



# Seek The Old Paths

*“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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## THE PROCESS OF INSPIRATION

*Victor M. Eskew*

***Eventually, all revelation was written down. Today, all of God’s inspired message is found in the book we call the Bible. The Bible is the revealed will of God to man.***

In many ways, the Bible looks like any ordinary work of literature. Human authors penned the words of each book. The books contain themes that are developed within their pages. The readers come in contact with characters, places, and situations that intrigue the mind. Most people who understand literature and who have read the Bible will claim that the Bible is one of the masterpieces of the literary world.

Faithful Christians realize that the Bible is much more than a mere human product. True believers know the Bible has a divine author. Men may have penned the words of the Bible, but those words come from the mind of God and were revealed to man by the Holy Spirit. It is this fact that sets the Bible apart from all other books ever written. It is the only book that is “inspired” of God.

There are numerous verses in the Bible that affirm the inspiration of the Bible — the very Word of God. The most familiar is probably Second Timothy 3:16. The apostle Paul writes: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The word “inspiration” literally means “God-breathed.” Among many other passages that affirm the Bible’s inspiration are:

- 2 Samuel 23:2, “*The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word [was] in my tongue.*”
- Galatians 1:11-12, “*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel*

*which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught [it], but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

- 2 Peter 1:20-21, “*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.*”

This writer’s favorite text on inspiration is found in 2 Corinthians 2:9-13.

<sup>9</sup>But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. <sup>10</sup>But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup>For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup>Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. <sup>13</sup>Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s

wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Let’s look at some of the points made about the process of inspiration in this passage of Scripture.

Paul begins by speaking about **things that were concealed**. “*But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*” (v.9). Many people lift this passage from its context and apply the words to be talking about heaven. Paul, however, is not discussing heaven in this verse. He’s talking about a time when God had not made His will known to man. At that time, God’s will was a mystery to man. Why? Because it is impossible for a human being to know the mind of God unless God makes it known. This is Paul’s point in verse 11. “*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*” In the past, God’s will was concealed from man. God had not divulged His word (his teaching) to humanity.

Paul tells the Christians of the first century that the things that used to be hidden became *things that were*

*(Continued on page 55)*

**The Process of Inspiration...**



Editorial...

# THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Garland M. Robinson

In the simplest of terms, the Bible claims to be the very word of God. Concerning the entirety of the Bible, notice Second Peter 1:20-21: *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.”* This passage has been and is misused and misunderstood by many to say that no one can interpret the Bible for himself and everyone else, but that many interpretations can be made of it. The grave mistake men make is in their failure to recognize that this passage is not talking about how its readers interpret or understand the Scriptures when they read them, but rather how the Scriptures (the Bible) came to be in existence. The point is this, no part of the Scriptures ever had their origin by man’s own will and thoughts. No prophet (spokesman/penman) ever spoke/ wrote by their own interpretation. But rather, holy men of God spoke and wrote as they were inspired (moved along) by the inspiration (direction, guidance) of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, put his stamp of approval on the entirety of the Old Testament Scriptures by referring to them in his teaching. Many people laugh and scorn the account of **Noah and the world wide flood** recorded in Genesis 6-9; yet, Jesus referred to it as an historical fact to illustrate how men will be living at the end of the world (Matt. 24:37-39). Jesus referred to the account of **Lot and his departure out of the city of Sodom** as an historical fact, giving full credit to its reliability (Luke 17:28-30). Our Lord talked about the account of **Jonah and the whale**, not as myth, but as history and a true account of what actually occurred (Matt. 12:39-41). In this same text He mentions the visit made by **the queen of the south to Solomon** (Matt. 12:42). Such exam-

ples are multiplied over and over in the New Testament.

In one sweeping statement, Jesus covers the authority of the entire Old Testament when He says, *“All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning me”* (Luke 24:44). The whole of the Old Testament books (39 in number) are grouped within these three categories. Therefore, if men in every generation expect to be in God’s favor, they must accept the Old Testament just as Jesus did. To not do so would make Jesus a liar and imposter and consequently not the divine Son of God and Savior of the world.

