

Back To Basics

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ARE THERE MULTIPLE CAUSES FOR DIVORCE?

Johnie Edwards

From a human standpoint, it might seem reasonable to think that there ought to be a number of reasons why a person could obtain a divorce from their marriage partner. It just so happens that truth is not determined by human reasoning. So, we take a look.

1) **GOD HATES PUTTING AWAY.** Since God's original marriage law was one man for one woman for life, God does not like "putting away." Malachi recorded, "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away..." (Mal. 2:16). If God hates putting away, so must we!

2) **"IS IT LAWFUL FOR A MAN TO PUT AWAY HIS WIFE FOR EVERY CAUSE?"** This is the question the Pharisees asked Jesus in Matthew 19:3. How did our Lord answer their question? Jesus first made an appeal to what God had said about it "at the beginning" (Mt. 19:4). What had God said about marriage at the beginning? "...He made them male and female, at the beginning, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh" (Mt. 19:5). You see, "from the beginning it was not so" (Mt. 19:8). That is, there was no cause for putting away at the beginning of God's marriage law.

3) **"LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER."** The conclusion the Lord reached, as He discussed putting away, was, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mt. 19:6). We must learn to leave together what God joins. In marriage, God joins a man and a woman as husband and wife, for life! Remember those vows, "till death do us part"?

4) **"EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION."** After discussing the teaching concerning putting away during the time of Moses, Jesus gave one reason for divorce. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Mt. 19:7-9).

5) **"LET NOT."** Paul prohibited divorce for any cause, when he said, "Let not the wife depart from her husband...and let not the husband put away his wife" (1 Cor. 7:10-11).

6) **GOTTEN SIDE TRACKED.** We have gotten so carried away with discussing the exception and whether the put away can marry that we have forgotten to teach what the Bible teaches about divorce in the first place! Let's get back to the basics of the whole issue.



THE SOWER'S SEED

Basic Sermon Starters

"HE THAT GOETH FORTH AND WEEPETH, BEARING PRECIOUS SEED, SHALL DOUBTLESS COME AGAIN WITH REJOICING, BRINGING HIS SHEAVES WITH HIM."

WHAT WE MUST DO WITH TRUTH

Introduction

1. There is nothing more important than truth!
(Jn. 18:38; 17:17).
2. Here are some things we must do with truth.

Discussion

I. BUY IT

- A. Proverbs 23:23; Matthew 13:44
- B. Buy it at any cost and hold on to it!

II. KNOW IT

- A. John 8:32; 1 Timothy 2:3-4
- B. To know the truth, we must read and study
(Eph. 3:4; 2 Tim. 2:15).

III. RIGHTLY DIVIDE IT

- A. 2 Timothy 2:15
- B. Some divide the truth to their destruction
(2 Pet. 3:16).

IV. BELIEVE IT

- A. 2 Thessalonians 2:12
- B. Mark 16:16; John 20:30-31

V. LOVE IT

- A. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- B. Like the Psalmist (Ps. 119:97, 113, 127, 140, 165, 167).

VI. OBEY IT

- A. 1 Peter 1:22
- B. Will do no good to buy it, know it, rightly divide it, believe it and love it, unless we obey it!

VII. WALK IN IT

- A. Galatians 2:11-14
- B. 2 John 4, 6; 3 John 3-4

VIII. SPEAK IT

- A. Proverbs 12:17
- B. Ephesians 4:15, 25

Conclusion

1. You have heard the truth. Now you know it. Do you believe it and love it enough to obey it and walk in it?
2. This is the favorite time and the favorite place to obey the truth. Come now!

Back To Basics

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IS THE PUT AWAY WOMAN FREE TO MARRY?

John Isaac Edwards

This issue will not be settled by emotional argument or appeal, but simply and solely on the basis of “what saith the scripture?” (Rom. 4:3). Since “All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16), any answer according to scripture is of God, while any answer contrary to scripture is not of God. Is the put away woman free to marry? Either she is or she isn’t. What saith the scripture?

1) NOT ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 5:32.

“But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” *Divorced*, in this passage, is equal to *put away*.

