

# GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 46, No. 7, February 16, 2021 / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes—designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST!"***

## **THE TRADITIONS OF MEN ... or SOLA SCRIPTURA?**

### THE TRADITIONS OF MEN:

**Ash Wednesday is 2/17/21; and it marks the start of the season of Lent**, which begins 40 days prior to Easter. According to the traditions of men, **Ash Wednesday/Lent is designed to prepare** for Easter by observing a period of fasting, moderation, and spiritual discipline. During Ash Wednesday services, the minister will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. This practice is common among Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Episcopalians, and many Lutherans; it is now also adopted by some Methodists, Presbyterians, Evangelicals, and Baptists— but it is NOT in the Bible.

**Like Ash Wednesday, Lent, etc...** the term "Easter" is NEVER used in the original Scriptures, nor is it ever associated biblically with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. **[THUS**, a few choose to use the term **"Resurrection Day"** rather than "Easter" when referring to a Biblical remembrance of Christ's resurrection.]

**Easter has something for everyone, be they religious or not:**

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/easter-ideas/g191/history-easter-traditions/>

**THE TRADITIONS OF MEN: Denominations, Churches, and pastors have decreed** that Easter is the date to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter often involves a sunrise service; and even an Easter egg hunt. **Easter sermons are packed with references about Easter as if it is Bible truth that Easter = the Resurrection!**

It may be a surprise and shock to some, but the truth is that both secular and Biblical histories reveal that Easter NOT in the Bible; and has nothing whatsoever to do with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Nevertheless, Easter has a POWERFUL grip on even genuine Christians!**

### **HOW DID THIS HAPPENED?**

More than we like to admit, we reserve for ourselves the right to determine what is and is not acceptable in worship. **THUS, IF we practice something and IF we don't see any harm or wrong in it— that settles it! It's our decision.** We believe that if we are pleased with something and if we are sincerely doing it as worship to God— ***God must be pleased, even though it is contrary to what He has revealed and/or commanded.***

**MOREOVER, we have a natural dislike for God's absolute authority.** THUS, we are easy prey for deceptions, even as was Eve. *We easily fall in love with our ideas,* even as Cain; and even as Israel with their golden calf. **INDEED, and SADLY,** it seems that many pastors today take their cue from Aaron, ***the great pragmatic facilitator,*** who apparently believed that his calling was to please the congregation rather than to obey God! (Exodus 32:1-6)

**But, says some, “‘Easter’ IS in the Bible!”** Yes, the word ‘Easter’ is recorded once in the King James translation. We

find this in Acts 12, where we learn that King Herod began to persecute the Church, culminating in the death of the apostle James. This pleased the Jews so much that the apostle Peter was also taken prisoner by Herod. The plan was to later deliver him to the Jews. **Verse 3 says**, “Then were the *days of unleavened bread*.” **Now read verse 4**: “And when he [Herod] had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions [sixteen] of soldiers to keep him; **intending after *Easter*** to bring him forth to the people.” **IS THIS VERSE, Bible authority for celebrating Easter as a Christian holiday or holy day?** NO, for...

In reality, the word translated *Easter* in the KJV is the Greek word ***pascha*** (derived from the Hebrew word *pesach*; there is no original Greek word for *Passover*), **and it always means *Passover***. For this reason, we find a *Hebrew* word used in the Greek New Testament. Other translations correctly render this word, *Passover*.

**NOTE: REGARDLESS OF ACTS 12, there are no verses, anywhere in the Bible that hint, suggest, authorize, or endorse the keeping of the Easter celebration! There is zero Biblical connection between EASTER and the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ.** The Bible says nothing about celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus by means of sunrise services, Ash Wednesday, Lent, eggs, egg hunts, baskets of candy, etc. It is impossible to show any Biblical support for any of this having any connection to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**NOTE: SOME argue that participating in the various Easter traditions *is harmless*.**

**RESPONSE: The point of this article is ONLY that there is NO BIBLICAL WARRANT to connect any of the Easter traditions**

with anything relating to our Lord Jesus Christ. **“What? No Biblical warrant? So? What does it matter?”**

**BESIDES, we have a great host of the world’s most respected preachers, (with Bibles in hand), practicing and preaching EASTER! That makes it OK! Moreover, we believe that we accomplish much good at our Easter egg hunt, etc. — that settles it. End of story. We are right and it is indeed our decision to do things our way. Besides, we prayed and the Lord led us!”**

