

DIFFICULT SCRIPTURES

1. Christ blotted out the law and nailed it to His Cross. (Col. 2:14).

A. Christ did not blot out the law. He blotted out the "HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES."

B. This could not refer to the law of God. God's law is not "against us" and "contrary to us."

"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). David said, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97).

God's laws don't hurt us--they help us. "Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and IN KEEPING OF THEM IS GREAT REWARD" (Psalm 19:11).

C. The context explains what "ordinances" Paul is referring to:

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD; why; as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2:20-22).

What kind of ordinances? "Touch not, taste not, handle not." In other words: asceticism, Stoicism, Catholicism, meatless Fridays, vegetarianism.

It certainly doesn't mean the Ten Commandments. It can't mean the Feasts where people ate, drank and danced vigorously. It can't mean the sacrificial law--the priest had a great portion of meat and had to handle and slaughter animals. This was a lusty way of life.

D. The Greek words for HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES are cheirographon tois dogmasin. This means the note of guilt from keeping man's laws.

CHEIROGRAPHON, according to the Greek Lexicon by Parkhurst, means: "Anything written with the hand...a bond, note of hand...it signifies a sort of note under a man's hand, whereby he obliges himself to the payment of any debt." In other words, a note of debt or a note of guilt.

In the same Lexicon by Parkhurst one of the meanings given for TOIS is "from."

DOGMASIN simply refers to law. (See Strong's Concordance.) In this case it refers to the laws of men as proved in Section C above.

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- E. The note of guilt is OUR SINS. We have sinned by obeying the laws and customs of men rather than God. What Christ blotted out is OUR SINS.
  - F. The law was not nailed to the cross (stake)--Christ was (John 19:18; 20:25). He was made sin for us (II Cor. 5:21). Our sins were nailed to the stake in His body (I Pet. 2:24).
  - G. Colossians 2:15 shows what Christ defeated. It was not the Law:

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." The principalities and powers referred to here are the same as the "spiritual wickedness (wicked spirits) in high places" mentioned in Eph. 6:12--demons.

By making possible the forgiveness of sin, Christ defeated the purpose of Satan and his demons. He made it possible for sons to be born into the God Family."

\*NOTE: It may be well to emphasize here that only two things were nailed to the stake at Golgotha:

1. The physical body of Jesus.
2. The "note of guilt"--the record of our sins which Christ paid for Himself in this sacrifice of His own life.

Therefore, NO LAWS of ANY kind were nailed to the stake--legal, ceremonial, sacrificial or any other!

2. We don't have to keep the law because we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28).
  - A. The verse does not say the "deeds of the law" are not necessary. The subject under discussion is "justification" and whether the "deeds of the law" can "justify" a person. Being justified in the Biblical sense is being made just or right before God--which means having your sins forgiven and completely blotted out. The question being settled is not "Should we keep the law?" but rather, "Does present obedience to the law somehow bring a person into a right standing before God and make up for his past sins?"
  - B. If a man commits a crime, his obedience to the civil law in the future does not make him any less guilty of his past offense. This is also true of us spiritually. Paul showed in verse 20 that the "deeds of the law" do not justify anyone, and he went on to explain in verses 24-27 that justification (forgiveness of sins that are past--verse 25) can come only by grace, through Christ's sacrifice.
  - C. The conclusion is (verse 28) that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law. "Without" should be more clearly translated "apart from" or "outside of."
  - D. Being justified by faith does not mean we do away with (make void) the law. On the contrary, we establish the law (Rom. 3:31). Once you are reconciled to God, you must keep the commandments if you want to remain justified. The doers of the law shall be justified (Romans 2:13).

3. We don't have to obey the law because we are under grace, not under the law (Romans 6:14).
  - A. This scripture does not say we don't have to obey the law. It does say we are not under the law, but under grace. The term, "under the law" refers to being under the penalty of the law--not under the jurisdiction of the law.
  - B. When we sin--break God's law (I John 3:4)--the law has a claim over our lives (Rom. 6:23). We are then under the law--under its penalty. It is the sinner who is under the law. On the other hand, when we repent and receive God's grace made possible through the sacrifice of Christ, we are pardoned and the penalty of death is taken away. Then we are no longer under the law--under the penalty of death for having broken the law.
  - C. Does this give us free license to sin (break the law) because we are under grace and not under the law? Paul asks this very same question in verse 15 and answers it saying, "God forbid." It is like a condemned murderer on death row waiting for execution. At the last minute the governor grants him a pardon. He is now a free man, but that does not mean he is at liberty to murder again. That would be absurd. His pardon covers only the past offense--not future crimes.
  - D. If grace did away with the law, there would be no sin because where there is no law, there is no sin (Rom. 4:15). The fact that sin exists and there is a need for grace to remove the penalty of sin shows that a law is being broken and is therefore still in effect today.
4. We don't need works because we are saved by grace through faith--not by works (Eph. 2:8-9).
  - A. This scripture does show that we are saved by faith--not works--but it does not in any way show that works are not needed! In fact, the very next verse--verse 10--shows that we are His workmanship; created in Christ Jesus unto good works. That is the purpose for which we are alive.
  - B. Salvation comes as a gift from God which we could never earn in a million lifetimes of perfect obedience, but many scriptures prove that obedience is a condition we must meet before God will give us--as a free gift--salvation. "If you will enter into life," said Christ, "keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). God gives His Holy Spirit only to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). If any man says he knows God and doesn't keep His commandments, he is a liar (I John 2:4).
  - C. Faith and works go together. Faith without works is dead (James 2:20-22), and faith is perfected by our works.
5. There are some sins which one can commit and not incur the death penalty (I John 5:16).
  - A. The wages of sin are death (Rom. 6:23). There are no exceptions! God does not categorize sin, but Hebrews 10:26-27 shows that it is a willful