2) NOT ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 19:9.

“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

3) NOT ACCORDING TO MARK 10:11-12.

“And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.” What is true for the woman is true for the man.

4) NOT ACCORDING TO LUKE 16:18.

“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.”

According to scripture, the put away woman is not free to marry. The only one free to marry, according to these passages, is the one who puts away for the cause of fornication. In a divorce where there is no fornication, neither the one who put away or the one put away is free to marry. Can it be any clearer?

INTRODUCING A NEW WEBSITE

Ancientlandmark.com is a new website being developed by John Isaac Edwards. Ancient landmarks stake out “the ancient paths” (Jer. 18:15). This site calls us back to the ancient paths by calling attention to the ancient landmarks.

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LOVE YOUR CHILDREN

Melba Edwards

Paul instructed the older women to teach the younger women to love their children (Ti. 2:4). We think this should be a natural affection, but notice he said it must be taught. Thus, it must be learned. One of the best passages that gives us a vivid description of love is 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. “Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...” Let’s look at a few ways we beget children and in each case how we must love them.

1) CHILDREN ARE BORN NATURALLY.

This was God’s plan in the beginning (Gen. 1:28). Rearing children in love is a must. We must be fair in how we treat each child, making sure we meet each one’s individual needs. If we mistreat them or cause one to feel neglected, problems will surely arise in abundance. We need to check ourselves with the passage listed above and love our children that are born to us from our own bodies.

2) CHILDREN MAY BE ADOPTED.

Many couples adopt children today. If we choose to adopt, we must be sure they are treated as if we gave birth to them ourselves. Fairness must also be demonstrated, especially when we have children born to us as well. Problems can arise in a child who has been adopted, as well as any child, but if we practice the Scripture above, we surely would have done our best in this special relationship.

3) CHILDREN COME BY MARRIAGE.

There are two unique relationships in which one may find herself. First, she may marry a man who already has children. Again, we need to measure ourselves against the Holy Scripture above. We must treat them as our very own as well as be in all fairness to them too. Second, when our children marry, we inherit children. I know of no finer example than that of Naomi. Eight times in the book of Ruth, Naomi called Ruth her daughter. Have you ever wondered why Ruth was such a wonderful daughter-in-law? Take a good look at her mother-in-law. As mothers-in-law, we need to check ourselves against the passage above and treat our children by marriage as our very own.

4) CHILDREN ARE BEGOTTEN THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

Paul had such a special bond with those he had begotten through the gospel. Notice 1 Corinthians 4:14-17. He calls them his beloved children. He calls Timothy his beloved and faithful son in the Lord. He had begotten Onesimus while he was in chains (Philem. 10). Oh, if we would but treat every child of God as if he or she were our very own, perhaps we would not have so many fall away! We must compare ourselves against the Scripture above in this wonderful relationship we have in Christ.

All of these relationships are very special. We must be admonished to love our children however we may get them. If I find myself having some problems in any of these areas, it may very well be my own fault.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN

John A. Gibson

Like father, like son is a common expression that people use to highlight the similarities between parents and their offspring. Some may say, “Oh, he has your eyes,” or “she smiles just like you.” Fathers and mothers naturally beam with delight when they hear such statements. Do you not think our heavenly Father rejoices when we exhibit His qualities in our lives?

1) **CHRISTIANS MIRROR THEIR FATHER.** As Christians, we are to exhibit the character of God. The apostle Peter expresses it this way, “But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior” (1 Pet. 1:15). In Peter’s second epistle, he speaks of becoming partakers of the divine nature. To partake of the divine nature means to “share” the characteristics of the Divine One. To partake of the divine nature does not make one divine, but makes one reflect the characteristics of this nature. This comes when one obeys the word of God. God gives us the right to become sons of God (Jn. 1:12) and when we are begotten by His word (1 Pet. 1:23), we “put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph. 4:24). Sharing the characteristics of deity occurs after we “put off the old man of sin,” fleeing the pollution of the world and put on the new man in Christ (Gal. 3:27).