**SERIOUS QUESTIONS: \*\*\* IF Bible truth is expendable in one area— what about in other areas as well? \*\*\* IF the Bible is not our infallible guide and rule for doctrine and practice in one area— maybe it should not be in other areas as well! \*\*\* IF we and our traditions get to decide what is and is not acceptable doctrine and practice— is anything not left subject to us? \*\*\* MOREOVER, IF we and our beloved and ‘successful’ traditions are embraced OVER and instead of obedience to the Word of God isn’t that making our will sovereign over God’s will?**

[By the way, this is indeed the position of Roman Catholicism— namely that the Bible plus their Church tradition decide what is or is not truth and practice, with their Church and their traditions being in authority over the Word of God!]

**SO: The real bottom line of this article is not Ash Wednesday, Lent, or EASTER! RATHER, this article is about our attitude toward the Word of God!**

It's about whether or not we will be guided solely by the Word of God, quickened by the AUTHOR OF THAT WORD, THE HOLY SPIRIT... **Or, will we guided by the Word of God, unless we**

**and our traditions are different from the revealed Word of God?**

### **Sola Scriptura! The Importance of Sola Scriptura:**

"The answer that we are to give to the question, *"What is Christianity?"* depends quite largely on the view we take of Scripture. \*\*\* **IF we believe that the Bible** is the very word of God and infallible, we will develop one conception of Christianity. \*\*\* **IF we believe that it is only a collection of human writings**, perhaps considerably above the average in its spiritual and moral teachings but nevertheless containing many errors, we will develop a radically different conception of Christianity, if, indeed, what we then have can legitimately be called Christianity. \*\*\* Hence we can hardly over-estimate the importance of a correct doctrine concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures." (Lorraine Boettner)

**What then is sola scriptura?** *First of all, it is not a claim that the Bible contains all knowledge.* The Bible does not have to be exhaustive to function as the sole rule of faith for the Church. We do not need to know the color of Thomas' eyes. We do not need to know the menu of each meal of the Apostolic band for the Scriptures to function as the sole rule of faith for the Church.

*Secondly, it is not a denial of the Church's authority to teach God's truth.* I Timothy 3:15 describes the Church as "the pillar and foundation of the truth." The truth is in Jesus Christ and in His Word. The Church teaches truth and calls men to Christ and, in so doing, functions as the pillar and foundation thereof.

**The Church does not add revelation or rule over Scripture.** The Church being the bride of Christ listens to the Word of Christ, which is found in God-breathed Scripture.

**[NOTE: Cults, Harlot Churches and those** who value their opinions over the pure revealed Word of God ADD to and/or deny or subtract from and place themselves and/or their leaders OVER the Word of God.]

*Thirdly, it is not a denial that God's Word has been spoken.* Apostolic preaching was authoritative in and of itself. Yet, the Apostles proved their message from Scripture, as we see in Acts 17:2, and 18:28, and John commended those in Ephesus for testing those who claimed to be Apostles, Revelation 2:2. The Apostles were not afraid to demonstrate the consistency between their teaching and the Old Testament. *And, finally, **Sola Scriptura is not** a denial* of the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding and enlightening the Church.

**What then is sola scriptura?** The doctrine of sola scriptura, simply stated, is that **the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are sufficient to function as the "rule of faith" for the Church.** All that one must believe to be a Christian is found in Scripture and in no other source. That which is not found in Scripture is not binding upon the Christian conscience. To be more specific, I provide the following definition:

The Bible claims to be the sole and sufficient rule of faith for the Christian Church. [\* See A. A. Hodge quote, below.] The Scriptures are not in need of any supplement. Their authority comes from their nature as God-breathed revelation. Their authority is not dependent upon man, Church, or council. The Scriptures are self-consistent, self-interpreting, and self-authenticating. **The Christian Church looks at the Scriptures as the only and sufficient rule of faith and the Church is always subject to the Word, and is constantly reformed thereby.** (James R. White)

**\* A.A. Hodge asks and answers: “What arguments do the Scriptures themselves afford in favor of the doctrine that they are the only infallible rule of faith?”**

**1st.** The Scriptures always speak in the name of God, and command faith and obedience.

**2nd.** Christ and his apostles always refer to the written Scriptures, then existing, as authority, and to no other rule of faith whatsoever. — Luke 16:29; 10:26; John 5:39; Rom. 4:3; 2 Tim. 3:15.