sin which brings "fiery indignation"--eternal death. Any other sin can be forgiven if it is repented of--if it is "confessed" (I John 1:9).

- B. A sin "not unto death," then, is a sin for which forgiveness is available. It is a sin committed by someone who has not willfully turned from God. A sin "not unto death" might be the result of ignorance or weakness. The sin itself carries a death penalty, but it can be forgiven if the person repents.
- C. If any of us sees a brother who is striving to obey God and walk with God "sin a sin which is not unto death"--sin out of ignorance or weakness--we ought to ask God to help the brother recognize his error and repent of it. By doing so we will "give him life"--God will hear our prayers for him. This is the kind of concern we ought to have for one another. This is one way that we can "bear" one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).
- D. On the other hand, if the brother has sinned "unto death"--if he has willfully and viciously turned from God's way and rejected God completely, we should not pray for him because God will not answer our prayer for him. This, by the way, would not include all disfellowshipped people--ONLY those where it is determined that they have maliciously and totally rejected God's Way so that they could not be brought again to repentance (Hebrews 6:4-6).
6. Christians don't have to keep the law to be saved--merely believe on Jesus Christ (Acts 16:30-31).
- A. Paul did not say all a Christian need do to be saved is believe. He told the jailor to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." But there is more to it than that.

To all men Jesus says in Luke 6:46, "Why call me, 'Lord, Lord' and do not the things which I say?" In connection with Acts 16:30-31, we can see that Christ expects us to do the things that He says if we really believe that He is our Lord and Savior. One of the things Jesus said was, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17).

- B. James magnifies this point by showing that faith and works go hand in hand--works are the automatic result of faith. Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:20, 26). We show our faith by our works (Jas. 2:18). Again, the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 2:13, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." No one is a Christian unless he has God's Spirit in him (Rom. 8:9), and God gives His Spirit only to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32).
- C. The attitude of the jailor was not one of "all I have to do is believe." Rather, it was "what must I do to be saved?" Paul could see that he was willing to obey God--willing to do whatever was required. Believing on Jesus Christ, on His message, His Word, His authority, was only one of the conditions to salvation. Paul didn't say that was all that was necessary. Verse 32 clearly shows Paul went on to teach him what real repentance was--turning from sin--obedience to God! And after that, he was baptized (Verse, 33):

Paul didn't teach faith without works. Rather he taught faith with works--a belief that leads to positive action.

7. God gave Israel laws which were not good (Ezek. 20:25).

- A. This verse cannot be referring to God's law. The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good (Rom. 7:12). "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul...the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart..." (Ps. 19:7-8).
- B. Then what are these statutes? They are man's laws and statutes. Speaking about the same situation, God says in Ps. 81:11-12: "But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts: and they walked in their own counsels."

In other words, since the Israelites would not follow God's laws and statutes, He gave them over to their own laws and statutes, which were not good--which ended in death (Prov. 14:12). The actual translation of Ez. 20:25 is better rendered "gave them over to statutes that were not good."

God did not give Israel or any other nation laws that were bad. God's righteous law was Israel's wisdom and understanding in the sight of all nations (Deut. 4:5-8). He commanded Israel to keep His laws for their good always (Deut. 6:24).

8. It makes no difference today whether or not you keep the Sabbath or the Holy Days and you shouldn't let any man judge you if you don't (Col. 2:16-17).

- A. The word "is" is in italics in Verse 17 and is not in the original. Therefore, this should read, "Let no man therefore judge you,--but the body of Christ."
- B. The body of Christ is the Church of God. (Col. 1:18) and it is the Church that is our pillar and grounding in the truth (I Tim. 3:15) and our standard, not the ideas of men.
- C. The word "judge" in Verse 16 is better rendered "call you in question." The Gentile Colossians previously knew nothing of God or of His Holy Days. God's ministers taught them to observe the Sabbath and the Holy Days, and outsiders called them in question for doing so. The ascetics in Colossae saw those in the Church eating and drinking (feasting) on the Holy Days and despised them for it.
- D. These Holy Days are shadows of things to come--they picture the major events in God's master plan to bring all mankind to salvation.
- E. Therefore, Paul is telling the Colossian converts to let no man call them in question for their observance of God's Holy Days.

