

The Amish Voice



PO Box 128, 575 State Route 250 N, Savannah OH 4487

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PART V—What is the Church Slave or Free; All Are Welcome

Social Status Makes No Difference When It Comes To Being A Member Of Christ's Church

One of the greatest privileges in belonging to the *Body of Christ* (the CHURCH) is the fact that you do not have to possess a lot of money, come from a certain background, be highly educated, or even be a person of great importance. You can be a poor person or a crippled person and still join the *Body of Christ*; you could also be a world leader or a millionaire—none of these positions matter when it comes to belonging to the *Body of Christ*.

The Bible says... *For thou shalt be His witness unto ALL men of what thou hast seen and heard.* (Acts 22:15)

The Apostle Paul said... *I continue unto this day, witnessing both to SMALL AND GREAT.* (Acts 26:22)

During New Testament times the **LOWEST POSITION** of all was that of a **SLAVE**. But even **slaves** are invited to be members in God's church; even **slaves** can enjoy all the **rights** and **privileges** of being members in the body of Christ.

Here are three passages that teach us that IN CHRIST there is no DIFFERENCE between a person who is a SLAVE and a person who is FREE:

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, **there is neither bond nor free**, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* (Gal 3:28)

*For by one Spirit are we all baptized [or placed] 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.* (1 Cor 12:13)

*Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, **bond nor free**: but **CHRIST IS ALL**, and in all.* (Col 3:11)

In the *Body of Christ* there is perfect EQUALITY and ONENESS. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE!

TO THE SLAVES: In Eph 6:5, Paul writes to Christian **SLAVES** (the word "servants" in this passage means "SLAVES"). Paul wanted these **SAVED SLAVES** to realize that they were not only slaves to their earthly masters but above all—**SLAVES OF JESUS CHRIST**.

*Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, **AS UNTO CHRIST**,* (Eph 6:5)

TO THE MASTERS: In Eph 6:9, Paul writes to Christian **MASTERS** (those FREE men who

had slaves under them). Paul wanted these **SAVED MASTERS** to realize that they also had a **MASTER IN HEAVEN** that they were under.

*And, ye masters, do the same things unto them (slaves), forbearing threatening: knowing that **YOUR MASTER ALSO IS IN HEAVEN**; neither is there respect of persons with him.* (Eph 6:9)



It does not make any DIFFERENCE whether a man is a SLAVE or whether he is FREE. **ALL BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS** must someday stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10) to receive reward or to SUFFER LOSS (1 Cor 3:14-15).

This is why Ephesians 6:8 says...

*"Knowing that whatsoever good thing **ANY MAN** doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be **BOND or FREE**."* (Eph 6:8)

The word "LORD" means "MASTER" and this means that whenever we read the words, "THE **LORD JESUS CHRIST**," we should remind ourselves that **HE is our MASTER** and because HE is our **MASTER** we should be

OBEDIENT to HIM and we should PLEASE HIM WELL in ALL THINGS (see Titus 2:9).

Therefore, every person who belongs to the LORD Jesus Christ is HIS slave. HE is our MASTER! Every believer is a SLAVE of JESUS CHRIST!!

In the following verses, the word "servant" means "slave"

1. Paul was a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ — (Romans 1:1)
2. Epaphras was a servant (slave) of Christ — (Colossians 4:12)
3. James was a servant (slave) of God and the Lord Jesus Christ — (James 1:1)
4. Peter was a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ — (2 Peter 1:1)
5. Jude was a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ — (Jude 1)
6. I, _____YOUR NAME_____ AM A SERVANT (SLAVE) OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, BECAUSE I BELONG TO HIM!

Here are two questions to consider:

QUESTION I: Is it possible for a saved person to be free and to also be a slave at the same time? —see Rom 6:18 below...

Rom 6:18 says [YES]...

Being then made FREE from sin, ye became the SERVANTS (slaves) of righteousness.

QUESTION II: Is it possible for an unsaved person to be free and to also be a slave at the same time?

Rom 6:20 says [NO]...

For when ye were the servants (slaves) of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

**Education Makes No Difference
When It Comes To Being A Member
Of Christ's Church**



Jesus Christ is interested in you, no matter how much education or schooling you have received in your life time. If

the gospel message only went to well educated people then millions and millions of people would never have had the opportunity to get saved.

The apostle Paul was always eager and willing to preach the gospel "both to the GREEKS (people well educated) and BARBARIANS (foreign people who were often uneducated);

In Rom 1:14, Paul writes... I am debtor both to the GREEKS, and to the BARBARIANS; both to the WISE, and to the UNWISE.

The Apostles, Peter and John, were both members of the church and yet neither one had been to school (Acts 4:13). Matter of fact, Matthew tells us that they were fishermen.

In some sense though, Peter and John had some of the best training and schooling anybody could ever have because Acts 4:13 says that **"they had been with Jesus"** who is the greatest teacher that ever lived. And as we both know, the Lord used Peter to write two books of the Bible and John to write five books of the Bible.

Moses was a well educated person:

The Bible says in Acts 7:22... *And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.*

According to the Word of God, Moses may have gone to school until he was about 40 years of age —BUT— all that education was still not enough to prepare him to lead the Children of Israel out of Egypt (Acts 7:23-34)

According to Acts 7:30, it would take an additional 40 years before God would then appear to Moses in the wilderness, and in a flame of fire, ask Moses to go back to Egypt and deliver His people from slavery.