**3rd.** The Bereans are commended for bringing all questions, even apostolic teaching, to this test.— Acts 17:11; see also Isa. 8:16.

**4th.** Christ rebukes the Pharisees for adding to and perverting the Scriptures.—Matt. 15:7-9; Mark 7:5-8; see also Rev. 22:18, 19, and Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Josh. 1:7. [Note: MOST of the quotes in this article are from old saved files on my computer... and while I saved the names of the authors.... I did not save the location of the quotes...}]

**DOES GOD’S WORD MATTER?**

**Let us all confess with Martin Luther,** “I'll trust in God's unchanging Word till soul and body sever. For though all things shall pass away, His Word shall stand forever!”

- **Let us get back to the God revealed truth of the sure Word of prophecy, God's Holy Word; and let us sit at His feet and worship Him in spirit and in truth.** (2 Peter 1:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-14; Matthew 4:4; John 4:23-24)

**BUT WHO CARES ABOUT ANY OF THIS? WHAT DOES IT MATTER?** 1. Satan’s first strategy was to call into question the goodness and absolute authority of God’s pure Word to Adam and Eve! He does the same today. 2. When Jesus

**was on earth, He confronted this issue head on: MARK 7:6-9—**

“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, **teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.** 8 For **laying aside the commandment of God**, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, **Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.**”

### **What is Sola Scriptura?**

“The doctrine is that **the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are sufficient to function as the "rule of faith" for the Church.** All that one must believe to be a Christian is found in Scripture and in no other source. The Bible claims to be the sole and sufficient rule of faith for the Christian Church. The Scriptures are not in need of any supplement. Their authority comes from their nature as God-breathed revelation. Their authority is not dependent upon man, Church, or council. The Scriptures are self-consistent, self-interpreting, and self-authenticating.

***The Christian Church looks at the Scriptures as the only and sufficient rule of faith and the Church is always subject to the Word, and is constantly reformed thereby.***” (James R. White)

Grace to all in Christ! / James Bell / [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://www.southsidegallatin.org)

## **NEWS NOTES:**

**EVERY Saturday, \*\*\* 8:00am — Men's Bible Study: *THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS!* (Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits are available!)**

**\*\*\* NEXT Ladies Bible Study— Tuesday, February 23, 11:00am: Women of the Bible!**

## **SUNDAYS, February 21, 28**

**\*\*\* Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes.

**\*\*\* WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

### **Additional Sunday Events for FEBRUARY 2021:**

**1. February 21, LORD'S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS, in the evening.**

**2. February 28, 5:00pm-6:00pm- Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... Dealing with Difficult Problems, videos by R.C. Sproul**

***TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi's home...***

### ***WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE:***

***6:30pm— Come in by the back 'double doors' under the Drive Thru awning!***

***\* Adult Prayer Service***

***\*\* Young FAMILIES Prayer Service***

## **2/17/21- NO WEDNESDAY SERVICES AT CHURCH... DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS.**

### **\*\*\* HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES**

**1. IF YOU ARE SICK... [OR if** you are presently in a state of high immune deficiency **or if** (at home or work) you are caring for one who is sick; **or if** you have • **Fever**; • Coughing; • • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.], **please stay home!**]

**2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY** and well... **you may or may not choose to wear a mask... or gloves... WE do not require; we WILL NOT provide such. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM... as to 'social distancing'—** 6ft apart... give sensitivity and respect one to another.

**NOTE: In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: so as to SEEK TO HAVE A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM... I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITIMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber.**

**3. LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.**

**\*\*\*FOR THOSE AT HOME: TO RECEIVE LIVE STREAMING FOR February 21 OR to connect with our YouTube page, GO TO: [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://www.southsidegallatin.org)**

**\*\*\*\*LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or ONLINE GIVING: SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) —**

**MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066**

**OR, you may choose to GIVE, via ONLINE GIVING:**

<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>

**IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all, (ESPECIALLY for SENIOR ADULTS), CHILDREN ANY WHERE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING— No unsupervised Children!**