9. Give simple proof that the Sabbath is to be kept.

- A. Mark 2:27-28--The Sabbath was made specifically for man, and Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, not some other day.
- B. Genesis 2:1-3--It was made by Christ at the same time that man was made, and set apart as holy time for all mankind forever.
- C. Exodus 16--Israel had lost the knowledge of the Sabbath in Egyptian slavery and God showed them which day it was by means of a special miracle and reemphasized the importance of keeping it holy.

- D. Exodus 20:8-11--God commanded all men to remember the Sabbath forever as one of the cardinal points of His spiritual law.
- E. Luke 4:16--Jesus kept the Sabbath Day.
- F. Acts 17:2--Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, also kept the Sabbath.
- G. Isaiah 66:23--The Sabbath will be kept in the future when God's Kingdom will be ruling on the earth.
- H. From this we see that the Sabbath was made for man at the time man was made, that it was given before Israel was given the Ten Commandments, it is one of the Ten Commandments, Jesus kept it, Paul kept it, and it will be kept in the Millennium when God's Kingdom will rule. So, we also ought to keep the Sabbath now.

10. Prove that the Holy Days are still in effect and should be kept today.

- A. The Holy Days are Feasts of God, not the Jews (Lev. 23:2, 4). They were commanded to be observed forever (Lev. 23:31, 41).
- B. But these days were ordained during the year before the sacrifices were given to Israel (Ex. 12 and 13). The Days of Unleavened Bread are part of the identifying sign between God and His people (Ex. 13:9). Jeremiah 7:21-23 also points out that when God began instituting the Holy Days--at the time He brought Israel out of Egypt--He did not institute burnt offerings or sacrifices. Therefore, the Holy Days do not stand or fall with the sacrifices, but are truly commanded forever.
- C. Jesus observed the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread (Luke 2:41-42) and the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day (John 7:1-2, 14, 37).
- D. The New Testament Church and the apostles kept the Holy Days:  
 Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread--Acts 12:3; 20:6; I Cor. 5:6-8.  
 Pentecost--Acts 2:1; 20:16; I Cor. 16:8.  
 Day of Atonement--Acts 27:9.  
 Feast of Tabernacles--Acts 18:21.  
 Paul told the Colossians not to let anyone condemn them for observing the Holy Days (Col. 2:16-17).
- E. The Feast of Tabernacles will be observed during the Millennium by everyone--both Jew and Gentile (Zech. 14:16). So all who would be in God's Kingdom had better learn to observe them now!

11. It was Paul's custom to observe Sunday (Acts 20:7).

- A. This scripture does not say Paul observed Sunday as a day of worship. If this were an example for us today, we would be starting the services on Saturday night--not on Sunday morning. Verse 7 shows Paul preached

to them until midnight. Also services would have to continue till dawn (Verse 11).

- B. Next, we need to realize that the breaking of bread was not a religious service, but merely the eating of a meal. Acts 27:33-38 proves this. Notice Paul's situation. He was a Roman prisoner in the midst of many Gentiles on board a ship (Acts 27:1-2). Obviously Paul was not holding a religious service. The men ate for their health (Verses 33-34).
  - C. Acts 20:3 does not describe a regular service. Notice the context. Paul was en route from Greece to Jerusalem (Acts 20:2-3, 16). Since he did not know when he would see the brethren again, he wanted to teach them as much as possible. The people were more than willing to listen. So, after the Sabbath Paul remained behind teaching the brethren, while his ship sailed around the peninsula (Verse 13). He remained talking with them until midnight and continued after a short meal until daybreak (Verse 11). Then after Paul had stayed as long as he could, he left them to walk across the peninsula to meet the boat (Verses 13-14). He worked on that Sunday by taking this long walk of some 19 miles!
  - D. There is nothing in the above scripture to indicate it was Paul's custom to observe Sunday. In fact, all through the book of Acts we see it was Paul's custom to observe the Sabbath (Acts 17:2; 13:14-15, 42-44).
12. We should all gather for Sunday services and take up a collection (I Cor. 16:1-2).
- A. This scripture does not say that Sunday is the day on which we should have church services.
  - B. Notice that this was a collection for the saints (Verse 1). Tithes and offerings went to the Levites--the ministers (Num. 18:24; Heb. 7:5)--not to the saints.
  - C. This was a gathering that each was to do individually (lay by him in store)--not a collection to be taken up during Church services.
  - D. This was a collection of fruit and produce to help relieve the saints in Judea suffering from famine (Romans 15:25-28).
  - E. Several men were required to carry the fruit to Jerusalem (Verse 3). If this collection involved money, Paul could have carried it to Jerusalem himself.
  - F. A gathering of this kind involved a lot of work. This work was done during the first part of the week after the Sabbath was past.
13. Christians will go to heaven and be there with Christ forever (I Thess. 4:17).
- A. Paul was speaking of the resurrection of Christians at the second coming of Jesus Christ (Verse 16). We will rise to meet Christ in the

air--the atmosphere over this earth (Verse 17). Thus we will be with the Lord.