Don't ever say, "God can't use me anymore because I am too old". Do you realize that it wasn't until Moses turned 80 years old that God called him into the ministry.

Luke and the Apostle Paul were also well members of the church and both of them were highly educated in the eyes of the world.

(Col 4:14) tells us that Luke was a doctor and more than likely he was well trained in medicine, just like our doctors are today.

Paul on the other hand was trained by one of the most respected and famous teachers of the day. Paul himself told us...

Acts 22:3... *"I am verily a man which am a JEW, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city AT THE FEET OF GAMALIEL and TAUGHT according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers"*

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We can learn some more about this great teacher whose name was GAMALIEL if we go to the book of Acts chapter 5...

Acts 5:34... *Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named GAMALIEL, A DOCTOR OF THE LAW, HAD A REPUTATION AMONG ALL THE PEOPLE...*

Paul had SAT AT THE FEET of this teacher who was respected and honored by all the Jews. But for the believer in Christ, there is a "GREATER THAN GAMALIEL" at whose feet we may learn. There is no greater teacher than THE MASTER!!

Are you His student and His disciple?

Education makes no DIFFERENCE, but once we become a member of the Church, God expects us to be WELL-TRAINED and WELL-EDUCATED in HOW TO LIVE.

Where can we find instruction on how to live right, act right, talk right and think right? I am glad you asked because God tells us in the following three verses.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 *...the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, AND IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

WHAT MUST I DO TO BECOME A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S CHURCH?

First, I Must Repent

The word "REPENT" means "to completely CHANGE your MIND about something." When a person REPENTS he must first admit that he was **THINKING WRONGLY** and then he must CHANGE his whole way of THINKING so that he begins to THINK RIGHTLY (to think as GOD THINKS and to see things JUST AS GOD SEES THINGS).

God in His Word, commands all people and nations to change their way of thinking. Please take a look at the following scripture verses:

Acts 3:19 *REPENT ye therefore, and be converted...*

Acts 17:30 *...but now (God) commandeth all men every where to REPENT*

Luke 24:47 *And that REPENTANCE and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

2 Peter 3:9 *tells us... the Lord is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to REPENTANCE (CHANGE THEIR MINDS ABOUT HIM)*



In the first four books of the New Testament, we often read of how the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees (religious crowd) followed

Jesus around with one goal in mind and that was to find fault in everything that Jesus did. One day, Jesus called out to a publican (tax collector) named Matthew and said "FOLLOW ME".

This obviously caused quite a stir among the Pharisees and scribes. Because you see, in their eyes they were by far the most righteous crowd of the day and when they compared themselves with the cheating, lying, and crooked tax collector, they became angry that Jesus would invite someone so low to come and follow Him.

But then Jesus made a statement that would rock the minds of many generations to come. He looked at the murmuring Pharisees and scribes and said...

They that are whole, need NOT a physician; but they that are sick. I CAME NOT TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE. (Luke 5:31-32)

In other words, Jesus said... Pharisees, I did not come to heal you, because you all are to self righteous to realize that you even need a Savior. I (Jesus) **came to heal and save those who know they are sinners** and are **willing to repent from their sin.**

I have found in my years of ministry that one of the hardest groups to reach for

Christ is the religious crowd. The more religious a person is the harder it is to get them to see their need to repent.

The reason this happens is because religious people measure themselves by their rules and ordinances. If they are able to keep at least 90-95 percent of the rules, they feel they have a chance to be right with God. But you see the Bible clearly says that "**ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God**"—Rom 3:23.

James 2:10 *says... For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, HE IS GUILTY OF ALL.*

Romans 3:10 *says... As it is written, there is none righteous, NO NOT ONE.*

Have you repented from your self righteousness and turned to God? If not, you cannot be part of the **body of Jesus Christ.**

Jesus spoke a parable to certain people WHO THOUGHT they were righteous.

Luke 18:9-13 *And he spake this parable unto certain WHICH TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES THAT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS, and despised others:*

Jesus continued... *Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican (tax collector). The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other man are...*

And the publican... smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Let's ask ourselves three questions...

1. Were these men THINKING RIGHTLY about themselves?
2. Did they need to REPENT and THINK DIFFERENTLY about themselves?
3. Which man in the parable was THINKING RIGHTLY?



Thus, if a man or a woman really wants to THINK RIGHTLY he/she must pay attention to God's Word. God has given us all the WARNINGS that we need, and these warnings are found in the Bible.

Luke 13:3 *says... except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

WHAT MUST I DO TO BECOME A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S CHURCH?

Second, I Must Be Converted

"To be **converted**" means " *TO TURN, TURN AROUND, CHANGE DIRECTION.*" The word is used of a person who **URNS AROUND** and faces a **DIFFERENT DIRECTION**:

For a good example of what a REAL CONVERSION looks like, lets go to (1 Thess 1:9) where Paul writes... *and how **ye turned to God from idols** to serve the living and true God;*

When a person is CONVERTED, he must first realize he is going the **wrong way** and then he must **TURN** to the living God and start going God's way.