When men “cherry pick” passages and claim some are historical facts while others are not, then by what thought, right or reasoning can such a person be so presumptuous as to make such a ridiculous assertion? Who gave them that right? Who set them up as judges of the holy book of God? How did they get any more authority to make such declarations than you or I have? If it’s claimed they have the knowledge and authority according to the accreditation of their educational attainments (their “degrees”), they’re spouting absolute foolishness! They’re trying to sell us ocean-front property in Tennessee! We’re not buying it. They need to get down off their “high-horse” and start digging into a reverent study of the ALL INSPIRED, INFALLIBLE, PLENARY, VERBAL word of God!

The Bible, all the Bible, is either the word of God or the word of men. If it’s the word of men, then let’s throw it away and all go home. If it’s the word of God, then let’s hold it dear to our heart and read, study, believe and obey it to the saving of our soul.

**Hebrews 1:1-2** explains that God spoke at different times and in various ways to the people of ancient times by and through inspired prophets. But since the time of the first century, He has spoken unto man

by His Son, Jesus the Christ. Jesus claimed to have authority from God and He so spoke. **Matthew 7:28-29** says Jesus “taught with authority.” At the mount of transfiguration in **Matthew 17:1-5**, Jesus was shown to have authority over Moses and Elijah. At his ascension back into heaven he said, *“All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth”* (**Matt. 28:18**). In **John 14:24** He said that His words were the words of His Father in heaven. From the time the Lord walked on the earth, we are told that His words were from God and that God spoke through Him (John 12:49).

Not only did Jesus claim to be speaking from God, but the apostles did also. In writing to the Christians at Corinth, the apostle Paul said, *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord”* (1 Cor. 14:37). In Matthew 10:40, Jesus said that if people would receive Him, they must also receive the inspired apostles whom He commissioned (cf. John 17:20; Matt. 10:14-20,40; John 13:20). To receive Him and the word of His apostles, was to receive God. *“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me”* (Luke 10:16). How then can any man say the Bible is simply the words of men?

One writer among churches of Christ had this to say concerning the inspiration of the Bible:

“The Bible tells us that it is inspired (2 Tim. 3:16). But the Bible does not tell us how it is inspired. ... The most common assumption (among churches of Christ) is that the Spirit supplied the very words for the authors to write. Passages like John 14:26 are often cited to show that the Spirit would bring words of remembrance to the apostles. However, the promise is ambiguous and Jesus never specified whether that process also worked for writing, preaching, or anyone in addition to the apostles who were originally present to hear the promise. Although God did supply the words to some authors, it is a mistake to assume that this was the process for every biblical author because the evidence does not support it.” (**Andy**

**Walker**, “How is the Bible Inspired?”, 9/9/2013, The Blog — Bring it Out)

Have you ever heard such gibberish and denial of the all inspired, God breathed, Word of God, the Holy Bible?

In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul says that “all scripture” is inspired of God. Inspired means it is “God breathed.” That includes the Old Testament as well as the New. Therefore, being inspired of God, the Scriptures are “profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**: that the man of God may be **perfect** (complete), **thoroughly furnished** unto all good works.”

Paul wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica commending them that “...when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, **ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh, also in you that believe**” (2 Thess. 2:13). The apostle tells them that the words he spoke were not just words of men, but actually God’s words. This goes along with what Jesus said in Matthew 10:18-19, that the apostles would be given what to speak. It would not be their own words, but God who was speaking. In John 16:13 Jesus said, “...when he, the Spirit of truth is come, **he will guide you into all truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.” The Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all the truth, not just some truth or a little of the truth. He would guide them to write the Holy Scriptures and those words would have the authority of God.