Then what? Where do we go from there? Since we will be with Christ, the question to ask is, "Where will Christ be?"

- B. Christ is coming to this earth. Zechariah 14:4 shows that on the very day mentioned in I Thessalonians 4:17, Christ will be standing on the Mount of Olives, which is on this EARTH.
- C. He is coming with all glory and with His angels to judge all nations (Matt. 25:31-32).

His saints will be given power to rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27).

They will be kings and priests with Him and will reign on the earth (Rev. 5:10).

14. The thief on the cross entered paradise on the day he was crucified (Luke 23:43).

- A. Jesus said the crucified thief would be with Him in paradise. Paradise is located in the presence of God's throne (II Cor. 12:2-4), which was at that time in heaven.
- B. Christ did not go to paradise that same day. Christ went to the grave (Acts 2:31).

He had not yet ascended unto the Father in heaven (paradise) the day following the resurrection (John 20:17).

- C. The truth of this scripture lies in the proper punctuation. Remember that punctuation was not used in the original Greek written by Luke. It was added into the Greek and English centuries later by men. Since the punctuation can change the meaning entirely, we need to let the remainder of the Bible interpret what Christ said.

As shown by the scriptures already cited, a comma placed before the word "today" is incorrect. The comma should follow it--"Verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in paradise."

- D. By using the word "today," Christ was stressing the time he was making the promise--not the time that the thief would be in paradise. Christ was saying that He could make this promise today, even as He hung on the stake. He could see by the attitude of the thief that he would repent when he was resurrected for the Great White Throne Judgment and that he would then enter paradise--God's Kingdom.

15. Christ said He would return during the lifetime of some of His disciples (Matt. 16:28).

- A. The next two verses tell when this occurred. Remember, these chapter divisions were made by man. They do not reflect the original Greek.



- B. He was referring to His transfiguration which was soon to occur. Six days after Christ made the statement in Matthew 16:28, He took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain. They saw Christ transfigured before their eyes in all His power and glory (Matt. 17:1-2). He was manifested the way He is now (Rev. 1:14-16) and the way He will appear at His second coming to set up the Kingdom of God on this earth.

Years later Peter referred to this event. He says in II Peter 1:16 "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty."

- C. Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ. They will be co-rulers with Him in God's Kingdom. Peter knew when this would be fulfilled--at the time represented by the Feast of Tabernacles. He wanted to make tabernacles or "booths" for the three of them.
- D. This was a vision (Verse 9). Christ was not literally glorified before their eyes. Exodus 33:20-23 shows that no man can look upon God and live.

Those disciples did not see Christ come to this earth to set up the Kingdom of God. But, they did see Him "come in His Kingdom" in vision-- in the vision of His transfiguration.

16. The Kingdom of God is in the hearts of men (Luke 17:21).

- A. Notice the context of this verse. Jesus was talking to the Pharisees (Verse 20). In Matthew 23:15-19, He called them hypocrites and blind fools. A number of them will never be in God's Kingdom (Luke 13:27-28). Christ was not saying the Kingdom of God was in the hearts of those self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees.
- B. The Kingdom of God cannot be in the heart of any human being. I Cor. 15:50 shows that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.
- C. In order for anything to be considered a kingdom, four requirements must be met: A king or ruler; subjects or people being ruled; a territory; and laws by which the people are governed. These cannot be in the heart of a person.
- D. The Greek word translated "within" in verse 21 is "entos." This word can also be rendered "among" or as the Englishman's Greek New Testament has it, "in the midst of." The marginal references of many Bibles show "among" as an alternate translation.

Jesus Christ, as the Representative of God's Kingdom, was standing among them or in the midst of them.

17. God showed Peter that it is now all right to eat unclean meats (Acts 10:12-13).
- A. Peter was in a trance (Verse 10). He saw the sheet filled with unclean creatures as a vision (Verse 17). He did not actually eat any of those creatures.
  - B. Peter did not know what the vision meant (Verse 17). He did not assume that it meant it was fine for him to eat unclean meats from now on.
  - C. The meaning of the vision is given in Verse 28. God was showing Peter that he should call no man common (ceremonially defiled) or unclean. The Jews regarded Gentiles as unclean and unfit for their company. God used this vision to show Peter that the Gentiles were no longer to be shunned and considered unclean.
18. If someone invites you to dinner and serves pork, you should eat it without question in order to avoid offending your host (I Cor. 10:27).
- A. The context has nothing to do with clean or unclean meats, but with meat offered to idols (Verses 19 and 28). If you want to take this verse out of context, then if your host puts cyanide, razor blades, or a bowl of acid in front of you, you should eat it, lest you offend him. This is, of course, ridiculous!
  - B. You usually would not have to ask whether or not what you are eating is pork; you can usually discern that. The true meaning is that if they went to an unconverted person's house for a meal, they didn't have to ask him if the meat he served them had been offered to an idol. Idols are nothing to true Christians, and whether or not the meat had been offered to an idol is of no importance.
  - C. However, if the host or someone else brought up the subject and told them the meat was offered in sacrifice to an idol, they should refuse it--not because it harmed them, but because of the conscience of the other person. This might cause the other person to think they were hypocrites for claiming to be Christians and appearing to worship the idol by eating meat sacrificed to it (Verse 28).
  - D. The whole topic of discussion is whether or not to eat meats previously offered to idols, not clean and unclean meats.
19. It is all right to eat any meat as long as you ask God's blessing upon it (I Tim. 4:4).
- A. The subject in question was not clean and unclean meats but vegetarianism (Verse 3).
  - B. Some were teaching to abstain from meats--which Paul described as a doctrine of demons (Verse 1).