Luke writes how that many Jewish people would CONVERT to Christianity...

Luke 1:16 *And many of the children of Israel shall He **TURN** to the Lord their God.*

On the other hand, the prophet Isaiah wrote about a people who REFUSED TO CHANGE DIRECTION, but rather, they continued on in their sinful ways.

Isaiah 6:9-10 *And he said, Go...Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they **see** with their eyes, and **hear** with their ears, and **understand** with their heart, and **CONVERT**, and be healed.*

How important is it that a person CONVERTS? Do people really need to **CHANGE DIRECTION**? According to Matthew, people who do not **TURN TO GOD** and **CHANGE THEIR DIRECTION** will never see the Kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3 *And said, Verily I say unto you, EXCEPT YE BE CONVERTED, and become as little children, **ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.***

In fact, the Word of God declares in (**Acts**

3:19) *REPENT ye therefore, and BE CONVERTED, that your sins may be blotted out...*

The Book of Acts records several more examples of CONVERSIONS to the Lord...

Acts 9:35 *And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and TURNED TO THE LORD.*

Acts 11:21 *...a great number believed, and TURNED UNTO THE LORD.*

Acts 26:20 *...that they should REPENT and TURN TO THE LORD...*

CONVERSION involves two things:

1. Turning from
2. Turning unto

When a person changes his direction, he must turn away **FROM** the way he was going, and he must turn **UNTO** a new direction.

Now, let's see this in the following scriptures:

Acts 14:15 *And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that **YE SHOULD TURN FROM THESE VANITIES UNTO THE LIVING GOD.*** (verses 11-12 tell what the vanities were)

Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them ⁽¹⁾ FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, and ⁽²⁾ FROM THE POWER OF SATAN UNTO GOD, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

1 Peter 2:25 *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now RETURNED unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

Don't forget though, there is such a thing as TURNING in the **WRONG DIRECTION** (see Gal 4:9; Acts 7:39 and 2 Pet 2:21-22).

Sometimes it is even necessary for a **BELIEVER** to change his direction!

If a Christian brother should err from the truth (GO THE WRONG WAY), then he needs to BE CONVERTED (GO THE RIGHT WAY). This means that you need to tell him he is going the WRONG WAY so

that he might CHANGE HIS DIRECTION. By doing this, James says...

James 5:20 *...he which CONVERTETH the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*

Sometimes when believers are going the wrong way, God brings them to an early death (see 1 Corinthians. 11:30 and Acts 5:1-10). DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH THE LIVING GOD! When you are **thinking** the wrong way, REPENT! When you are **going** the wrong way, BE CONVERTED! See Acts 3:19 and Acts 26:20)

WHAT MUST I DO TO BECOME A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S CHURCH?

Third, I Must Believe On The Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 16:29-31 *Then he (prison guard) called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, ...and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, **BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved...***

Every person who is a member of Christ's church is a **BELIEVER**, and every **BELIEVER** is a member of Christ's church.

Acts 5:14 *says, And BELIEVERS were the more ADDED to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.*

The moment a person becomes a **BELIEVER** he/she is added to the body of Christ, and thus becomes a member of the Church. There are no unbelievers in the body of Christ. Every **BELIEVER** is placed into the body of Christ, the moment he/she believes (see 1 Cor. 12:13).

FAITH (belief or trust) is not some difficult thing which no one really understands. People walk by faith every single day of their lives. When you sit down in a chair you have **FAITH** in that chair and you **BELIEVE** that it will hold you up and not break into pieces when you put your weight upon it. When you ride in your buggy you **TRUST**



the horse and buggy and you **BELIEVE** that when you need to stop suddenly your horse will come to a fast halt. Whenever you eat food, you **TRUST** that the food has been properly prepared and not poisoned. When you go down into your basement, you **RELY UPON** the pillars and walls that hold up the ceiling over your head, and you **BELIEVE** that the house will not come crashing down upon you. When you climb a tree and hang all your weight upon one branch (30 feet above the ground), you **TRUST** that the branch is strong enough to hold you up. Every time you haul a heavy load of grain or hay over that bridge, you **DEPEND UPON** that bridge to hold you up and not collapse into the water below. Then your friends tell you that they will meet you at so and so place by 7am the next day --- you **TAKE THEM AT THEIR WORD** and **BELIEVE** that they will do what they said they would do. Can you think of other examples of how we live by faith every day?

Sometimes the horse and buggy do fail and a person might have an accident. Sometimes chairs do break when people sit in them. Sometimes there is something wrong with the food we eat and it might make us sick. Sometimes the roofs on buildings do come crashing down. Sometimes our friends do not keep their promises. **Is it possible to trust something or someone that will never fail us? Is there someone that we can put our faith in who will never disappoint us or let us down?**

The Bible tells us exactly WHO we should believe in and WHO we should trust completely. It is **not** our best friend! It is **not** the President of the United States. It is **not** your Bishop or next door neighbor, though these may be very fine people. It is certainly **not** yourself because often you will disappoint yourself and let yourself down. But there is a Person that we can SAFELY believe in. WHO IS THIS PERSON (see Acts 11:17; 16:31; 19:4 and 20:21)?

