

## Differing Opinions Of Scriptural Doctrine

'Shun, avoid foolish questionings, genealogies, contentions, strife, arguments and disputes about the Law (of Moses) for they are unprofitable and useless. Avoid a factious man ... knowing such a one is perverted, warped and sins, being self-condemned' (Titus 3:9 to 11). 'I ask you brothers (and sisters) look out for those who are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, speaking words contrary to the doctrine you have learned and turn away from them. Those people do not serve our Lord Jesus but their own desires, and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent' (Romans 16:17 & 18). 'I ask you brothers (and sisters) through the name of our Lord Jesus, all speak the same thing and let there be no divisions among you, but be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. It has been reported ... there are contentions among you ... The Word of the Cross is foolishness to those who are (eternally) dying but to us who are saved it is the power of God ... 'When you gather together in the Assembly, there are divisions and factions among you' (1 Corinthians 1:10 to 13 then 18; 11:18). 'In the last days (in our day) there will be mockers who walk after their own ungodly lusts. These are the people who cause divisions and are sensual, not having the Holy Spirit' (Jude 1:18 & 19). The behaviour of the flesh or carnal mind are obvious and it is the carnal mind that has caused rivalry, division and heresies like these of which the Scriptures forewarn everyone, those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19 to 21). 'When Paul had said this an argument arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees and the Assembly was divided' (Acts 23:7).

The Lord did not divide Christianity up into various religions, sects, cults or factions. Carnal, self-serving, ungodly religious leaders did that. Jesus warned ungodly religious leaders; "I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way you will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:20). The first churches were called Assemblies after the assembly of the congregation of Moses (Exodus 12:6). Jesus Himself instigated the very first early Assembly/church meeting on the Sunday evening of His resurrection. 'When it was evening on the first day of the week (Sunday evening) and when the doors were locked where the disciples were assembled ... Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you." When He had said this, He showed them (the nail wounds in) His hands and (the spear stab wound in) His side. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent Me, so I send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:19 to 22).

Christianity is not a 'new' religion. Jesus was a dedicated Orthodox Jewish Man so Judaism and the Old Testament are the foundation of Christianity and the New Testament. Most of the New Testament was taken from the writings of the prophets, who wrote what God had told them to record. That makes Christianity the continuation or extension of Judaism. The Christian movement as a whole was called 'The Way' (Acts 19:23) after Jesus said, "I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). During the early days of The Way, each area had its own leaders called elders, apostles, disciples, deacons and deaconesses. All of the Assembly leaders were men but women played a vital role in keeping the balance of service. The title of Assemblies were so named hundreds of years after Moses when Jesus said, "I tell you, you are Peter (meaning Rock) and on this rock I will build My Assembly and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). That meant the devil and all of his evil cohorts would never be able to destroy the work Jesus started when His ministry began. The Way was also called the Assembly of God (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1), the Assemblies of Messiah (Romans 16:16) and the Way of the Truth (2 Peter 2:2). Nowhere were the Assemblies referred to by any other name or title. The title of 'Church' or 'Kirk' were archaic English/Scottish words first used when the Bible was translated into English during the reign of King James so was never used by Jesus or the apostles.

Corruption crept into the Assemblies and what followed the corruption were divisions, pride, factions, sects, cults and shocking anti-Semitism, which still thrives in some areas and some churches today. Most of the original apostles were murdered and some died a terrible death. Only Apostle John lived long enough to die from old age. Persecution and strife divided most of the early Assemblies. There are many false religions around today that deny the only way to heaven is through our Messiah Jesus (2 Peter 2:1). Some religions have invented their own false messiah and worship their own false prophet, which is something Jesus warned all people about. "If anyone tells you, 'Behold, here is the messiah,' do not believe it. There will arise false messiahs and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen ones (Christians). Behold (listen to Me) I have warned you beforehand. If they tell you, 'He is in the wilderness,' do not go out there, or, 'He is inside,' do not believe it" (Matthew 24:23 to 26). After this very strong, blunt warning from the mouth of our Messiah, it is surprising how many people are led astray by false religions. Clearly, the people being led astray do not read or adhere to the Bible and they do not listen to the voice of Jesus. "You do not believe because you are not of My sheep ... My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:26 & 27). This verse reveals, the people who are led astray were

called but chose to never actually commit themselves to Jesus. "Many are called but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14).

