

## Trends

Outside of specific religious samples, the groups most likely to be absolutely certain there is a God include blacks (70%), Republicans (65%), older Americans (62%), Baby Boomers (60%), Southerners (61%) and Midwesterners (58%), and those with a high school education or less (60%).

- via a Harris poll

**Psalm 14:1:** "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good."

## Sentence Sermons

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

-Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945

**Revelation 21:8:** "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

## News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for Susan Ferrell and her family as she continues to recover from brain tumor surgery. Also, please pray for her husband Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.

Continue prayers for Jennifer Shorter (Garner) a member at Knightsville who is recovering well from her brain tumor surgery. Also, please pray for Elias Dispennett (age 8), son of Rob Dispennett, Knightsville's preacher, w2ho has Type 1 diabetes.

Please pray for my daughter Dawne. She was born with bilateral cleft lip and palate. She has had many surgeries over the years. On July 13th, this coming Wednesday, she is scheduled for a major jaw revision surgery at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. Sherry and I would sincerely appreciate prayers on her behalf.

Pray for the college students as they are now on summer break. Jonathan will be attending IUPUI law school this fall and Rachel plans to return to IU.

Please keep sister Wilma in your prayers! She gives all of us so much encouragement! God bless her and Virginia! Remember both of them in your prayers.

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**Times of Service:** Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

# Words of Life

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



## Improve Your Life

Frank Himmel

1. Turn off the TV and read your Bible. The Psalmist said of the blessed man, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night" (Psalms 1:2).

2. Hang up the phone and pray. I never cease to be amazed at how much time some people spend on their cell phones. Is all that talking necessary or profitable? "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (James 5:16).

3. Get up out of bed an hour earlier and come to Bible study on Sunday. "As the door turns on its hinges, so does the sluggard on his bed" (Proverbs 26:14).

4. Cut down your credit card purchases and give. Give to the poor. Increase your contribution at church. "One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his good deed" (Proverbs 19:17). "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

5. Change the conversation from sports, weather, and politics to spiritual things. Do that at home. "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Do that at work, too. "He who wins souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).

## Official Interpreters

Larry Ray Hafley

Through the years, Catholics and Calvinists have taught that the Bible is too difficult for the common man to understand. It is, some have said, "spiritually discerned." By this they mean that they are "spiritual" and that you cannot understand it without their help. Occasionally, they cite 2 Peter 1:20, 21, as proof that the Bible is of "no private interpretation." But, why

cite that text? Do they expect you and me to understand that it says that the “clergy” is to interpret the Bible for us? If so, down goes their argument, for they provide a passage which, they say, we can understand and interpret! If we are expected to read the text and understand that it teaches that the Bible is of “no private interpretation,” they have just ruined their argument, for they show us a passage and expect us to interpret and understand it correctly!

However, let us simply turn to some passages which refute the clergy claim and also show that their understanding and discernment of 2 Peter 1:20, 21, is false.

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word...Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You” (Psa. 119:9, 11). Why encourage a “young man” to turn and take heed to the word of God if he cannot “discern” it?

“These were more fair minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men” (Acts 17:11, 12). In this text, unbelievers “searched the Scriptures” and were able to learn and believe the truth. They had no special help of the clergy, or of a priest. Thus, they do greatly err who misuse 2 Peter 1:20, 21, for if their interpretation and understanding of that passage were correct, Acts 17:11, 12, would not be possible.

“But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that **from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures**, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:14, 15). Timothy evidently had been taught by his mother and grandmother (2 Tim. 1:5). Thus, “from childhood” he had “known the Holy Scriptures.” How is that possible if a special priestly class is the only way we can know and believe the truth?

(W)hen you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Eph. 3:4). Obviously, Paul did not think the Ephesians needed men in clerical robes to interpret his writings for them. He said they could “read” and “understand.” Did he tell the truth?

Yes, there will be things “hard to be understood” (2 Pet. 3:16). Note, though, that it was an apostle himself who said there are some things “hard to be understood!” The very one (the apostle Peter) whom some exalt as the ultimate “official interpreter” said there were things even he had difficulty understanding (Cf. Peter’s failure to understand the full import of his own words in Acts 2:21, 39; 10:14-29)!

Since those priests and pastors who allegedly are “in the know” have not understood that the Bible teaches that we can read and understand the truth, why should we trust their “interpretations” of other matters? Why not, like the Bereans, simply read and study the Bible for ourselves (Acts 17:11)?

## Does the church produce the Bible or does the Bible produce the church?

Ryan Thomas

Perhaps one of the biggest misconceptions regarding the Bible is that it is a product of the church. Many reject the Bible as our sole source of religious authority and instruction and belittle us for believing in the “Bible alone theory.” Thus, there is a great need to discuss the relationship between the Bible and the church. As always, we will appeal to the scripture as our only source of authority and not our own wisdom (1 Cor. 2:6-7).

For one to understand that the Bible is our only standard for all religious faith and practice, one must understand the church is the result of the Bible and depends on it for everything it preaches and practices. In other words, the Bible produces the church, not the other way around. We are told by some that since the “church is the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), the church itself establishes what truth is. On the contrary, truth emanates only from God (Psa. 86:11; Jn. 1:17; 17:17) and the church is limited to preaching, practicing and upholding that truth (Matt. 28:20). Or as Paul put it in Ephesians 3:10, “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” The church, just like individuals, must appeal to the Bible as the only source of authority for the Bible alone contains the manifold wisdom of God (1 Cor. 2:9-13; Eph. 3:3-5). Just as Moses was admonished to “make all things according to the pattern” (Heb. 8:5); we must use the Bible alone to insure we are following God’s revealed pattern for His church. Thus, we must speak where the Bible speaks, remain silent where the Bible is silent, do Bible things in Bible ways, and call Bible things by Bible names (1 Pet. 4:11).

**“But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?”**

**1 John 3:17**

We read in Acts 16:5 that the “churches were established in the faith.” We would like to emphasize very kindly, yet very firmly, that the one true church is established *in* the faith— it does not establish the faith. The faith which is spoken of in Acts 16:5 is simply the revealed truth of the gospel which was “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) by the end of the first century. As beings created with the rights of freedom and choice, why would anyone bind themselves to the decrees, councils