2) **NOT A ONE-TIME DEAL.** Putting on the characteristics of God is not a concern just for the newly converted. Paul tells us in Colossians 3:10 that those who have “put on the new self” are “being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.” We are to continue to grow by being renewed in God’s word which will bring us into accord with the divine

image. Christ is our standard. As we shape our lives by His word, we become more and more like Him. We take on His image, His characteristics.

3) **THE CHARACTERISTICS.** Peter lists qualities we are to possess as a Christian. He says we are to give “all diligence” in applying them. We are to put on moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. If we take on these qualities and increase in them, he says, “they will render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:5-8). Paul says we must bear the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). These cannot exist with the works of the flesh. Thus Paul states that those “who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:24). In Colossians 3:12-15, Paul adds that we need to “put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against any one, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

We, no doubt, have room to grow in all of these areas. Let’s continue to renew ourselves to the true knowledge according to the image of Christ.

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IS POPE BENEDICT XVI THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER?

John Isaac Edwards

With the eyes of the world upon Rome, at the passing of Pope John Paul II and the naming of his successor, Pope Benedict XVI, it is a good time to call attention to the claim of the Roman Catholic Church with reference to the primacy of Peter, and the Pope, the Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter.

1) **THE PRIMACY OF PETER.** According to the *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ*, published in the Fourth Session of the Holy Oecumenical Council of the Vatican, Christ “set blessed Peter over the rest of the apostles...” It is further stated, “We, therefore, for the preservation, safekeeping, and increase of the Catholic flock, with the approval of the sacred Council, do judge it to be necessary to propose to the belief and acceptance of all the faithful, in accordance with the ancient and constant faith of the universal church, the doctrine touching the institution, perpetuity, and nature of the sacred Apostolic Primacy, in which is found the strength and solidity of the entire church, and at the same time to proscribe and condemn the contrary error, so hurtful to the flock of Christ.” Again we are told, “the primacy of jurisdiction over the universal church of God was immediately and directly promised and given to blessed Peter the apostle by Christ the Lord...And it was upon Simon alone that Jesus after his resurrection bestowed the jurisdiction of Chief Pastor and Ruler over all his fold...If anyone, therefore, shall say that blessed Peter the apostle was not appointed the Prince of all the Apostles and the visible Head of the whole church Militant; or that the same directly and immediately received from the same our Lord Jesus Christ a primacy of honor only, and not of true and proper jurisdiction: let him be anathema.”

According to Catholic teaching, the strength and solidity of the Roman Catholic church rests upon the proposed primacy of Peter. When we show that what the Catholic Church affirms the Bible denies, this monstrous body of error will not have a leg upon which to stand. Where, in the Bible, did the Lord set Peter over the rest of the apostles and bestow upon Him authority He did not confer to the rest of the apostles? The charge given in Matthew 16:19 was given to all the twelve, without regard to any special primacy of one (Mt. 18:18). The teaching of the Lord, in Matthew 19:27-28, where Jesus told the twelve they would occupy thrones of authority judging the twelve tribes, the whole church, by their apostolic word, shows equality in authority of all the apostles, with no primacy vested in any one of them. The claim that upon Peter was conferred a singular mission and to him was intrusted a sole power contradicts Luke 22:24-30, in which Christ taught there would be no primacy among the apostles. These are discrepancies with which Roman Catholics must come to terms!

2) **THE ROMAN PONTIFF AS THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER.** On the perpetuity of the primacy of blessed Peter in the Roman Pontiff, the *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ* maintains, “that which the Prince of Shepherds and great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ our Lord, established in the person of the blessed Apostle Peter to secure the perpetual welfare and lasting good of the Church, must, by the same institution, necessarily remain unceasingly in the Church...For none can doubt, and it is known to all ages, that the holy and blessed Peter, the Prince and Chief of the Apostles, the pillar of

the faith and foundation of the Catholic Church...lives, presides, and judges, to this day and always, in his successors the Bishops of the Holy See of Rome, which was founded by him, and consecrated by his blood. Whence, whosoever succeeds to Peter in this See, does by the institution of Christ himself obtain the Primacy of Peter over the whole church...Wherefore it has at all times been necessary that every particular church - that is to say, the faithful throughout the world - should agree with the Roman church...If, then, any should deny that it is by the institution of Christ the Lord, or by divine right, that blessed Peter should have a perpetual line of successors in the Primacy over the universal church, or that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter in this Primacy: let him be anathema.”

