2. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"
3. "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts..."
4. "A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country..."
5. "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

### Who prayed:

6. "For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast Thou delivered Thy people at all."
7. "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant..."

### Challenge Question:

8. Does the land of Palestine belong to Israel today?

### Evidence of Intelligent Design:

Such examples as the Pilt-Down Man, Neanderthal Man, Homo-Erectus and Nebraska Man have been cited as evidence of the evolution of man, but they have all either been proven fraudulent or inconclusive. For example, the Pilt-Down man is the greatest forgery of all time. A human skull was doctored up with the jaw of an orangutan! Also, the only original part of Nebraska Man was a pig's tooth! Yet many of these fraudulent "evidences" of evolution remain in science books!

### Answers:

1. Simeon (Lk. 2:34); 2. Peter (Ac. 10:47); 3. David (1 Sam. 17:45); 4. Jesus (Mk. 6:4); 5. Noah (Gen. 9:25); 6. Moses (Ex. 5:23); 7. Elijah (1 Kin. 18:36)

### Challenge Question ANSWER From March 2008:

The Bible teaches that man has free-will. Although many passages could be considered, the following five texts unquestionably teach that man has free-will: Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; Prov. 1:29; Is. 56:4; Jas. 4:8.

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"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

2 Corinthians 5:9-11a

that he must do (Ac. 3:19; 17:31). Again, salvation is conditional. Please note that repentance is also spoken of as being a "work" (Jonah 3:10; Mt. 12:41). It is not a work by which we *earn* salvation, but a work of obedience that is necessary in order to receive salvation. 3) **Confession**-- Can one be saved without confessing their faith in Jesus? The apostle Paul affirms that confession is a condition of receiving salvation (Rom. 10:9-10). Note the conditional "if" in Paul's teaching. Who has to confess? Is that something that God does for us? No! It is something that man must do (cf. Ac. 8:37). While confession is not specifically a "work," it is undeniably an action that man chooses to engage in if he wants to be saved. 4) **Baptism**-- Man is generally willing to acknowledge the aforementioned conditions of salvation, but forgoes their consistency when it comes to baptism. Can one be saved without baptism? Absolutely not! "Let God be true but every man a liar." Despite the fallacious reasoning of men, Jesus stated baptism as a condition of salvation. Men can finagle all they want to, but when it is all said and done, Jesus still said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved..." (Mk. 16:16). It is a requirement to be met in order to receive salvation (Ac. 2:38; 22:16). It is the means God has chosen for man to get "into" Christ (Gal. 3:26-27) and "into His death" (Rom. 6:3-5). Note that what occurs in baptism is called "the working of God" (Col. 2:11-13). Baptism is an operation performed "without hands" in which the sins of the flesh are removed by God. Who is doing the work? God is! Also keep in mind that whereas faith, repentance and confession are acts one must perform themselves to be saved, one simply permits another to baptize them. You do not baptize yourself. These facts actually make baptism the most passive act of obedience in becoming a Christian.

Where do the conditions of faith, repentance, confession and baptism fall in connection with salvation? They come first and salvation follows! The doctrine that says "works of obedience are not necessary for salvation" is false and deceiving. It leads people to believe they are saved when they have not met the conditions stipulated by the Lord. This doctrine also distorts the purpose and design of baptism. Instead of being "for the remission of sins" (Ac. 2:38), it allegedly becomes "because of the remission of sins." This is not the "one baptism" of the Bible (Eph. 4:5). Repent of denominational error and obey the simple gospel plan of salvation. Your soul is too precious to jeopardize.

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## “Nobody Made It! It Just Happened!”

Sir Isaac Newton had a replica of our solar system made in miniature. In the center was the sun with its retinue of planets revolving around it. A scientist entered Newton’s study one day, and exclaimed, “My! What an exquisite thing this is! Who made it?” “Nobody!” replied Newton to the questioner who was an unbeliever. “You must think I am a fool. Of course somebody made it, and he is a genius.” Laying his book aside, Newton arose and laid his hand on his friend’s shoulder and said: “This thing is but a puny imitation of a much grander system whose laws you and I know, and I am not able to convince you that this mere toy is without a designer and maker; yet you profess to believe that the great original from which the design is taken has come into being without either designer or maker. Now tell me, by what sort of reasoning do you reach such incongruous conclusions?”

-W.G. Polack in “Lutheran Witness”

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## Lightning Lesson

One of the key elements to being a faithful Christians is the development and upkeep of self-discipline. That is, we must learn to control ourselves: our feelings, our desires, our words, etc. Regarding sin, James says in Jas. 1:13-15, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” You see, sin happens when we fail to control our desires and give in to temptation. Whether it is a lustful thought or an agitated temper, we must learn to be disciplined so that we can overcome such tempting situations. Galatians 5:17 says that there is a constant war going on between the flesh and Spirit, but ultimately we must recognize that the choice is ours. When our flesh is begging us to indulge, and when peer-pressure eats away at our resolve, we must “bring (our body) into subjection” (1 Cor. 9:27) and overcome. Self-discipline allows us to walk away from temptation when our carnal side wants to stay. Self-discipline allows us to maintain the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22-23). Self-discipline allows us to focus on God during times of distress and tribulation!