- C. Paul was pointing out that meat is good--if it be received with thanksgiving of them which know the Truth. What is Truth? John 17:17-- "Thy Word is Truth." God's Word--in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14-- shows which meats are to be received with thanksgiving.
- D. Notice verse 5. Certain meats are sanctified or "set apart" by the Word of God and prayer. We could not, in faith, give God thanks and ask His blessing on meat that is not set apart for food by His Word.
- E. Verse 4 is telling us, then, that all meat is good if we who know God's Truth--who know Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14--receive it with thanksgiving.

20. All meats are fit to eat (Gen. 9:3).

- A. This scripture does not say God made all meats for human consumption. God explained what He meant by the phrase "Every moving thing that liveth." Genesis 9:2 shows that He was referring to the four classifications of animals: the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, all that move upon the earth, and the fish of the seas.
- B. Genesis 9:3 shows that not every animal is clean and good for food. A qualification is added, "even as the green herb have I given you all things." Not all green herbs are good for food. You wouldn't think of eating poison ivy or poison oak. In addition, oleanders (an evergreen shrub) are poisonous--even though they have fragrant flowers.
- C. Just as all plants are not good for food, neither are all animals. Noah was well aware of that fact. Genesis 7:2, 8 proves that God had revealed which animals were clean and which were not. Here a definite distinction was made between clean and unclean meats.

Later God had Moses codify the law of clean and unclean meats which had been in effect since Creation. Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 state which animals may be eaten and which may not.

- D. God knew that man could find out for himself which herbs were good for food and which ones were not. But, He had to reveal to man which animals were fit to eat and which were not. The Bible is God's instruction book for man, providing him with the knowledge he could not discover for himself.

21. It is a sin to drink wine (Prov. 23:29-31).

- A. This scripture does not say it is wrong to drink wine. It does say we should not tarry long at the wine (Verse 30). One who tarries long at wine becomes a winebibber, or in plain English, a drunkard and no drunkard will inherit God's Kingdom (Gal. 5:21).
- B. Verse 31 says don't look upon the wine when it is red, when it moveth itself aright. The terms "red" and "moveth itself" refer to wine when it is in the process of fermentation. This is before the wine

is fully fermented. If at this time you "look on it" so as to finally drink it, you will become sick and possibly even die. In fact, instances are recorded describing how winery workers have become asphyxiated by merely leaning over the wine vats "looking on" the fermenting wine and being overcome by the poisonous gases, falling into the vats and drowning!

- C. God's Word shows it is perfectly all right to drink wine in moderation. The first miracle Jesus performed was to turn water into wine (John 2:1-10). The Greek word here translated wine is "oinos." And it means fermented wine.

The Apostle Paul even advised Timothy to drink some wine for his stomach problems (I Tim. 5:23).

- D. God gave us wine and alcoholic beverages to learn to use properly-- and to develop character by the proper exercise of wisdom and self-control. The proper use of alcohol is a great responsibility, but it is only the wrong use of it which becomes sin.

22. A rich man cannot enter the Kingdom of God (Matt. 19:23-24).

- A. Christ said it was very difficult for a rich man to enter God's Kingdom. He was referring to the example of the rich young man who turned down an opportunity to become one of Christ's disciples because he did not want to give up his wealth (Verses 16-22).
- B. In the parallel account (Mark 10:24) Christ emphasized that it was trusting in riches that would keep a rich man out of the Kingdom. Paul showed that the love of money could keep a man from entering the Kingdom of God (I Tim. 6:10). Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare (Verse 9). They become lustful. The more they get the more they want. Soon they are more intent on getting riches than striving to enter the Kingdom of God. It becomes their god (Col. 3:5).
- C. Christians are to flee the lust of wealth and concentrate on living a godly life and striving to lay hold on eternal life. A Christian can't serve God and mammon--a Greek word meaning wealth or riches (Matt. 6:24). Jesus said where you treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matt. 6:21). A man will either direct his efforts to increasing and maintaining his material wealth or to serving God.
- D. God is not opposed to wealth. His desire is that we prosper (III John 2). Many of God's servants were wealthy. Joseph was a prosperous man (Gen. 39:2). Job was the greatest man in the East (Job 1:3). Abram was rich in cattle, silver and gold (Gen. 13:2).

