

Trends

Over 6 hours a day are spent by the average American family either watching movies, television or videos. Dick Rolfe, movie and television specialist and head of the Dove Foundation remarks "...when you spend that much time watching something, you have just developed new role models and a new window on life. And I think that's the destructive value of some television and movies... [viewers] get the wrong impression and a distorted view of what life is really like."

- via ChristianAnswers.net

2 Corinthians 10:5: "...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ..."

Sentence Sermons

"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is a really huge matter—'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and lightning." —Mark Twain

Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

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 a brain tumor. Please pray for her and her family.

Please pray for Alan Jones. He underwent deep brain stimulation to hopefully relieve severe facial pain. Alan held a gospel meeting for us in October 2014. He's been unable to preach for several months due to his affliction. Pray for him and his family.

Sister Virginia Brown's hip replacement surgery was a success! She is now back home and doing well! Keep praying for a fast and complete recovery!

Pray for Larry Hafley as he recovers from major surgery to replace a heart valve.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many temptations in today's school environment.

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.

There are many needy saints! Can you help? Let me know.

If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know!

Words of Life is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

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

Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

Apr. 2
2017

Vol. 9,
No. 13

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

John 6:68



Answering Assertions

Larry Hafley

Assertion: "God is too loving to send anyone to hell."

Answer: Where did you learn that God is a loving God? "From the Bible," you say? The same Bible that tells of the love of God also tells us that he will send the wicked to hell (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 2:6-9; 5:8; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 21:8). Why believe one but not the other?

What if I told you that I believe people are going to hell, but that I do not believe in the love of God? What would you say to that? How could you deny my assertion? It is the reverse of yours. Why is it wrong? Or suppose I say, "God is too hateful to send anyone to heaven." How would you refute my assertion?

Assertion: "We cannot understand the Bible alike. We can no more think alike than we can look alike."

Answer: Is everyone expected to understand that we cannot understand the Bible alike? If all may understand that we cannot understand the Bible alike, what is to prohibit us from understanding the Bible alike? Does the Bible teach that we cannot understand the Bible alike? If it does, are all expected to understand alike the passage that teaches it?

Were the Ephesians to "understand" Paul's knowledge alike (Eph. 3:4; 5:17)? (If so, could they look alike, too?) Why does God desire that all men come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4)? Might he not just as well expect us to look alike as to will that we should all come to the knowledge of the truth?

Are we all to understand and believe alike that Jesus is the Son of God who died for our sins (Jn. 8:24, 32; Rom. 10:9, 10)? If we can "think alike" with respect to Jesus' eternal power and Godhood, may we look alike?

Assertion: "Doctrine does not matter."

Answer: Your doctrine, your teaching, says, "Doctrine does not matter." If doctrine does not matter, the doctrine which says, "Doctrine does not matter," does not matter, does it? Since, according to you, "doctrine does not matter," you will not be offended when we reject your doctrine to that effect.

If doctrine does not matter: (1) Why did Paul say to "mark" and "avoid" those who teach doctrines contrary to "the doctrine" which we have learned (Rom. 16:17)? Or does the doctrine, the teaching of Romans 16:17, not matter, either? (2) Why did Paul leave Timothy in Ephesus and specifically charge him "to teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3)? (3) Why did Paul tell Timothy to "take heed...unto the doctrine" and that in so doing he would save those who heard him (1 Tim. 4:16)? If Timothy did not take heed to himself, he would be lost (1 Tim. 4:16; Cf. 1 Cor. 9:27). If he did not "take heed...unto the doctrine," others would be lost. But, why, if doctrine does not matter? (4) How could there be "good," "wholesome," and "sound" doctrine (1 Tim. 4:6; 6:3; Titus 2:1)? If doctrine does not matter, are there any bad, unwholesome, unsound doctrines? If there are, then at least some doctrine matters, does it not? If not, why do both Jesus and the Spirit tell us not to believe every teacher we hear (Matt. 7:15; 1 Jn. 4:1)? (5) Why does John say that whosoever "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God" (2 Jn. 9)? If doctrine does not matter, why does he say that those abiding "in the doctrine of Christ...hath both the Father and the Son"? (6) Why are they criticized who will "not endure sound doctrine," and who "hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans" (2 Tim. 4:3; Rev. 2:15)?

Conclusion: If all the assertions above are true, why should this article be opposed? First, God is too loving to send me to hell for writing it. Second, perhaps you and I do not understand this article alike. Why, then, criticize it? Third, why be upset with what has been taught since what it teaches, its doctrine, does not matter anyway?

Dumbing Down of Christianity

Phil Robertson

Did you know that 10% of church goers in America believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife? That really should not surprise us, since less than 20% of "church goers" will attend Sunday school this week. A lack of biblical knowledge in churches seems to be a sign of the times.

As frustrating as this may be for church leaders, we need to ask ourselves, "Are we seeking ways to reverse this trend or are we contributing to the problem?" It seems churches have resorted to entertaining the masses instead of educating. You may be more likely to get a drama or extravaganza when you "go to church" than a Bible class or a sermon. In fact, a local news station recently ran a story on a church that had replaced all preaching with plays.

Jesus was faced with a similar dilemma during His ministry. He knew people were not following Him for the right reasons. So, He refused to feed them. "Most assuredly I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw

the signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for food which perishes, but for food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you" (John 6:26-27).

Instead of seeking to emulate theaters and concert halls, maybe churches would have better attendance and more commitment if they to looked and acted like a church. In its infancy, Christianity was grounded in teaching and preaching the gospel of Christ. Young evangelists were admonished to "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (1 Timothy 4:2). Why was there such an emphasis on education? Because the gospel, and only the gospel, "is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

However, if we do not preach it, people will not learn it. Biblical faith begins with the word of God (Romans 10:17). That is why the apostle Peter said, "Beware lest you fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:17-18).

Easter Sunday

Johnie Edwards

There is no such thing as "Easter Sunday" in the Bible. Many people have been led to believe that there is a special day, set aside by God, called "Easter Sunday." The religious world has been taught that this is the day that Christ resurrected from the dead and that we are commanded to observe the Lord's Supper that Sunday in remembrance of that occasion. Let's take a Bible look at this.

1) **Use of the Word 'Easter' in the KJV Bible:** The word "Easter" does occur in the King James Version of the Bible. "And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people" (Acts 12:4).

2) **Easter Refers to Passover:** The word translated 'Easter' in Acts 12:4 is translated 'Passover' 28 times in the New Testament. Only this one time did the KJV translators render it 'Easter.' The American Standard Version renders it properly - 'Passover.'

3) **No Example of Observance:** Read the Bible as much as you will, you will not find one command, or example, of Christians observing a special day called "Easter." We do read of early Christians meeting on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). We find them being told to "lay by in store" upon the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). But no where are we told to meet for an "Easter Service"!

4) **The Resurrection of Jesus:** The Bible teaches us to remember the death of Christ. As we partake of the Lord's Supper, the death and resurrection of our Lord is remembered (1 Cor. 11:23-26). This is to be done weekly, not just once a year!