Fast forward to our present day. Everyone has an opinion but not enough people actually seek the Lord and study the Bible thoroughly enough to find out what the Lord has actually said. Many people rely on a religious leader for their Bible teaching. Wars have been fought over religious beliefs as Jesus said would happen. Jesus said some people would claim to be the Messiah. He warned us people would hate genuine devout Jews and genuinely committed Christians for worshipping our Lord. Jesus said many Christians would fall away from the faith and turn on genuine believers. He said false prophets would arise and the most evil of all false prophets is the god of Islam because that religion has led many millions of people astray and far away from salvation through the blood of Jesus. Jesus warned us Christian love would grow cold and only those who endure right to the end will be saved. Finally, after genuine Christians teach the whole world about Jesus and preach the full Gospel of the Kingdom of God, only then will He come and bring all of the world's suffering to an abrupt end. These are the words of Jesus. "Many will come in My name saying, 'I am the Messiah,' and will lead many astray ... They will deliver you up to oppression and will kill you. You will be hated by all of the nations for My name's sake. Many (Christians) will stumble and will deliver up one another and will hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will lead many astray. Because iniquity will be multiplied, the (Christian) love of many will grow cold. Those who endure to the end will be saved. This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:5 to 14). Jesus encouraged us with these words. "I have told you these things so in Me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression (strife, tribulation, persecution etc) but cheer up! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The entire world is suffering and we who are alive today are living through it. We are privileged to see God at work fulfilling His prophecies regarding the return of the chosen Jewish people to their chosen homeland of Israel. This is where we see a stark difference in the quality and depth of Christian commitment and where the differences of opinion become strong to the point of estrangement. Genuine, God fearing, Holy Spirit filled modern disciples, honestly love Israel and the Jewish people. We modern-day disciples, Scripturally known as 'sheep' support Israel any way we can. Spiritually weaker, religion based 'Christians' Scripturally known as 'goats' refuse to acknowledge the Lord's deep, eternal love for all Jewish people and refuse to accept He has pardoned them (Isaiah 40:2). Some of these 'Christians' believe the evil and erroneous 'Replacement Theory' believing the church has replaced Israel. They are very wrong. God loves Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6 to 8). The Lord God is looking for genuine participants who will study, understand and identify with God's plans for Israel (Isaiah 40:1 & 2). We need to personally seek the Lord regarding Scriptural interpretation and not leave it to religious leaders, who may not know or understand what the Lord's plans for Israel really are. Some religious leaders admit they teach what people want to hear and stay away from deep or controversial topics because it is easier. Other differences of opinion dividing Christians are the wicked 'Prosperity Teaching', which has led millions of Christians into selfishness and materialism, ignoring the needs of the poor and spending their money on themselves. There is nothing wrong with being financially poor. The 'Rapture' theory has also led to millions being led astray, hoping to be 'raptured away' instead of enduring to the end like Jesus said (Matthew 10:22).

God's deep desire is for all Jewish people and Gentiles to work together for the common good of mankind and eventually live together in heaven in complete harmony. To achieve that goal, we need to love and embrace our Jewish brothers and sisters and support them in their quest to live in their own nation of Israel, chosen by God for His people to live. 'We (all humanity) are His workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so we would walk in them ... You Gentiles were at that time separated from Messiah Jesus, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world, but now in Messiah Jesus, you who once were far off (distant from God) are made near (to Him) in the blood of Jesus. He is our peace Who made both (Jews and Gentiles) one (Spiritual Body) and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in the flesh the hostility (between Jews and Gentiles), the law of commandments contained in ordinances so He might create in Himself One New Man of the two (both Jews and Gentiles) making peace, so He might reconcile them both in one (Spiritual) Body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility through His blood on the cross. He came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off and to those (Jewish people) who were near. Through Jesus we both (Jews and Gentiles) have our access in one Holy Spirit to the Father. You (Gentiles) are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints (all righteous people – not solely dead Catholics) and of the household of God, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Himself being the Chief Cornerstone in Whom the whole 'building,' fitted together, grows into a Holy Temple in the Lord in Whom you also are 'built' together for a habitation of God in the Spirit' (Ephesians 2:10 to 22).