BELIEVING in Jesus Christ as our Savior is simply casting one's "self" **totally** and **completely** into the open arms of the Lord Jesus and saying, "Lord, on Thee I rest my soul for eternity. I am trusting Thee to hold me up and to keep me safe and secure forever! I am depending on You and on You ALONE to save me! I am resting all my weight on

WHO YOU ARE, and WHAT YOU HAVE DONE and WHAT YOU HAVE SAID."

What does it mean to believe on the Lord? *The story is told of an expert tightrope walker whose tightrope was extended across Niagara Falls. Of course, to fall from this rope would mean instant destruction. Balancing his long pole lightly, he steps upon the rope and starts across. The crowd is silent. Finally he victoriously places his foot on the farther bank and a great cheer rises even above the noise of the falls themselves.*

The man then turns to the crowd and makes a thrilling proposal. He offers to cross the falls a second time with a man on his back! But who is to be the man?

"Do you believe I am able to carry you across?" asks the ropewalker turning to a likely individual.

"I certainly do," at once responds the one addressed. "Will you let me?" inquires the waiting hero.

"Will I let you? Well, hardly. You don't think I am going to risk my life like that, do you?" and he turns away.

"And what about you?" as he asks another man who was standing by.

"I believe. In fact, I have no doubt about it at all."

"Will you trust me?"

"I will!"



Breathlessly the people watch as he climbs onto the tightrope walker's back and they begin

step by step. At last they are over; their final step is taken and they stand once more on firm ground!

Bridging the gulf between time and eternity is the great rope of salvation. Jesus Christ alone is able to cross it. You may have heard all about it, and like the first man, you may even believe that Jesus can carry you across. But not until you take the final step and commit yourself to Him will you

ever get over. God wants you to trust yourself completely to His Son.

There is only one problem with this illustration. It gives the idea that trusting the Lord Jesus is something very dangerous and risky. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, trusting Jesus for one's eternal salvation is the safest thing a person can do! Human tightrope walkers sometimes fail and some have even plunged to their death. The Lord Jesus Christ has never failed and never will. Those who come to Him for salvation will never be disappointed!

John 6:37 *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT.*

What must a person do to be saved and to become a member of Christ's Church? God's answer is clearly given to us in **Acts 16:30-31**. But many people refuse to believe what God says, and they have made up their own way of salvation:

1. Try to live a good life, and thou shalt be saved.
2. Keep the Ten Commandments, and thou shalt be saved.
3. Love your neighbor, and thou shalt be saved.
4. Be baptized, and thou shalt be saved.
5. Follow the Ordinance letter, and thou shalt be saved.
6. Wear Amish clothes, and thou shalt be saved.
7. Go to church every other week, and thou shalt be saved.
8. Be a church member and thou shalt be saved.
9. Do good works and thou shalt be saved.

Before we close this study out, I need to ask you a very personal question.

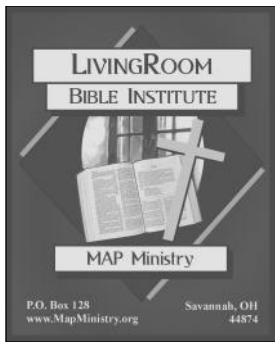
Have you placed 100% of your faith and trust in Jesus Christ for your eternal salvation? If not, you can do that right now. You can become a born again believer by simply asking the Lord to save you.

Romans 10:12-13 *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

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Did you Know?

1. Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying.
2. Dogs and cats consume almost \$7 billion worth of pet food a year.
3. Dolphins sleep with one eye open.
4. During your lifetime, you'll eat about 60,000 pounds of food, that's the weight of about 6 elephants.
5. Even if you cut off a cockroach's head, it can live for several weeks.
6. Fingernails grow nearly 4 times faster than toenails.
7. Hershey's Kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it's kissing the conveyor belt.

Amazing Facts In The Bible

“How many children did Adam and Eve have?” The Bible does not give us a specific number. Adam and Eve had Cain (Genesis 4:1), Abel (Genesis 4:2), Seth (Genesis 4:25), and many other sons and daughters (Genesis 5:4). With likely hundreds of years of child-bearing capability, Adam and Eve likely had 50+ children in their lifetime.

“Did Adam and Eve have belly-buttons/navels?” A belly-button is formed by the umbilical cord that connects a baby in the womb to its mother. Adam and Eve were created directly by God, and did not go through the normal birthing process. So, Adam and Eve would not have had belly buttons.

“Were Adam and Eve saved?” The Bible does not specifically tell us whether Adam and Eve were saved. Adam and Eve were the only two human beings who knew about God before they became tainted with sin. As a result, they likely still knew God better after their Fall than any of us do today. Adam and Eve most definitely believed in and depended on God. God continued to talk with Adam and Eve and provide for them after the Fall. Adam and Eve knew of God's promise that He would provide a Savior (Genesis 3:15). God made garments of skin for Adam and Eve after the Fall (Genesis 3:21). Many scholars understand this as the first animal sacrifice, foreshadowing the eventual death of Christ on the cross for the sins of the world. As a result of these facts, it would seem that Adam and Eve were "saved" and did indeed go to Heaven / Paradise when they died.

