

“Referring to the epistle of St. Peter, I quoted: ‘So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures’ (2 Pet.3:15-16).

“Today, there are an estimated 20,000+ denominations or sects in a fractured Christianity. Ask them all to solve the problem: ‘What does the Bible teach?’ Each will give you a different answer. But you and I know that only one can be correct, all the rest are wrong. There can be only one truth.

“You cannot have one Fold and one Shepherd, one Faith and one Baptism, by allowing every person to distort and pervert the Scriptures to suit his or her own pet theories. This is tantamount to Bible sabotage.

“Christ’s doctrine has always found numerous and fierce opponents, of whom many were quite intelligent, even brilliant. Though Catholic doctrine has been subjected to the strictest sort of examination, thousands of times over, no one has ever proven that it is in any way contrary to sound reason or good morals. Catholicism is a complete and full system of religion. It is also a very beautiful, awe-inspiring religion. Each dogma is indissolubly interlinked with one another in such a way that one flows from one to the other, one calls for and presupposes another. Only a divine intellect could have possibly formulated such a religious system.

“The Bible teaches that the true Church began with Christ, and not with men 15 to 19 centuries later. It also teaches that the visible Church of Christ has had and will ever have an uninterrupted existence. ‘Go therefore and

make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age’ (Matt. 28:19-20).

“Hence the theory that the Catholic Church, which began with Christ, failed, became non-existent for 1000 or more years, and was then revived by Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Smith (either Chuck or Joseph), or some other person, is ridiculous and patently false.

“Contrast the unity of Faith, one fold and Shepherd in the Catholic Church with the dissenting, contradictory tenets of the thousands upon thousands of Protestant churches and the divinity of the former becomes obvious and certain.”

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Pamphlet 152

How Do You Know You Are Teaching Truth?

Victor R. Claveau, MJ

Not too long ago I found myself in a discussion with a man named George, who has been teaching Scripture for many years under the auspices of Calvary Chapel Church. He obviously considered himself very qualified to do so and offered to answer any questions that I might have on the subject.

I said, “There is one question I would like to ask.” He appeared eager to answer, and said, “What would you like to know?”

I then asked, “How do you know you are teaching truth; that your Biblical interpretation is correct?”

It became readily apparent that this was not what he was expecting. With a puzzled look on his face, he thought for a few seconds and then replied, “Well, I have been studying the Bible for many years, and I also pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance.”

“Which Holy Spirit?” I facetiously asked.

“What?” He replied, “There is only one Holy Spirit!”

“Yes”, I said, “there is only one Holy Spirit, and most people, when asked the question about knowing if they were teaching truth will answer in same way, by invoking the Holy Spirit.” My second question to you George, is, “how come the Holy Spirit doesn’t give everyone the same answer. The Holy Spirit does not have a split personality disorder and there can be only one truth. If we were all truly guided by the Holy Spirit in this, and other theological matters, how come there are tens of thousands of Christian

denominations each relying on the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit? It seems to me that this could not have been the way Jesus intended things to be.”

George just sat there looking at me, and when he failed to respond, I went on with another question and answer.

“Do you think that Our Lord Jesus, preached for three years, established His church, and then have been foolish enough to depart without leaving behind some sort of visible authority to carry on His teachings? Jesus must have realized that there would be chaos if everyone were able to interpret his teachings in their own way. For 1500 years, there was Church unity because all looked to the Catholic Church for guidance. Martin Luther rejected Church authority in 1517 and in doing so, opened Pandora’s box and released the chaos that has enveloped the Protestant Christian churches ever since. Jesus left behind a visible Church with the authority to speak for him, He said, ‘He who hears you, hears me’ (Lk 10:16). Scripture tells us that there were bishops, priest, and deacons in the Church Jesus established. Where are they in your church? Acts 15 describes the authority of this visible Church.

“In this day and age, there is no whim or fad that someone will claim has biblical foundations. Most people are conceited enough to set themselves up as competent interpreters of the word of God. ‘I think the Bible means this, therefore it does mean this’ is their position. These people want it thoroughly understood that our forefathers were all fools; that for the last 1900+ years the Christian world was in darkness. With them, however, light has come into the world. The truth is that no book in the world today is

falsified, distorted, and misapplied as much as the Holy Scriptures.

“Some like the early heretics will prove from the Bible that Christ is only God and not man. Others, like the Unitarians, will prove from the Bible that Christ is only man, not God.

“Some denominations will prove from the Bible that in the New Law, Christ shared his priesthood with no one. Others will prove from the Bible that in the New Law, even women are priests; hence the name Presbyters or priests, from which ‘Presbyterian’ is derived.

“One sect will prove from the Bible that baptism is unnecessary for children, but is necessary for adults. Others will prove from the Bible that baptism is necessary for no one; that it is only a ceremony, an initiation such as required when one joins a fraternal group. Still others believe that it is necessary to baptize the dead.

“Campbellites (Disciples of Christ) or ‘First Christians’ will prove from the Bible that to be really baptized, one must be totally immersed in water. Others prove from the Bible that the whole thing is unnecessary and ought to be abandoned.

“The Jehovah’s Witnesses prove from the Bible that there is going to be a millennium, a thousand years when everyone will get a second trial. Calvinists prove from the Bible that a large part of mankind do not even get a first trial, but are predestined to damnation irrespective of their merits.

“Some sects prove from the Bible that eternal punishment is going to be meted out to nearly everyone. Only a small handful of their particular sect is going to escape. But others prove from the Bible that everyone is going to

be saved. To even murderers, adulterers, and those who rob widows and orphans – and never repent – will Christ hold out his arms and say: ‘Come blessed of my Father, and possess the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’

“Reduce to practice, their theory means this: Read the Bible and believe as you like; if you like Martin Luther’s theory, follow it; if you prefer John Calvin’s Christianity, embrace it. If you think that the Adventists have ‘discovered’ the truth, then take them as your guide. If none of these theories suits you, make one up yourself.

“In the Bible we are told to ‘work out our salvation in fear and trembling’, and so we have those who live in dreadful fear of the wrath of God. Again in the Bible, we are told to ‘rejoice in the Lord always’, and so we have the ‘holy rollers’ and those who believed that everyone will be saved so ‘sin and sin boldly’. Surely, you would think that there is sufficient variety to suit every one, but it seems not, for new sects are springing up constantly.

“Each of these groups claims that their version of Christianity is taken directly from the Bible; they are all willing to swear that their little handful are the only ones who are right and that everyone else is wrong. They believe that Christ’s Church (read here the Catholic Church) for almost 2,000 years has been a complete failure, but fortunately they have come to finally set it on the straight path. Meanwhile the Bible itself warns us:

‘For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths’ (2 Tim. 4:3-4).