These men were wealthy, but they did not put their trust in riches, nor seek their own blessings. They obeyed God and were blessed materially by Him, and they will be in God's Kingdom!

- E. It is physically impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, but with God, all things are possible (Verse 26). It is only through God's miraculous help that a rich man--or anyone--can enter His Kingdom.

23. You can borrow from your second tithe if you pay it back and add 20 per cent (Lev. 27:31).

- A. Notice, first of all, that this scripture does not say anything about borrowing from your tithes. Secondly, this scripture is not talking about second tithe. Notice--the scripture says all the tithe of the land is holy to God (Verse 30). This tithe belongs to God. Second tithe belongs to the individual for the purpose of observing God's annual Feasts (Deut. 14:22-26).
- B. In ancient Israel most of the people were engaged in farming. Therefore, most of the tithes were in the form of produce, fruit or livestock.
- C. Because produce and fruit are perishable, God permitted the farmer to "redeem" or "buy back" this tithe, if he so desired. In doing this, the farmer would pay the market value of the produce or fruit, plus 20%, and keep it for himself.
- D. Livestock, however, cannot be redeemed (Lev. 27:32-33). A Christian farmer today should sell the tithe of his herd and send the proceeds in to God's Work.

24. Christ built the Church on Peter (Matt. 16:18).

- A. This scripture does not say that Christ made Peter the head of His Church. What does it say?
- B. The key to understanding this verse lies in the correct translation of the Greek words here rendered Peter and rock.

The Greek word translater Peter is "petros," which means a stone or piece of rock.

The Greek word translated rock is "petra," which means a huge rock--a massive crag or cliff or rock.

- C. Christ said He would build His Church on "petra"--the massive crag--not on "petros"--the stone. Christ is the Rock ("Petra"), as shown in I Cor. 10:4. He is also the Chief Cornerstone upon which the Church is built (Eph. 2:20).
- D. Peter was not even the chief apostle. Notice Acts 15:1-19. Here was a Ministerial Conference (Verse 6). Peter rose up to make his point (Verse 7), but it was James, the physical brother of Jesus Christ, who made the final decision (Verses 13-19). James was the chief apostle, not Peter.
- E. Immediately after His statement about the "rock" in Matt. 16:18, Christ had to severely rebuke Peter for his carnal, human approach (Verses 21-23). This clearly shows He had not made Peter the infallible head of His Church, upon whom the Church was to be built.

25. Every Christian woman should wear a veil or hat when she prays (I Cor. 11:5).

- A. This scripture is not talking about hats or veils. The subject in question is hair. "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her HAIR is given for a covering" (Verse 15). Notice: Paul, under inspiration, speaks of LONG HAIR as the "covering," or veil--not some hat, or piece of cloth.
- B. In Verse 6, Paul discusses various lengths of hair. Four lengths are mentioned: (1) not covered, (2) shorn, (3) shaven, and (4) covered. Shaven designates a totally bald head. Shorn hair is very short-cropped hair as when a sheep is shorn. Hair that is not a "covering" is short hair. Hair that is a covering is long hair--long enough to cover the head and back of the neck down to the shoulders. This of course refers to the length, not the style, so that long hair can be worn up on top of the head or in a French roll or bun even though it might appear shorter.
- C. In the setting of Verse 5 by itself, a veil just doesn't fit. What does a veil have to do with being shaven? Rather, Paul is saying that if a woman is going to have short-cropped hair she might as well go all the way and shave herself bald.
- D. To further show that this chapter is dealing with hair lengths, not veils, consider Verses 4 and 14. Verse 4 says that if a man has his head covered when he prays, he is dishonoring his head who is Jesus Christ. Verse 14 shows that it is a shame for a man to have long hair.
- E. Verse 10 shows the purpose of long hair on a woman. This verse should be rendered as it is in the margin, "For this cause ought the woman to have a covering in sign that she is under the power of her husband." Long hair is a sign that a woman is willing to be in subjection to a man, and that she acknowledges the need for protection by angels.

Since God has placed man as the head of the woman (Verse 3), the woman should have a sign of her submission to his authority. This sign is the woman's long hair--not a veil or hat.

26. Christian women should not wear jewelry (I Tim. 2:9-10).

- A. The Bible does not condemn the proper use of material things. It teaches that the material things are not sin, but it is the improper use of them that is wrong. It is the act of abuse or misuse that is a sin or violation of God's Law.
- B. Paul, here, is condemning the wrong use of clothes and jewelry. First, Paul says that women should adorn themselves in modest apparel. This is not speaking of the cost or quality of material, but of the design. Secondly, Paul mentions braided hair. This refers to the custom among the Greeks of intertwinning gold strands through the hair. Today this could apply to any outlandish hairstyle. Thirdly, Paul mentions gold, pearls and costly array. This is speaking of the addition of costly or distracting and unnaturally bulky adornments which take away the natural beauty of a woman.