“Who was Cain's wife? Was Cain's wife his sister?” The Bible does not specifically say who Cain's wife was. The only possible answer was that Cain's wife was his sister or niece or great-niece, etc. The Bible does not say how old Cain was when he killed Abel (Genesis 4:8). Since they were both farmers, they were likely both full-grown adults, possibly with families of their own. Adam and Eve had surely had more children than just Cain and Abel at the time Abel was killed - they definitely had many more children later (Genesis 5:4). The fact that Cain was scared for his own life after he killed Abel (Genesis 4:14) indicates that there were likely many other children and perhaps even grandchildren or great-grandchildren of Adam and Eve at that time. Cain's wife (Genesis 4:17) was a daughter or granddaughter of Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve did not have any genetic defects, so that enabled them and the first few generations of their descendants to have a far greater quality of health than we do now. As a result, it was safe for them to intermarry. It may seem strange or even disgusting to think of Cain's wife being his sister.

In conclusion it would make sense then that—Since God started with one man and one woman, the second generation would have no choice but to intermarry amongst themselves.

Simple Thoughts From Eli

It is Written

When we make a major purchase or wish to have something understood properly, we put the words in writing. The spoken word has weight also, but time has a way of causing us to forget exactly what was said. When God created heaven and earth, he simply spoke all things into existence.

Genesis 1:3 *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

But when God gave his laws to Moses, he inscribed them into stone tablets.

Exodus 24:12 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.*



Because it was written, we can know to this day exactly what was said. It is called the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word 'testament' is usually used when a person's will is written. It is called last will and testament. It does not come into force until the death of the author. After Jesus died and rose again, his

'will' was written by those who knew him best.

When the apostle Paul was ministering to the various churches throughout Asia, he probably would have been content to travel from place to place and tell by spoken word what they should do when problems arose. But God saw differently. As a result, Paul was put into prison and had to write his letters known as epistles to the churches. Now to this day we have written record of what was his solutions were.

Therefore we need to be careful to pay attention to what is written unless we stray from what was intended for churches to preach and teach. Paul writes some things that he has always taught. The concept of salvation by grace through faith alone is one.

Romans 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

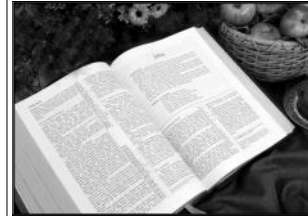
I like the way Martin Luther wrote it. *So halten wir nun dafür, daß der Mensch gerecht wird ohne des Gesetzes Werke, allein durch den Glauben.*

The Galatians were trying to add the requirements of Jewish law to the concept of grace.

Galatians 3:10 *For as many as are of*

the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

And in Martin Luther German; *Denn die aus den Werken des Gesetzes leben, die sind unter dem Fluch. Denn es steht geschrieben (5. Mose 27,26): "Verflucht sei jeder, der nicht bleibt bei allem, was geschrieben steht in dem Buch des Gesetzes, daß er's tue!"*



If God works his will according to the written Word, the Bible, we need to take notice. If we

can't know what he expects of us, He is unjust. If we refuse to look, we have no excuse. If we look and refuse to accept it, we will have to answer.

Traditions are usually not written, because they are simply passed down from one generation to another. Change is common in tradition. What people have believed traditionally must have less weight than what is scriptural. What will you base your beliefs on? I am going to go with what is written.

**Eli Stutzman, R.R. 1 Straffordville
Ontario, Canada N0J1Y0**

The Silversmith

Malachi 3:3 *says: He (God) shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver...*

This verse puzzled a young man and he wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

So, he went to a silversmith to find out the process of refining silver.

That week, the young man called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. He didn't mention anything about the reason for his interest beyond his curiosity about the process of refining Silver.

As he watched, the silversmith held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat

up. The silversmith explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.



The young man thought about God holding us in such a hot spot; then he thought again about the verse that says: *'He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.'* The young man asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time.

The silversmith answered that yes, he not

only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The young man was silent for a moment. Then he asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?"

The silversmith smiled at the young man and answered, "Oh, that's easy -- when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has his eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

Are the End Times Here?

Earthquakes and global crime: How do these signs suggest that Christ's return is at hand?

Earthquakes

When they read Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8, or Luke 21:11, some men foolishly observe, "We've always had earthquakes. How can this be a sign?" According to the U.S. Geological Survey, from 1890 to 1930 there were only 8 quakes measuring 6.0 or larger. From 1930 to 1960, there were only 18. From 1960 to 1979; however, there were 64 "killer" quakes. And from 1980 to the present, there have been more than 200. Think of it! More than 200 major quakes in less than three decades—an earth-rattling reminder that the Rapture is near.

Crimes against Humanity

Christ went on to say in His pronouncement of signs, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matthew 24:12). The FBI index paints a grim picture, giving us the unsettling information that a murder occurs every twenty-four minutes, a forcible rape each seven minutes, a robbery every sixty-eight seconds, and an aggravated assault each fifty-one seconds. The total figures show that a violent crime is committed every twenty-seven seconds, a property crime every three seconds. Judge for yourself: Are things getting better or worse? The answer is obvious.



Why are seeing behavioral attitudes such as blasphemy, lack of gratitude, and broken promises, signs of Christ's return?

Sinful attitudes which move us away from a holy God have been with us since the fall of man. If you read world history, however, you will notice the sins of humankind have become progressively worse - some would say more creative in their evil. The bad news is that tomorrow they even become worse (2 Timothy 3:13). Let us look at some signs of Christ's imminent return referred to in the above question.