On the power and nature of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff, the *Dogmatic Constitution* continues, “Wherefore, resting on plain testimony of the Sacred Writings, and adhering to the plain and express decrees both of our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, and of the General Councils...All of the faithful must believe that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff possesses the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and is true vicar of Christ, and Head of the whole church and Father and Teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given to him in blessed Peter to rule, feed, and govern the universal church by Jesus Christ our Lord...Hence we teach and declare that by the appointment of our Lord the Roman Church possesses a superiority of ordinary power over all other churches...This is the teaching of Catholic truth, from which no one can deviate without loss of faith and of salvation.”

The primacy of Peter, and the Roman Pontiff as the successor of Peter in that proposed primacy, Catholic presumption, “in which

is found the strength and solidity of the entire church,” is without the support of one jot of God-breathed Scripture or one tittle of authenticated history! The church was not built upon the weakness of human flesh, but upon the bedrock truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Mt. 16:16-19). While the Catholic Church is founded upon Peter, the church built by Christ is founded upon Christ. “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). If the church is built upon the primacy of the apostle Peter, why did the apostle Paul speak of the “household of God,” “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Eph. 2:19-20)? Catholic tradition displaces Christ as the chief corner stone and reinstates Peter, and his proposed successors, the Roman Pontiffs, as the foundation stone upon which the church is built. It was not Christ that vested Peter with primacy; it is Catholic tradition that seeks to endow Peter with primacy! Catholic dogma dethrones Christ as the Supreme Head and Ruler (Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:15-19), removes Him from position of Spokesman (Heb. 1:1-4), and robes the Pope (Pontiff, Holy Father, Holy See), of which the Bible says not a word, with such power! The salvation of man is not predicated upon subordination to the Roman Pontiff or Catholic truth - man must obey Christ and continue in the faith to be saved (Heb. 5:8-9; Col. 1:23).

The Roman Catholic church has the shoe on the wrong foot! The apostle Paul penned, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8). The anathema of heaven does not rest upon those who deny Catholic dogma; anathema rests upon those who deny gospel teaching! We plead with you to leave the curse and damnation of error and come to the blessing and salvation of the truth.

PETER'S SERMON TO CORNELIUS

by Tom O'Neal

Cornelius was a good man (Acts 10:1-2); however, he was in need of salvation (11:14). Many preachers would have told him such goodness would save him. However, it took a miracle to convince Peter to preach to him.

The first miracle of the angel to Cornelius did not save him, but told him where to find Peter who would tell him what to do (10:3-8). The second miracle to Peter convinced him that he needed to preach to this Gentile (10:10-20). The third miracle, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, showed God put no difference between Jew and Gentile so far as the gospel was concerned (10:44; 11:15-18; 15:7-9). When Peter arrived at Cornelius' house, he had assembled his kinsmen and near friends to hear words of salvation (10:24, 33).

1) GOD IS NO RESPECTOR OF PERSONS. Peter begins his sermon by showing God is not a respecter of persons (10:34), but all those who (1) fear God, and (2) work righteousness are accepted of God. Thus, none are elected unconditionally to salvation with others excluded.

2) THE CAREER OF JESUS. The message of Jesus was first sent to the Jews (10:36) being published through Judea having begun in Galilee. God was with Jesus in all that He did (v. 38). Peace was preached by Jesus Christ (v. 36; Eph. 2:13-16). The word was known by Cornelius (v. 37) for it had been published through the area. Jesus had gone about doing miracles of healing and doing good (v. 38).

