

## SUNDAY MORNING

### Announcements

Mark Davis

### Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

### Lord's Supper

Jon Barry                      Clay Morris  
Jerry Schnelle                Joseph Barry

### Prayers

Rodney Ellis                Dee Minter

## SUNDAY EVENING

### Announcements

Mark Davis

### Song Leader

Hayden Ellis

### Lord's Supper

Clay Morris                      Jerry Schnelle

### Prayers

Randy Ellis                      W.H. McFerrin

## WEDNESDAY

### Announcements

Dee Minter

### Song Leader

Jack Calvert

### Prayers

Bryan Garlock                Melvin Potts

### Invitation

Bill Brittenham

## ABOUT US

### Elders

Jack Calvert                      Rodney Ellis

### Deacons

Jon Barry                      Bill Brittenham  
Mike Davis                      Dave Massey

### Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

## SERVICE TIMES

### Sunday

Bible Study .....9:30 A.M.  
Worship .....10:15 A.M.  
Worship .....6:00 P.M.

### Wednesday

Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

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## GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

**Hear** the word of truth ..... Romans 10:13-17

**Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

**Repent** from all sins .... Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

**Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

**Be Baptized** in His name ..... Mark 16:16;  
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

**Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death ..... Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

# Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ

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Issue 1

## The Importance of knowing and Understanding Religious Error

Bryan Garlock

Many, even within the church, do not understand the importance of knowing and understanding religious error. The Scriptures are clear: if anything is taught or believed contrary to the truth, it is a lie and it is soul-damning (Gal. 1.6-10; 2 Thess. 2.12, etc.). Consequently, the Bible is clear that error must be answered (1 Peter 3.15), exposed (Eph. 5.11), silenced (Titus 1.11), and repented of (Acts 8.18-23; 17.30-31).

In the first century, Christians dealt with error as they went about teaching. Some of the errors in their time were that Christ was not the Messiah of the Old Testament (see the gospel accounts), that God's grace allowed for one to continue in sin (Rom. 6.1ff; Jude 4, etc.), that for the Gentiles to be accepted into fellowship with God they must be circumcised in addition to obeying the gospel (see Acts 15, Galatians, Romans, etc.), that Jesus did not come in the flesh (see 1-2 John), and that the resurrection either would not happen or already happened (1 Cor. 15; 2 Tim. 2.18, etc.).

To teach the truth on these matters, the Christians had to have a knowledge and understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures and the teachings of the apostles. We would be foolish to think that first-century Christians did not deal with error nor need to know how to deal with error. In fact, for one to be a pastor in the Lord's church he must be able to answer error (Titus 1.9). Not only should all Christians aspire to this level of knowledge, they are commanded to be knowledgeable in the Scriptures (1 Peter 3.15, 2 Peter 3.18). Simply put, religious error 2,000 years ago could not be answered or exposed without a working knowledge of God's word – *the same is true today*.

However, what about modern-day error? Per Wikipedia.com, there are 41,000 different denominations and 4,200 different religions. While our first-century brethren dealt with error, they did not have to deal with the pervasive amount that we currently face. For the most part, there was paganism in all its forms, Judaism in all its

## FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Francine Davis** and **Mary Alice Turner**. Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

**Bill Rinehart** is undergoing rehab for his new knees.

**W. H. McFerrin's** cataract surgery Tuesday went well. He is scheduled for his other eye on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Ann Thomas** and **Maxine Burnham** both fell recently. Thankfully, nothing was broken.

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forms, Gnosticism in all its forms, etc. Therefore, it is this writer's experience that it is exceedingly difficult, though not impossible, to teach someone without understanding their religious background and their beliefs and opinions of God and the Scriptures. It is no longer a matter of teaching someone to believe in Christ – since the "Christianity" of the religious world already does – it is a matter of teaching them out of the lies they have been taught and into what it means to truly believe in Christ. In other words, it has become a matter of "un-teaching" them before we can teach them.