Blasphemy

Blasphemy is a sin against the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul indicated that he "was before a blasphemer" (1 Timothy 1:13). What had Paul done? He murdered Christians and hated the name of Jesus Christ. Today the physical murder of Christians continues unabated. I recently received two reports of hundreds of Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in the nations of China and India. The name of Jesus is not honored in those places. Pastors are being thrown in jail; individual Christians must worship in secret, lest they be taken before the authorities. In many places of our world, the name of Jesus is blasphemed, and Christians are suspect. In fact, this would be a good time to pray for Christians throughout the world who serve the Master faithfully in difficult places, even as it puts them in danger.

Ingratitude

Many people-Christians included-find it difficult to give credit where credit is due. Because they seek their own glory, they

refuse to recognize the accomplishments and contributions of others whom God has



sent to share the labor and service. Many simply do not take the time to say, "Thank

You, Lord" for answered prayer. Still others are ashamed to pray in a restaurant. When they do bow their heads, they sit there and scratch their eyebrows for a few seconds so no one will think they are talking to Almighty God. My friend, of what are we afraid? Has the world so squeezed us into its own mold that we are indistinguishable from the world system? Are you thankful? Do you have an attitude of gratitude? Show it!

Lack of Love and Broken Promises

The phrase, "Without natural affection" (2 Timothy 3:3), refers to the breakup of families through a lack of love. Look at the divorce rate, the murder of babies through abortion, the stories about parents beating their little ones to death, and you will know this sign is being fulfilled. For millions, the marriage vow has become a cruel joke. For millions, commitment is a word in a foreign tongue. Broken promises are the order of the day. Has someone shared a confidence entreating your prayer support? Did you keep it, or did you spread gossip about that person? Promise breaking is a pivotal end-time sign, mentioned in the Bible.

~ DR. Jack Van Impe

A Few Lines to Make Us Think...

1. God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.
2. Dear God, I have a problem. It's Me.
3. There is no key to happiness. The door is always open.
4. Silence is often misinterpreted, but never misquoted.
7. Do the math ... count your blessings.

8. Faith is the ability to not panic.



9. If you worry, you didn't pray. If you pray, don't worry.
10. As a child of God, prayer is kind of like calling home every day.

11. Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.

12. The most important thing in your house is the people.
13. When we get tangled up in our problems, be still. God wants us to be still so He can untangle the knot.
14. A grudge is a heavy thing to carry.
15. He who dies with the most toys is still dead.

**An English, German, and PA-Dutch
“Word Comparison Study”
Reflecting on Titus 1:1a**

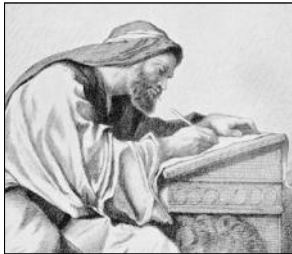
Before we get started with our “**Word Comparison Study**”, please know that the English text used in this article is from the Authorized **King James Version**. The German text is from **Das Neue Testament** unsers Herrn und Heilandes Jesu Christi [nach der deutschen Uebersetzung Martin Luthers "1912"]. The PA-Dutch/German text is taken from **Es nei Testament** which was translated from the *Textus Receptus* Greek Text and Dr. Martin Luther's German translation.

Titus 1:1a (English): *Paul, A servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness...*

The Strong's Greek Concordance uses the words “an attendant” and “a waiter” which means “at table or other menial duties,” in order to explain what Paul was trying to say with the use of the word *servant*.

Was Paul saying that he was an attendant? I think yes. The attendant makes a living by serving their employer's customers. A wise attendant will be committed to serving by going the extra mile in order to make a good impression on the customer. Why? Because the attendant understands that their actions are a direct reflection on their employer.

Paul, the servant of God, was willing to be the best attendant to mankind that he could be. His intention was to serve mankind with the gospel of Christ Jesus. Paul wished to serve all with food [Spiritual], loving care and compassion. He sought to attend to the needs [building up] of God's children. He praised others who were servants of God such as Phebe in



Romans 16:1. She was a servant, serving God in her local church. True followers of Christ follow wholeheartedly and gladly become attendees - they follow and serve (see John 12:26).

Titus 1:1a (German): *Paulus, ein Knecht Gottes und ein Apostel Jesu Christi, nach dem Glauben der Auserwählten Gottes und der Erkenntnis der Wahrheit zur Gottseligkeit*

In Pennsylvania Dutch a *gnecht* is a hired hand that a farmer trains and teaches the art of farming to. The *gnecht* learns under the guidance and influence of the farmer how to do each task and works with the farmer until the *gnecht* can be trusted to do the tasks on his own. In time the *gnecht* is able to do almost any task on the farm because he has been trained, and has proven his ability by his actions through his willingness to learn and to perform. But a *gnecht* never worships his farmer. He is thankful for the farmer he works for, but he cannot or must not worship him.