The Bible not only claims to be God’s Word, it IS God’s word. That clearly explains why it is indestructible. Numerous attempts through the centuries have been made to destroy it. Do you remember reading what Jesus said in Matthew 24:35? “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but **my words shall not pass away**.” In Isaiah 40:8 we read, “the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but **the word of our God shall stand for ever**.” First Peter 1:23-25 speaks of this same point. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of **incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever**. For all

*flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But **the word of the Lord endureth for ever**. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*”

The Bible is the Standard for all of mankind. It is the operations manual for the whole world. It comes from God, every single word of it. Jesus said, “*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*” (John 12:48). The words of Jesus recorded in the Bible by holy inspired men, are the very words which will judge us when we stand before Him at the last great day.

The Bible is God’s measuring line. Where we spend eternity depends on how we live our life here on this earth according to what is written in the Holy book, the Bible. Each and every person that has ever lived must stand beside this great book. We all will be judged by the things written therein. Does your life measure up to the standard of the word of God?

The apostle Peter wrote, “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers; <sup>19</sup>But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: <sup>20</sup>Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, <sup>21</sup>Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. <sup>22</sup>Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently: <sup>23</sup>Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. <sup>24</sup>For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: <sup>25</sup>But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you*” (1 Peter 1:18-25).

The only way we can be pleasing to God is by believing and obeying His Word. Not just a mere mental acceptance of it, but a belief that leads to a

change of heart, mind, and action; one that obeys every command. Not out of grievance, but out of love. Let us renew our commitment in full obedience to the Bible, the holy inspired word of God.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

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Baker C/C, Baker, FL.....	\$25
Joe W. Nichols.....	\$100
C. S. Hines .....	\$50
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Jean Ware .....	\$25
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Jack D. Langford .....	\$50
Noah & Frances Champion, White Pines C/C, White Pines, TN .....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$5
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# Elder's COLUMN

## LET US PRESS ON!

Ivie Powell

***The Playboy Philosophy of the 1960s catapulted the sex, drug-crazed, hedonistic society of today. It was during this period that liberalism began to make inroads into the church of Christ.***

The emphasis in the 20th century through about the later 1960s was on teaching fundamentals of the faith so that brethren would not be “*carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*” (Eph. 4:14). During this period of time, brethren had strong convictions regarding the differences between the Lord’s church and denominationalism. If a preacher refused to fulfill the divine mandate to “*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*” (2 Tim. 4:2), he was immediately released. Because of strong indoctrination (Titus 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:16), fellowship with the denominational world was strictly forbidden (2 John 9-11) and false teachers were marked and withdrawn from (Rom. 16:17-18; Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11). Instrumental music in worship was without biblical authority, therefore sinful (Col. 3:16-17; Rev. 22:18-19). In addition to this, lessons were taught both from the pulpit and classroom on immodest apparel, dancing, drinking, pre-martial sex, marriage, divorce and remarriage, mixed swimming, etc. Only those who met the qualifications for elders and deacons (1 Tim. 3; Titus 5; 1 Peter 5) were selected and appointed. Because the pattern of God’s Word was followed (Heb. 8:5), the results brought glory to God, “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*” (Matt. 5:16).

During the 1960s, rebellion was the order of the day. Not only was this true in the political realm, but also the religious arena as well. The Playboy Philosophy of the 1960s catapulted the sex, drug-crazed, hedonistic society of today. It was during this period that liberalism began to make inroads into the church of Christ. In the early 1970s, great em-

phasis was placed on growth at all cost. The Lord’s church was introduced to the Bus Ministry, which in turn brought about Children’s Church and Youth Ministers. All of which came from the Baptist and other denominations. The beloved, tried and true *King James Version*, and the *American Standard Version of 1901* were replaced by perverted versions of the Bible; e.g. *Revised Standard Version*, *Good News For Modern Man*, *Taylor’s Bible Paraphrased* and the *New International Version*. It was also during this period of time that brethren began to look to colleges and schools of preaching instead of the Bible for guidance.