- C. What Paul is getting across in this verse is that a woman should not have the emphasis on physical attire but on her character.
- D. Many other scriptures show that God does not condemn the use of jewelry per se. Exodus 3:22 shows that God instructed the Israelites to take jewels from the Egyptians and to put these jewels of silver and gold on their sons and daughters. Genesis 24:22 shows that Abraham's servant gave earrings and bracelets to Rebekah when he came seeking a wife for Isaac. In Ezekiel 16:11-13, God says that He figuratively bedecked Israel with earrings, bracelets, a crown, and other jewelry. In the parable of the prodigal son found in Luke 15, God the Father is pictured as receiving back a repentant son. And in Verse 22, we see that he has his servants place a ring on the son's hand.

From this we see that a modest use of jewelry is not condemned in the Bible. Only such use of jewelry as detracts from a woman's modest character is rejected. God wants us to keep our minds on the spiritual aspects of life and not physical possessions.

27. Why did God kill Uzza (I Chron. 13:9-10)?

- A. David wanted to bring the ark back from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. In doing so, he had the ark carried on a new cart. As they were going, the oxen stumbled and Uzza put his hand on the ark to steady it--to keep it from falling. Because Uzza touched the ark, God killed him (I Chron. 13:1-10).
- B. This is an example of disobedience which ended in disaster. The ark should have been carried on the shoulders of the Levites, not on a new cart (Num. 7:9; Deut. 10:8). Also, Numbers 4:15 warned the Levites that they were not to touch any of the holy things they were to carry lest they die.
- C. The parallel account in II Samuel 6:6-7 explains that God smote Uzza for "his error." The word error is rendered rashness in the margin. It was a rash act to touch the ark of God that even the Levites were forbidden to touch. The ark was so holy that at one time God killed over 50,000 Israelites for profaning it by opening and looking inside of it (I Samuel 6:19).
- D. I Chronicles 15:2 shows that David later realized what he had done wrong. He learned after the death of Uzza how the ark should be transported--by being carried (with poles) on the shoulders of the Levites. Verses 12-13--David told the Levites to sanctify themselves so they could carry the ark. Because they hadn't carried the ark at first, God made a breach upon them. They hadn't sought God after "the due order."
- E. When they did everything according to God's instructions, they were able to bring up the ark with joy (I Chron. 15:15, 25-26). The principle to learn is that we must do exactly as God commands--not "reason" or water down His instructions. Also, we must deeply respect anything He has made holy--i.e., the Sabbath, Holy Days, etc.

28. Is the "baptism of fire" something we should seek (Matt. 3:11)?
- A. Notice the context. John was not speaking to Christians. He was reproving the Pharisees and Sadducees for their self-righteous attitudes (Verses 7-9), and he was telling them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance (Verse 8).
  - B. John explained that he was baptizing with water unto repentance (Verse 11), but Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
  - C. Notice verse 12. This fire is described as an unquenchable fire that would burn up the chaff.
  - D. Malachi 4:3 describes this also. The wicked are to be ashes--completely burned up--under the feet of the righteous. This is speaking of the second death, as described in Revelation 20:14-15.

29. What does the parable of the garments and the winebottles mean and what does it have to do with fasting (Luke 5:36-39)?
- A. Jesus was answering a question. "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?" (Luke 5:33). He used this parable to help answer the question.
  - B. "No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old" (Luke 5:36).
- It doesn't make sense to put a new piece of cloth on an old garment to repair it. After washing, the new cloth will shrink and tear the old.
- C. "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish" (Verse 37).

Strong's Concordance shows the Greek word here translated "bottles" really means "wineskins." It would be ridiculous to put new wine into an old wineskin. An old wineskin has already stretched and the fermentation of new wine would burst it.

- D. The new cloth and the new wine symbolize the new way of life Christ was bringing. We must change our total approach to God--our methods and purposes in fasting, prayer, obedience, etc., when we are converted. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).
- E. Jesus gave these two examples as a lesson in incongruities. It would make as little sense for His disciples to fast while He was there as it would to put a new cloth on an old garment or new wine in an old wineskin. We can't fit God's Truth into our old way of life. For



instance, if you try to mix the truth of the Sabbath or Divorce and Remarriage into your old Methodist way of life and concepts, it will indeed seem "hard" and "burdensome" to obey God--and will cause a "rent," etc.

The main reason for fasting is to get closer to God. JESUS' DISCIPLES DIDN'T FAST. They didn't need to fast to get closer to Him because He was already with them. "And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days" (Luke 5:34-35).

- F. "No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better" (Luke 5:39).

Christ had already explained why His disciples didn't fast at that time. This last analogy was to show why the Pharisees and John's disciples did fast. These men were not ready to accept the example of Christ and His disciples as being right. They didn't want to drink the "new wine"--the new way of life that Christ was bringing--because they felt the "old wine" of their customs, doctrines and practices was better.