Titus 1:1a (PA Dutch): *Paulus, en deensht-gnecht funn Gott un en aposhtel funn Jesus Christus, noch em glawwa funn selli raus-groofana funn Gott, un es di voahheit fanemma vass eishtimd mitt en gettlich layva.*

The use of the English words “a servant” and the German “ein Knecht” have the same meaning. However, when the word *deensht* is added to form the PA Dutch/German word “en deensht-gnecht,” these words are given a slightly stronger and clearer meaning.

The word *deensht* comes from the PA-Dutch root *deena* which means to worship and to serve. In PA Dutch, *en deensht-gnecht* is a [male] servant. Therefore, in Dutch one can say that a *deensht-gnecht* is a male servant who is in worship. Although I have



never heard the following words combined on a secular level, the words *deensht-mawt* [female] are to be used when referring to a servant maid. The use of combining *deensht-mawt*, makes a strong point on a Spiritual level. Referring back to Romans 16:1 at

the acknowledgement that Phebe was considered a servant of God in her local church.

Therefore, whether a *deensht-gnecht* or a *deensht-mawt* of God, the truth of the matter is this person is one who first of all worships God and because of his/her worship to God, he/she is willing to be God's *gnecht/mawt*.

So, are you willing to follow Paul's example of serving and worshipping? If you are, then it will be demonstrated in your actions and shown in your love and care towards others.

Andy Geesey
66 New Rd, Elverson, PA 19520
Cell: (484) 638-3208

I Am “Kept”

You see, there were a few times when I thought I would lose my mind, but GOD kept me sane. (Isaiah 26:3)

There were times when I thought I could go on no longer, but the LORD kept me moving. (Genesis 28:15)

At times, I've wanted to lash out at those whom I felt had done me wrong, but the LORD kept my mouth shut. (Psalm 13)



Sometimes, I think the money just isn't enough, but GOD has helped me to keep food on the table, clothes on my back, etc... (Matthew 6:25-34)

When I thought I would fall, HE kept me up. When I thought I was weak, HE kept me strong!(Peter 5:7, Matthew 11:28-30)

Praise the Lord! I'm blessed to be KEPT."

THE SIMPLE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR JOY IN LIFE (OR LACK OF IT!)

The toughest, most courageous people in history have been people who in their lives have endured terrible, unfortunate circumstance. I have two friends who are brothers, whose father deserted them when they were young. One went on to have a successful life and family, the other destroyed his relationships, and lived in much bitterness. Both grew up in the same home, with the same parents. What was the difference?

Abuse, neglect, rejection, and all the other horrible things that happen to people, will either destroy a person or it will propel them to a bright destiny. But why the different outcomes? Because every person has two choices whenever anything painful occurs in their life. Choice one is *become bitter*; choice two is *become better*. **It is a simple truth, but foundational for living a life of freedom and joy.**



one is *become bitter*; choice two is *become better*. **It is a simple truth, but foundational for living a life of freedom and joy.**

At the root of every one of your negative behavior issues lies a choice you made, consciously or subconsciously, to become bitter. This choice was made at a time when you experienced some kind of pain—physical or emotional.

What Does Bitter Mean?

Bitter doesn't necessarily mean *angry*. *Bitter* is like chewing a lemon peel. It means that when you are hurt you embrace a *belief system* to protect yourself from the same pain reoccurring. This belief system is like a virus in a computer—it runs continuously in the background unnoticed, scrambling all the processes. The result of bitterness is that you make a subconscious plan of self-protection. This self-protection stands in sharp contrast to God's protection. **God's protection makes a person better; self-protection makes one bitter.**

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Don't Waste Your Sorrows:

Years ago, I was influenced by a book called *Don't Waste Your Sorrows*. The book is about the powerful opportunity that every painful experience provides us to grow stronger, wiser, and more influential. For everybody, life is a series of wounds, rejections, hurts, and abuses. There are those who embrace this fact, somehow, early in life and are catapulted by these wounds into a more enriching life, and there are those who react negatively toward these pains and create a self-protective pattern that destroys a part of their life. Gene Edwards writes: *If you make your past your present, you will destroy your future.* This means that if your past is still controlling the way you act, react, think, or behave, you are destroying your future.

The list of wounds you may have experienced is innumerable, including rejection from a parent, sexual abuse, being born crippled, ugly, or poor. It may be abandonment by a friend, spiritual leader, or a spouse. Perhaps you saw your dad murdered by terrorists, or were told you were worthless by those you respected. Maybe you have children that have become bitter because of wounds you inflicted on them. I don't know how to undo all the pain of your past or present, but I do know that you have two choices; I know that you can give your sorrows to God, learn from your mistakes, accept His forgiveness, and become a better person from this day forward. The choice is yours.

Isaiah 61:1-7 describes the mission of Christ:

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;*

*To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to **comfort all that mourn**; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes,*

the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

*But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. **For your shame ye shall have double**; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.*

So What Do I Do?

By a choice, take the total package of your past, and turn the bitter into the better by nailing all your pains, hurts, wounds, failures, and shameful places to the cross of Jesus. Forgive those you need to forgive. Repent to those you need to repent to. Ask God to use you to help others choose better-ness instead of bitterness. Use your past, right now, to catapult you into a brighter future—free from the pains of the past **Then write to us and tell us how God changed your life.**



~Bruce Lengeman,

A Key Speaker for Door of Hope Ministries

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Heart to Heart with Joe Keim

Well, it happened again. I woke up two hours before it was time to get up this morning. Like so many other mornings, I couldn't sleep because of my bottomless desire to see revival break out across our Amish communities and the land we live in. The cry of my heart, like never before, is that God would send one more great awakening.