“Pentecostal” style preaching fueled emotionalism, which in turn produced Neo-Pentecostalism. Young people and many adults became prime targets and were swept away by the Crossroads Movement which divided homes and congregations. While many other things could be mentioned, in my judgment, two additional factors that greatly contributed to fragmenting a once united brotherhood were: 1) False doctrine on marriage, divorce and remarriage and 2) the so-called New Hermeneutic (which says the Bible is not to be respected and looked to as authority for all we say and do; cf. Col. 3:17). Because of the combination of these major events, we are not really surprised and very sad when we learn of brethren participating in:

- Using women to wait on the Lord’s table,
  - Incorporating drama in the worship service,
  - Inviting denominational preachers to fill the pulpit, and
  - Having a greater allegiance to schools and brotherhood projects.
- The purpose of this article is not to give a chronological account of events, but to set forth the dynamics that has resulted in the present-day apostasy of so many congregations of the Lord’s church. Nor is this article written out of bitterness or an Elijah complex — “we are the only ones that are faithful to the Lord.” We must keep in mind that there will always be a remnant (Matt. 16:18-19). A reflection of the 1906 division clearly demonstrates this fact. At that time some 80% of congregations abandoned biblical authority for the unauthorized use of instrumental music in worship and the Missionary Society. As for the 20% (the remnant), it was a time to press-on and press-on they did. Whereas the Christian Church divided, the Lord’s faithful, the church of Christ, grew to the point of outnumbering the digressives. Why? Because their objective was to abide by a “*thus saith the Lord*” (Col. 3:17). The lessons of history clearly demonstrate that when brethren forfeit biblical authority, division is inevitable!
- As for the present apostasy, let us press on! Let us press on with allegiance to Christ and His glorious body, the church of Christ. Let us “*press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 3:14). “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*” (Gal. 6:9).

PO Box 92  
West Plains, MO 65775

# THE HOUSE OF THE LORD IS NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH!

Marvin L. Weir

God loved Israel and was concerned about His people. He gave instructions for the tabernacle which eventually became known as the “house of the Lord” (Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Josh. 6:24; 9:23; Judges 18:31). It was David who desired to build God a house (2 Sam. 7), but it was Solomon whom Jehovah allowed to build the temple (1 Kings 6:1). The temple became a most holy place to the Jews and they were convinced it would endure on earth forever.

During His earthly ministry, the Lord found that man-made traditions, politics, and materialism was squeezing the truth from the religion of the Jews. At the beginning of His ministry, Christ found money-changers in the temple seeking to profit from the items people needed for their sacrifice. The Lord then made a scourge of small cords and “drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise” (John 2:15-16). The lesson had not been learned and the situation had not improved near the close of the Lord’s earthly ministry. Commercialism in the temple was still being practiced as is evidenced by this scene: “And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves” (Matt. 21:12-13).

The sentiment of the chief priests and Pharisees was expressed in this manner: “If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation” (John 11:48). Can it be that the **house of God** in the mind of the people is now considered to be “**our place**?” It made a difference then, and it makes a difference today, whether or not things sacred belong to God or man.

Before His death, Christ wept over Jerusalem, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” (Matt. 23:37-38). When the **house of God** becomes **man’s place**, it is no longer fit for sacred matters! Judgment for the Jews who rejected the Messiah and clung to the Law of Moses and the temple came in the form of the Roman army. The temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 and left desolate. Instead of the Jews disposing of Christ, it was God who disposed of the Jewish temple, their way of life and their economy.

The “**our place**” or “**our house**” mentality is alive and well today. It is now quite common to hear those professing to be members of the Lord’s church to speak of “their church,” “our church,” or “your church.” More often than not, this truly describes the congregation where they assemble. It is “their church” and they are determined to do things **their way!**

Recreation, entertainment, and all other man-made innovations come from the “my church” concept. The Lord’s church is to be “*the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3:15) instead of the soft cushion of man’s felt needs! This writer recalls the North Richland Hills church of Christ (now known as “the hills Church”) led by Rick Atchley boasting how the elders had prayed for many months before deciding to include instrumental music in their services. Their philosophy is that in **their church**, much prayer will make instrumental music acceptable to God. But it won’t! Man feels that in **his church** he can sing and play. God spake nothing about playing on an instrument in worship (cf. Heb. 7:14). He did specify that hymns of praise be sung in worship (Matt. 26:30; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; James 5:13).