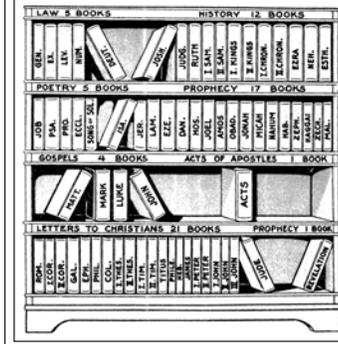
3) RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. Peter preaches that the apostles were witness to what Jesus did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem (v. 39). Peter tells this Gentile that the Jews slew and hanged Jesus on a tree (the cross) (v. 39). But God raised him from the dead the third day (v. 40) and he appeared not to all the people, but to chosen witnesses (v. 41). The apostles were to preach that the resurrected Jesus would be the judge at the end of time (v. 42).

4) REMISSION OF SINS. It was through the name of Jesus that Cornelius could have remission of sins (v. 43). When Peter saw that the Holy Spirit was given to Gentiles and they evidenced such by speaking in tongues, he asked, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (v. 47). Peter then commands them to be baptized in the name of the Lord (v. 48). Sometimes people say men are not commanded to be baptized in water. Peter shows different here for he commands his hearers to be baptized in water. Peter preached baptism for the remission of sins on Pentecost (Acts 2:38) and he preaches baptism for the remission of sins at the house of Cornelius (v. 43, 48). Thus, Peter shows that God put no difference between us [the Jews on Pentecost] and them [the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius] purifying their hearts by faith (Acts 15:7). What showed that God put no difference between Jew and Gentile so far as salvation was concerned was that God "bare them [Gentiles] witness, giving them [Gentiles] the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us [Jews] (Acts 15:8).

Most who read this will be Gentiles. Like Cornelius, you need to hear the gospel, believe it, repent of sins and for the remission of sins be baptized in water. One cannot ignore the commands of the gospel and be saved.

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BROWSING THROUGH GOD'S LIBRARY



by
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In our last article, we browsed through that section of God's New Testament library called History. We now enter the section called **Special Epistles**, sometimes called *Pauline Epistles* because Paul is likely the author of all fourteen books from Romans to Hebrews, with Hebrews being the possible exception.

Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 & 2 Thessalonians were written to churches in these cities (Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica). 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon were written to individuals. Galatians was addressed to "the churches of Galatia." Hebrews was written to Hebrew Christians dwelling in Palestine.

Romans was written at Corinth on Paul's third journey. The theme is *Justification by Faith*. The church at Corinth, established by Paul, was plagued by numerous problems. **1 Corinthians**, written likely from Ephesus, addressed these problems in an effort to correct them. It appears to have accomplished its purpose, for in **2 Corinthians**, written a few months later from Macedonia, Paul commends them for their positive reception of the first letter. The churches of Galatia, composed of Gentile Christians, had started out well, but had been influenced by Jewish teachers to believe that

they had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. The book of **Galatians** was written to show the fallacy of that claim.

Paul wrote at least four books while a prisoner at Rome: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The books of **Ephesians** and **Colossians** are very similar, both dealing with God's scheme of redemption and various duties of Christians. The Philippian church had helped Paul perhaps more than any other church. **Philippians**, Paul's epistle to them, is expressive of deep appreciation for their love and concern. **1 & 2 Thessalonians** were both likely written from Corinth a few months apart. He reminds them in the first epistle of their persecutions when they first received the gospel and commends them for their continued faithfulness. The second epistle was written to correct some erroneous views concerning the second coming. **1 & 2 Timothy** were written to Timothy, a younger preacher, Paul's *son in the faith*. The time when the first letter was written is unknown. **2 Timothy** was written during a possible second imprisonment at Rome. Both epistles were written to instruct Timothy regarding his work as an evangelist. **Titus** was also a young preacher to whom Paul wrote for the same purpose. **Philemon** was a Christian friend of Paul's who lived at Colosse, whose slave, Onesimus, had run away. Somehow, Onesimus had met up with Paul at Rome and had been converted. Paul returned him to his master, instating Philemon to receive him back both as a servant and a brother in the Lord.

The last book in this section, **Hebrews**, was written because Hebrew Christians in Palestine were in great danger of apostatizing and reverting back to Judaism. This epistle was written to prevent this from happening.

We will explore the **General Epistles** in our next article.

Kid's Activity Page

Paul Adams

Memory Verse: *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11).*

Who Was It?