There are differences of opinion in the way the Gospel is preached. 'There are many unruly men, empty talkers and deceivers (liars) whose mouths must be stopped. Men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things they ought not teach for dishonest (unjust) gain' (Titus 1:10 & 11). 'Some (preachers) sinned and have turned aside to useless talking, desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say nor about what they strongly believe' (1 Timothy 1:6 & 7). 'The time will come when they will not listen to the sound doctrine but having itching ears, will heap up for themselves teachers after their own lusts and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside to fables (and lies)' (2 Timothy 4:3 & 4). 'False prophets arose among the people as false teachers will be among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master (Jesus). They bought the falsehoods, bringing on themselves swift destruction. Many will follow their immoral ways and as a result the Way of the Truth will be maligned' (2 Peter 2:1 & 2). 'Do not be carried away (influenced) by various and strange teachings' (Hebrews 13:9). To prevent being led astray by winds of doctrine, we all need to adhere to the Words of God written in the Bible.

Many Christians speak nastily to others who hold differing views or opinions. The fact is, we cannot form our own opinions about the Bible, we need to believe what is written. We need to all work towards unity of the Holy Spirit and be the one Body of believers as God intended. God never intended for His people to be divided up into separate religions. There are about 38,000 different Christian denominations who believe different things and they all believe they are the only ones who are correct. It is impossible for all of them to be right! It is silly for people from different denominations to argue about individual beliefs instead of deeply seeking the Lord Who will make all things known to us. It is time to join together to fight our common enemy, the unseen evils that have permeated the world and brought division within the church and division between the Jewish people and Gentiles. There are much larger issues facing the world today than silly, useless arguments. The Bible says, 'With all lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love, be eager to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace. There is only one Body and one Holy Spirit, even as you also were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in us all. To each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of our Messiah ... Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a full grown (spiritual) adult, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of our Messiah, so we may no longer be (immature spiritual) children, tossed back and forth and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of carnal, ungodly men in craftiness after the wiles of error' (Ephesians 4:2 to 7, 13 & 14).

It is time all true genuine believers laid aside their differences of opinion and unite around common Scriptures, verses we all know and should obey. Many churches arose out of carnal disputes, pride and disagreements causing a rift to bring a breaking away. One group following the leader while another group followed the rebellious leader who snatched them away. The Bible talks about this carnal attitude. 'It has been reported to me concerning you, there are contentions among you. Each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter," or "I follow Jesus." Is Jesus divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptised into the name of Paul? ... When someone says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," you being carnal! Who then is Apollos and who is Paul? Both are servants through Jesus, Whom you believed and each as the Lord gave to him' (1 Corinthians 1:11 to 13; 3:4 & 5). This is not unity of the Holy Spirit. If we are going to be effective for the Lord we must pull together not away from each other. Not one of us knows everything there is to know. What we do know, according to the Scriptures, is God equips us to serve Him using our individual given gifts and talents. 'You are the Body of the Messiah and members individually. God has set some in the Assembly, apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, gifts of healings, helps, governments and various kinds of languages (tongues). Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all miracle workers? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? Earnestly desire the best gifts' (1 Corinthians 12:27 to 31). 'God gave some believers to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of serving, to the building up of the Body of the Messiah until we all attain to the unity of the faith' (Ephesians 4:11 to 13). 'Above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable (kind, loving, caring) to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms' (1 Peter 4:8 to 10).

We need to have a clear understanding of our own personal calling and purpose. We must become serious about studying the Bible. It is important we all understand our calling and focus our priorities accordingly while at the same time respecting God's calling on other people. No ministry is less or more important than another. Study carefully 1 Corinthians 12:1 to 31 and especially verse 25; 'There should be no divisions within the Body!' We cannot fulfil our ministry by praying just once a week or living by the 'verse of the week' from the Bible. We need to pray and study the Bible for ourselves daily. We need a constant connection with the Lord and we must also keep in mind the ministry chosen for us is not 'ours' but the Lord's Who gives us the ability and the talent to serve Him. If our ministry is successful we must never become proud of it. Any