The Lord’s church demands a “thus saith the Lord” for all that is done in sacred matters. The Lord’s

church also recognizes that the Word of God was long ago “settled in heaven” (Psa. 119:89). The “my church,” “our church,” and “your church” crowd has nothing but disdain for Bible authority. They reject a Bible pattern or blueprint because it makes no mention of **their church**.

One who is devoted to the “my church” philosophy not only makes room for the instrument but also for the fornicator, the adulterer, and the homosexual (Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21). The “my church” believer demands that women be allowed to use their God-given talents to preach, lead singing, or participate in any other leadership role in the church. The Word of God restricts women from serving in a leadership role in the Lord’s church (1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:12-14).

Today, in far too many instances, denominational thinking takes priority over Biblical thinking. Self-indulgence seems to be the only thing that most folks refuse to cast aside! The modernist forgets or does not wish to remember that Jesus Christ “came to seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). He did not come to supply man’s every wish, want, and social need.

Since the Lord’s church is “*the house of God*” (1 Tim. 3:15), it is not **my** house, **your** house, or **their** house! The Lord purchased His church with His blood (Acts 20:28) and is therefore the head of His body, His church (Eph. 1:22-23). Salvation is found in the house of God and not someone else’s house. The precious Gospel is the only power to save (Rom. 1:16) and it is not to be twisted, perverted, or watered down (Gal. 1:6-9). The Lord’s church realizes it **must** worship according to truth (John 4:24; James 17:17) while man’s church is convinced God will accept most anything that is offered. Such an attitude did not work out well for Israel, did it (1 Kings 12:28-30)?

May we learn not to trifle with God’s house!

484 CR 44700  
Blossom, TX 75416

# MISUSE OF THE NAME CHRISTIAN

Richard Latham

To hear the name Christian being misused today is as common as night and day. We read it on billboards, day care centers, family-owned businesses, bumper stickers and even on church buildings where true Christianity is not taught. This name is used because there is something inherently good about it, and people know it is associated with the Lord Jesus Christ. To put this name on anything is to suggest by it that the owner has an affiliation with that which is good and or have intentions of the same, even though they may not be a Christian at all.

The name Christian, by the world's standards, has been applied to anyone who does something good. The name Christian becomes more frequently used around the holiday seasons. Many organizations, religious and non-religious, get on TV and radio to let people know they are going to be fixing meals. They encourage everyone to come out and enjoy fellowship with one another. We also hear a lot about Christian unity, even though the majority of them know nothing about being Christian or unity (cf. Eph. 4:1-6). Why are people who are not Christians using this name? The people who are using the name are like many today that go about stealing another person's identity. These people want what belongs to someone else.

Let's explore the name Christian. Where did it come from? Whom does it apply to? What is required to become a Christian?

## WHERE did the name Christian come from?

The name Christian is first mentioned in Acts 11:25,26. It reads, *"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."* The disciples (followers of Christ) were called Christians. Long before Acts 11:25, it had been prophesied by Isaiah that God's people would be called

by a new name (Isa. 62:2). It would be after the "Gentiles shall see thy righteousness." In Acts 10, Peter went to the house of Cornelius (a Gentile) and taught him and his family the Gospel. They gladly obeyed. Thus we see both Jews and Gentiles in the church before the name Christian is given in Acts 11. Therefore, the name Christian came from God to distinguish his people from the world.