30. Angels married women and engendered a race of giants (Gen. 6:1-4).

- A. This scripture does not say that angels married women. It states that the sons of God "took them wives of all which they chose" (Verse 2). These sons of God were not angels. The fact is that angels cannot marry--it is impossible for them to marry. Jesus said those in the resurrection "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" but are as the angels (Matt. 22:30 and Mark 12:25).
- B. Angels cannot co-habit with women and reproduce sexually. Angels are spirit beings (Heb. 1:14). Women are human beings. Here we have two different kinds. God established a law that each kind produces only after its own kind (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21). This is made clear by the context as well. In Genesis 6:3-4 God states, "My spirit will not always strive with man." God is speaking of mankind, not angels. Verse 4 shows that the children of the sons of God and the daughters of men were "mighty men" not angels.
- C. In the Bible the phrase "sons of God" has three different meanings. One refers to spirit-begotten Christians (Rom. 8:14; I John 3:2). Also, angels are called "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 38:4-7). But remember angels "neither marry, nor are given in marriage." The third meaning refers to mankind in general because all men are sons of God by creation (Psa. 82:6; Mal. 2:10; Luke 3:38). Since these were obviously not spirit-begotten Christians, and could not be angels, it is evident that these "sons of God" were simply mankind in general who had forsaken God and were intermarrying in defiance of His law.

- D. One final clarification--giants were not exclusively the progeny of the sons of God and the daughters of men. Verse 4 shows that the giants existed before the sons of God married the daughters of women and afterwards, but does not state that they were the result of these marriages.

31. Should we answer a fool or not? (Prov. 26:4-5).

- A. First of all we need to realize the Bible does not contradict itself. God's Word is truth (John 17:17). The scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).
- B. These two verses are not contradictory. They complement each other. The last part of each proverb shows the set of circumstances under which each is to be used.
- C. Verse 4 tells us not to answer a fool according to his folly lest we be like him. In this situation, to answer the fool's specific statement or question you would be descending to his level and end up in a pointless argument.

An example of this is given in Luke 20:1-8 where the Pharisees asked Christ by whose authority He did certain things. The Pharisees were not there seeking to learn anything. To avoid being like the fools they were, Christ didn't answer their question. Rather, He asked them a question which they couldn't answer without condemning themselves. Since the Pharisees couldn't answer His question the discussion was dropped.

- D. Verse 5 tells us that under another set of circumstances we must answer the fool according to his folly--by a foolish answer, which exposes how ridiculous his statement, claim or question is--or he will be wise in his own conceit. This case is well-illustrated by Paul's example in II Corinthians 11:23.

Certain men were at Corinth who claimed to be true apostles of Christ, but they were false apostles (II Cor. 11:13). For Paul to have remained silent at the time would have given tacit approval of these men who were leading the Church astray. They would have appeared wise in their own conceit. Therefore in Verse 23 Paul said, "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft." These men had been boasting of their qualifications, and in this epistle Paul was exposing these men for what they were. Paul answered these false apostles' claims so they would not appear wise.

These scriptures do not contradict; but taken together they explain two different methods of handling the questions and statements of fools. You need wisdom to know just when and how to apply these principles. And wisdom comes from God.

32. We should preach the Gospel from house to house (Acts 20:20).

- A. This verse is not talking about preaching the Gospel to uninterested, unconverted people from house to house. Notice that Paul is talking to the elders of the Ephesus Church (Acts 20:17-18). Paul taught these men from house to house (Acts 20:20).
- B. In Matthew 7:6 Christ gives the principle of "not casting your pearls before the swine." The precious truth of God is not to be carelessly given to the unconverted who will treat it with disrespect. If an individual's mind hasn't been opened by God, trying to cram the truth down his throat will only make him angry at you. For this reason we visit only those who specifically request a visit. Otherwise we let the WORLD TOMORROW and the PLAIN TRUTH witness to those who have no desire to be visited.
- C. In Luke 10:7, Christ instructed his disciples, "Go not from house to house."
- D. Throughout the book of Acts we see that Paul's practice was to enter into the synagogue and preach publicly to the Jews assembled there (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:10). Nowhere does it mention that Paul preached the Gospel to the unconverted, from house to house!

Yet, in Acts 20:20 we see that Paul, when speaking privately to the elders of the Church, did teach them in their homes!

33. Christ preached to the spirits in prison while His body lay in the tomb (I Pet. 3:18-19).

- A. This scripture does not say Christ preached to the spirits in prison during the time He was in the grave.
- B. These wicked angels followed Satan in his rebellion against God (Isa. 14:12-14), and were put in prison (chains of darkness) for their folly (II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
- C. But when did Christ preach to them? "When once the longsuffering of God waited IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, while the ark was a preparing" (I Pet. 3:20). That's when Christ preached to the spirits--in the days of Noah, not during the time He was in the grave.
- D. Jesus died (I Cor. 15:3; Rev. 1:18). When He was dead, He was dead! The dead know nothing (Eccl. 9:5, 10). Their thoughts perish (Ps. 146:4).

Jesus could not possibly have preached to those wicked spirits while in His grave. Rather, He did this during the days of Noah.