ministry, any works for the Lord is always His and we are merely the vessels He chooses to use. We are not infallible. If we are unable to continue our ministry due to ill health or another circumstance, the Lord can very easily raise up someone else to do it. God loves us but does not need us – we need Him. He always helps us to fulfil our calling and without Him our ministry would collapse. Sometimes several ministries work together in genuine teamwork. In a successful God fearing church, there might be many different people all working together to serve the Lord, all with their own talents, gifts and abilities. ‘See how good and how pleasant it is for brothers (all believers) to live together in unity. It is like precious oil ... like the dew on Mount Hermon ... for there the Lord gives His blessing’ (Psalm 133:1 to 3). If we want God’s blessing, we need to appreciate the entire team or Body the Lord is currently creating. It began with the first meeting with Jesus and His chosen apostles and continues to this day. All Body members need to pull together to achieve what God is intending for His Body, all using the gifts and talents He has given to each of us. A united Body is a force God can use. A divided Body is useless to the Lord.

Staying obedient to the Lord’s calling right until the end is very difficult. Many ministries fail because they do not have the strength, the commitment, the capability, the focus or the endurance to continue and they give up. They are too weak to hold on in tough times. To justify their weakness they often say, “The Lord told us to stop.” That is opposite to what the Scriptures teach. ‘The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable’ (Romans 11:29). Apostle Paul continued working for the Lord in his ministry through terrible hardships including poor eyesight, death threats, whippings, shipwrecks, being imprisoned, suffering in cold weather, starving and a host of other difficulties. The problem with people today, they are too soft, being spoilt by having too much, many have never had to work hard to save for what they want but can buy things on credit. Many obey every whim of social media instead of thinking for themselves. Many want every new brand of ‘smart’ phone that comes out resulting in a serious lack of verbal communication skills. This generation is the most emotionally weakest, most emotionally fragile, lacking discipline and self-discipline, suffer more mental illness and are the most disjointed generation in history. They constantly look inward to themselves instead of looking upward towards God. They whinge, whine and grumble, and are filled with misery, self-pity, self-needs and materialism. Eventually, with that attitude, the devil creeps in and offers suicide as a ‘way out’.

Schoolyard bullies have been around since schools were invented but this generation of children are so weak and pathetic, they suicide over being bullied instead of standing up for themselves and telling the bullies where to step off. This generation needs to toughen up! We were all bullied at school but our post-war generation withstood it, stood up for ourselves and once school was over, we got over it. Most definitely the bullies need to be disciplined because showing such violence as a child might lead to that child becoming an adult violent offender. Bullying is a form of persecution. If people cannot cope with childhood bullies, they will not be able to cope with harsh persecution as adults, and the day is rapidly coming when Western world Christians will suffer intense hardships, persecution, pressure and perplexity, just like some Christians in other countries are suffering right now, and they never give up. ‘We are pressed on every side yet we are not crushed. We are perplexed but not to despair, pursued but not forsaken, struck down but not destroyed’ (2 Corinthians 4:8 & 9). Jesus encouraged us, “When these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads because your redemption is near” (Luke 21:28). We all need to forget the negative situations and events behind us and stretch forward to the things which are in our future, pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus, which is our salvation (Philippians 3:13 & 14). Apostle Paul suffered many hardships but he never gave in to self-pity or negative emotions. He never considered suicide as a way out. He was positive right to the end. See what Paul said days before he was murdered, beheaded by Nero. “You be sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist and fulfil your ministry. I am already being offered (as a sacrifice) and the time of my departure (death) has come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith. From now on, there is stored up for me the Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge, will give to me on Judgement Day, but not to me only, but to all those who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:5 to 8). All people need to understand this one vitally important fact; walking with God is not solely for this earth – it is for eternity.

It is time for genuine faithful Christians to toughen up, unite, put aside their divisions and various religious beliefs, return to the faith-based servitude evangelism of the early Assemblies and pull together to bring a powerful united front against the evils in this world. See what Jesus said about those who continued serving Him in their calling throughout their trials. “Be ready, for in an hour you do not expect the Son of Man will come. Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his Lord has set over His household to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord finds doing so when He comes. Most certainly I tell you, the Lord will set him over all He has” (Matthew 24:44 to 47).

Amen and God bless you.

[www.bibleabookoftruth.com](http://www.bibleabookoftruth.com)