## To WHOM does the name Christian apply?

The name Christian is applied to those who are members of the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). When we read the book of Acts, we see the Lord adding those who were being saved to his church (Acts 2:47; 5:14; 6:7). The church that God is referring to was paid for by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). All the members of the church are bought and paid for with the Lord's blood he shed on the cross (1 Cor. 6:20). Therefore, the church of Christ is composed of Christians and ONLY Christians. It is the one church over which Christ is head. Consider these scriptures, Colossians 1:18, *"and he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] he might have the preeminence"* (cf. Eph. 1:22,23). The scriptures teach in 1 Corinthians 12:12,13, *"For as the body is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit."*

There are those today who are religious claiming to be Christians or at least misusing that name to apply to themselves. Let us remember the law of reproduction from the book of Genesis. This law states that, *"every seed produces after its kind"* (Gen. 1:11,12). Apple seeds produce apples. Watermelon seeds produce watermelons, and so on. The Bible tells us that God's word is seed (Luke 8:11), and when the Bible seed is planted (and not perverted or tampered with) it produces only one kind of fruit. That

fruit is Christians. In order to get another kind of fruit, someone would have to pervert (change) the seed. Think about it! How did all these other religious plants get on this earth? They did not come from Bible seed. Jesus responds to this by saying in Matthew 15:13,14 *"Every plant which my heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: They be blind leaders of the blind and if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch."*

Friend, if you believe the apostles were Christians, and they were, please tell me which church did Christ add them to? He added them to his church, the only church that is his, the church of Christ. We also need to understand that not all who become Christians remain faithful. For example, Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), Demas (2 Tim. 4:10), Diotrephes (3 John 9) and the list goes on and on even unto this day. But, be that as it may, all Christians are in the church of Christ and none are in a "man-made" denomination.

The name Christian appears in the Bible three times: Acts 11:26, 1 Peter 4:16, Acts 26:28. This last one will lead us to our third point.

## WHAT is required to become a Christian?

When the apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa, he taught him about Christ and the resurrection (Acts 26:1-27). Upon hearing these words, King Agrippa stated, *"Almost thou persuadest me to be a \_\_\_\_\_"* (Acts 26:28). Now, if what you are called in terms of religion (Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, etc.) can go in this blank and be found in the scriptures, then you have nothing to worry about. If you cannot fit the name of your religion in this blank, then what? Remember, every seed produces after its kind. In searching the scriptures, how is it that none of the Christians in the Bible were ever spoken of as being a "\_\_\_\_\_ Christian." They were only referred to as "Christians." One is not a Christian just because they want to attach that title to themselves.

One becomes a Christian when

he/she does what the Bible teaches them to do to become a Christian. In Acts 2:37 they asked Peter and the other apostles, “men and brethren what shall we do?” What was Peter’s answer according to verse 38? “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” How did Peter know what to tell them? It was because Jesus had earlier told the apostles in Mark 16:16, “*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” So, **believe** (John 8:24), **repent** (Acts 2:38), **confess** (Rom. 10:10), be **baptized** (Mark 16:16) and then **live faithful** to the Lord all your life (1 Cor. 15:58).

Second Timothy 2:10 tells us that salvation is IN Christ. Just as all the saved were in the ark of Noah’s day, all the saved are IN the church of Christ and are called Christians. If you truly want to be a Christian, then do what the Bible tells you to do to become a Christian. Be baptized INTO Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). Otherwise, you will be like Manasseh and Ahab of the Old Testament who “provoked” God to anger (2 Kings 21:1-7; 1 Kings 16:29-34). What caused God’s anger? It was their disobedience to the will of God.

Why will sinners profane that “worthy name” by which God’s people are called (James 2:7)? The name Christian is only to be associated with those who are members of the church of Christ as taught in the Bible. Talk about stolen identity! Yes, it is a crime, punishable by God’s law (Matt. 7:21-24; Luke 6:46).

Friend, God does not have amnesia. The Bible tells us in 2 Timothy 2:19, “*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his, and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity* (lawlessness). A prominent Christian once wrote, “The Bible makes Christians only and the only Christians.” Oh how true!