So many men and women have become stagnant and sluggish in their spiritual lives. At the end of the day, they are too tired to read the Word of God; prayer has become more of a tradition than a cry from the heart.

Oh yes, there are those few times in their

lives when they passionately desire a deeper relationship with God but then it quickly passes away because there is too much work to do.

Days turn into months and months turn into years. When is it going to stop and when is it going to change, you ask? The answer is simple, when we decide to put a stop to it. You see, there are some men and women who are afraid that if they open up to the Lord too much, it may require that they change their way of thinking and doing things. But friend, if we want what God wants, we have to stop thinking that way; we have to line our thinking up with God's thinking, because in the end that is the only

thing that will matter anyways.

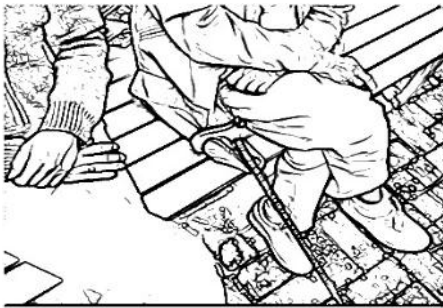
Dear Lord, send just one more great awakening like you did back in Martin Luther's day and so many others. Help us to feel the need to get on our faces before You God and start doing things Your way instead of ours.

Oh God, we want to hear from You, more then ever before. Awake us out of our sleep and cause us to hunger and thirst after Your Righteousness and not ours. We have sinned against You oh God, and today we desire to make things right with You. Come and take over in our families and churches and do what You desire to accomplish. Send revival! Amen

From A Woman's Stand Point

GRANDMA'S HANDS

Grandma, some ninety plus years, sat feebly on the Porch swing. She didn't move, just sat with her head down staring at her hands.



When I sat down beside her she didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if she was OK.

Finally, not really wanting to disturb her but wanting to check on her at the same time, I asked her if she was OK. She raised her head and looked at me and smiled. "Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking," she said in a clear strong voice.

"I didn't mean to disturb you, grandma, but you were just sitting here staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK," I explained to her.

"Have you ever looked at your hands," she asked. "I mean really looked at your hands?"

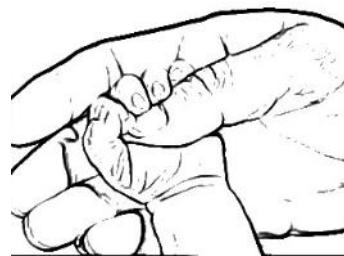
I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands as I tried to figure out the point she was making.

Grandma smiled and related this story:

"Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled shriveled and weak, have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life.

They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor.

They put food in my mouth and clothes



on my back. As a child, my mother taught me to fold them in prayer. They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots. They held my husband and wiped my tears.

They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent. They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son. They wrote many letters and they

trembled and shook when I buried my parents and my spouse.

They have held my children and grandchildren, consoled neighbors, and shook in fists of anger when I didn't understand.

They have covered my face, combed my hair, and washed and cleansed the rest of my body. They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw. And to this day, when not much of anything else of me works real well, these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer.

These hands are the mark of where I've been and the ruggedness of life.

But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home. And with my hands He will lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch the face of Christ."

I will never look at my hands the same again. But I remember God reached out and took my grandma's hands and led her home.

When my hands are hurt or sore or when I stroke the face of my children and husband, I think of grandma. I know she has been stroked and caressed and held by the hands of God. I, too, want to touch the face of God and feel His hands upon my face.

Noteworthy News

Judge fines Amish men over lights on horse-drawn buggy —Western Kentucky

Three Amish men were found guilty and fined \$20 each, plus \$128 in court costs, for not having lights and a slow-moving vehicle symbol on the horse-drawn buggies.



The case started a conflict between religious freedom and state law. The men argued that flashing lights and the orange triangular symbols on their buggies would violate their religious beliefs. However, according to Kentucky statutes, displaying of the slow-moving vehicle symbol has been in affect since 1971. The requirements for lights was added in 2005.

The answer would somehow involve the balancing of Kentucky safety laws and the religious beliefs of the Amish.

Amish Outhouses Prompt Citations —Pennsylvania

Cambria County Sewage Enforcement Agency has received numerous complaints concerning an Amish schoolhouse which has unpermitted outhouses that are illegally emptied onto farm fields.



According to Pennsylvania law, outhouses are to be placed over a tank that is legally emptied. The law also provides fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for each offense.

Through discussions with the Amish elders, the Amish are opposed to the purchase of a precast tank, as state law requires for an outhouse, and they oppose entering into a contract to pump and haul sewage waste.

Since a solution could not be reached, the enforcement agency filed charges against the landowner and Sam Yoder of Cambria Township, a school and church elder.

Each man faces two charges:

- Failure to obtain sewage permits prior to construction.
- Discharging untreated sewage onto the ground or into water.

Even though this case remains to be resolved, it was noted that in neighboring Cambria Township, a similar complaint was resolved when an Amish family installed a legal sewage system.

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