Match the description on the left with the name on the right.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| _____ He was about 9 1/2 feet tall (1 Sam. 17:4) | A. David |
| _____ Had a bed about 13 1/2 feet long (Dt. 3:11) | B. Absalom |
| _____ Harlot who hid spies (Josh. 6:17) | C. Solomon |
| _____ Hair weighed about 5 pounds (2 Sam. 14:26) | D. Methuselah |
| _____ Was known for patience (Jas. 5:11) | E. Goliath |
| _____ Man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) | F. Rehoboam |
| _____ The wisest man in the Bible (1 Ki. 3:12) | G. Job |
| _____ Had 88 children (2 Chr. 11:21) | H. Rahab |
| _____ His knees knocked (Dan. 5:6) | I. Son of Giant |
| _____ Oldest man in the Bible (Gen. 5:27) | J. Og |
| _____ Had 12 fingers and 12 toes (1 Chr. 20:6) | K. Belshazzar |

*“Suffer the little children to come unto me,
and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).*

Q

&

A

Bible Questions & Answers

Question: “Does the Bible say anything about preachers wearing religious titles, and is there any Bible authority for a priest being called father?”

Answer: This is two questions in one, and we take them up in the order in which they were asked.

DOES THE BIBLE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT PREACHERS WEARING RELIGIOUS TITLES?

It surely does. Job put it this way, “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give *flattering titles unto man*. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away” (Job 32:21-22). If this was all the Bible says about wearing religious titles, this would be sufficient. But, there is more. Many preachers wear the title *reverend and right reverend*. Do you know how many times the word “reverend” is found in the Bible? Only one time. Do you know to whom it refers? Look at it: “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: *holy and reverend is his name*” (Ps. 111:9). Only God is called “reverend;” never a man. Did you ever read of any New Testament preacher being called reverend? None were. The apostles of Christ were just referred to by their names; Peter, James and John. Why should a preacher today, who is just a man, be elevated above his fellow man? Someone asked, “Well, what should we call the preacher?” Just call him by his name, as we do others! Somehow, preachers have gotten the wrong impression that they should wear robes, collars turned around backward, garbs and religious titles that distinguish them from those who don’t preach. And, the Bible knows nothing about such distinction!

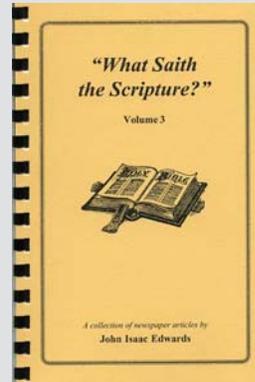
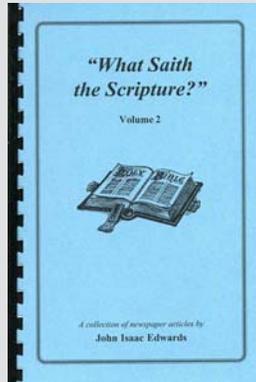
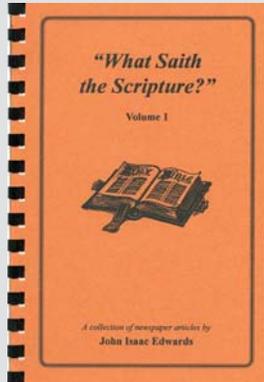
IS THERE ANY BIBLE AUTHORITY FOR A PRIEST BEING CALLED FATHER?

There is none. During the death of a recent Pope and the election of a new one, the words “*father, holy father*” and the like have been televised into about every home in the world. Yet, the Bible says, “*And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven*” (Mt. 23:9). That is, we are not to call any man “father” in a spiritual sense. Only God is a Christian’s spiritual Father. Someone is quick to respond, “If we cannot call any man on the earth father, we could not call an earthly parent ‘father.’” Well, we can, for we have divine authority to do that, just as Paul penned, “Honour thy father and mother...” (Eph. 6:1-4). The Bible surely makes allowance for calling a male earthly parent “father.” If not, why not? But where is the Bible authority for calling a man father in a spiritual sense? Anybody want to supply us a Bible passage?

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