437 Gregory Rd  
Columbus, MS 39702

## The Process of Inspiration...

(Continued from page 49)

*unsealed.* Remember, Paul said there were things that man had not seen, heard, or imagined (v.9). He then writes: “*But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*” What had been “sealed” from man was “unsealed” in Paul’s day. The Holy Spirit searched out the deep thoughts of God and revealed them to what are referred to as “inspired men.” These men were the apostles of Christ and all the prophets, not only of the first century, but through the Old Testament era as well. The Holy Spirit came to them and spoke God’s message into their ears (cf. Matt. 10:27). This was not a message of their own making. Peter makes this clear when he wrote, “*no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*” (2 Peter 1:20). That is, no man spoke or wrote his own mind (that is, according to his own “private interpretation”). It was the Holy Spirit who moved these individuals and carried them along in what they said and wrote. “*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (2 Peter 1:21). When the Holy Spirit came to these men with a revelation from God, they knew it was the Spirit of God speaking to them. In Ephesians 3:3, Paul tells us: “*How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery.*” See also 2 Samuel 23:2, “*The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word [was] in my tongue.*” First Corinthians 7:40, “*...I have the Spirit of God.*” Paul knew God revealed His will to him. What had been concealed in the past was now unsealed.

Once the inspired message was given to the messengers of God, they spoke the message to others. We refer to this as the *things that were revealed.* Paul acknowledges this in First Corinthians 2:12-13. “*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*” Paul af-

firms that he received things from “the mind of God” by “the Spirit of God.” He, then, states: “*Which things also we speak.*” Inspired men did not selfishly hold onto the message they received from God. No! They spoke those things to others. Over time, God inspired these men to write the messages down and these writings are the Bible we hold in our hands today. The books of the Bible are not the thoughts and words of men, they are the thoughts and words of God!

Let’s go back to Ephesians 3:3-5. Paul told the church at Ephesus: “*How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.*” Eventually, all revelation was written down. Today, all of God’s inspired message is found in the book we call the Bible. The Bible is the revealed will of God to man. Second Peter 1:3, “*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*”

Jesus had promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would reveal all truth to them. John 16:13, “*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.*” This promise was completely fulfilled. ALL truth was given by the end of the first century. Jude says that is was “*once delivered unto the saints*” (Jude 3). This means it was delivered “once for all time” or “once never to be delivered again.”

Dear reader, all truth is found in the Bible. No more truth will ever be given, nor is it needed. We have all we need for life and godliness in God’s Word (2 Peter 1:3). Let us praise God that His will which was once concealed has been unsealed and now revealed to mankind. Let all of us commit to loving it, reading it, studying it, and applying it to our lives.

1025 Snug Harbor Court  
Jacksonville, FL 32233



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

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article by Adam Good is so very excellent and so true to our time. The entire country is mourning the deaths of homosexuals. If they had all been members of the church and in worship, would America have mourned as much? Would flags at our White House have been lowered? Would the mayor of Nashville have cried over us and honored us and raised money for our children? Would almost every ‘church’ in America have lamented and mourned over us? Absolutely not. What a frightful moment in America this is, as God is deciding what our fate is! This is scary isn’t it? Certainly I don’t condone murder, but moaning and wailing over blatant sinners, I don’t condone either. God must feel sickened over us today. ...**TN.** “What a tragedy committed with the deaths of those in Orlando. They will never have a chance to learn the Gospel and obey it to receive the forgiveness of their sins. This is true when anyone dies outside of Christ. I can’t keep from thinking, if they had only been at home where they should have been that time of night/morning, they would still be alive and have more opportunities to learn the Truth. If such a ‘night-club’ had never been established, they would still be alive. The Scriptures are so very true when it says, *‘the whole world lieth in wickedness’* (1 John 5:19). The urgency of preaching the Gospel is always present. Life is short, death is certain, eternity is long. Why do so many choose not to accept the truth, obey it, and go to heaven? The problem is that they love themselves and the world more than they love God and heaven. Why won’t people turn, turn to God for forgiveness?” ...**TN.**

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Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** – [seektheoldpaths.com](http://seektheoldpaths.com)

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