Do not misunderstand. One may successfully teach an individual without knowledge of false religions and doctrines. Just knowing the truth of God's word without any knowledge of others' beliefs is powerful in recognizing what is right

and wrong and in refuting religious errors. There have been countless times where this writer was presented with a new doctrine or idea about the Scriptures and could powerfully refute the error because of knowing the truth. Do not feel overwhelmed in thinking that one must know everything about a false religion before being successful in converting souls to Christ. *The truth alone is your best defense every time.* In fact, when the Bible is in our hand and written on our hearts, we can conquer any error.

As the Christian teaches their family members, friends and neighbors, they will encounter some people who have not been tainted or brainwashed with false doctrines. For example, one may be "unchurched" (either grew up never going to church or does not go to church at all) and therefore is ignorant of deceptive doctrines or, while they may have been influenced by these false teachings, are not wedded to them. In this writer's experience, these individuals are the easiest to teach and convert to Christ.

On the other hand, one may strongly hold to religious error. Fortunately, most people are not experts in their own religion. Many people *do not even know why they believe the things they believe.* In fact, oftentimes their faith is in tradition rather than in Scripture. If we are aware of their beliefs and why they believe something, we are better equipped to answer their questions, doubts, and even arguments. Just knowing the basic facts about others' religions is sometimes all one needs to overcome any objections to the truth. In this case, it is important that the Christian have a working knowledge of false religions and doctrines. If one is to study with an atheist, it would be advantageous to understand atheism, evolution, and supposed "contradictions" of

the Bible, among other things. It is simply not enough to claim atheism is false and God is real; the uneducated and unprepared Christian stands no chance whatsoever. If one wants to study with a Jew who does not accept the New Testament nor the Messiah, he needs to know how to prove Jesus is the Son of God and the prophesied Messiah, that the promises to Abraham have been fulfilled and that the blessings are found in Christ, that the Old Testament has been done away with and we now live under in the New Testament, etc. Remember, this is exactly what the first century Christians needed to know to teach their Jewish kinsmen the gospel (see the book of Acts). For a denominationalist, one would need to show the true plan of salvation, the true church and her work and organization, and answer and expose denominational doctrines and erroneous views such as baptism is non-essential to salvation and once-saved-always-saved. One would also need to show that denominationalism itself is unacceptable to God.

These errors are just a few of the ones we as Christians should be prepared to answer. These examples of skepticism and false religions are real and prevalent and cannot be avoided in Bible studies or discussions. This writer cannot remember a time when studying with someone that these issues and others were not brought up in some form or another. For this writer, it would have been somewhat difficult to teach a person who brought up strange beliefs about the Bible without some basic understanding of the student's religious background.

Finally, if one argues that it is not necessary at all to know anything about

other religions, please consider the following: Should we not be prepared for every question or argument that may be presented to us when teaching the lost? What about a Muslim? A Mormon? A Jehovah's Witness? Should we not know *something* about these religions? They all have "bibles" too. Should we not know *why* our Bible is right and true and theirs is false and fake? Should we not study their books and point out to them the inconsistencies, untrue statements, illogical conclusions, etc.? What if they point out what they suppose are "inconsistencies, untrue statements, illogical conclusions, etc." about our Bible? Should we not have a working knowledge of not only the Scriptures, but the external evidence of the Scriptures? Our children are taught in school that God's word is a man-made book, a lie, and a joke. Therefore, *it is necessary at times to know more than what is contained within Scripture if we plan to have an answer for our faith.*

It is true that Paul used the Scriptures when teaching the Jews, but did not Paul use the pagans' sources when teaching the pagans in Acts 17.28? As false religions began to form and false doctrines developed and evolved, it became necessary to understand what these religions taught; to say that it is not necessary to study religious error is not wise at all.

As Christians, our mission is to seek and save the lost. As we do our best to fulfill this mission, we need to study the Bible and learn God's will so that we can teach others, and we need to learn enough about false doctrines so that we can refute them.