

Misconceptions Of The New Testament Position

Introduction. The gospel has always been misunderstood. Jesus Himself was frequently misunderstood (Matthew 26:61); at times even by His own disciples (Luke 24:25-26; John 20:9). The apostles were likewise misunderstood (Romans 3:8). Acts 28:22 tells us that the early church was "spoken against everywhere." Truth has always been misunderstood and misrepresented. Some of these misunderstanding have been honest; some have been willful and premeditated (Acts 28:26-27; 2 Peter 3:5).

Whenever people appeal to the sound pattern found in the New Testament, there are bound to be misconceptions. When we attempt to forsake man-made religions and unite on the basis of divine truth that the prayer of our Lord in John 17:20-21 might be answered, there is going to be misunderstanding and misrepresentations. We want to examine five objections commonly offered to Christians which are really misconceptions. Hopefully, when these are cleared up, it will offer the world a better view of the simple New Testament plan of salvation.

I. **"You Do Not Believe In The Old Testament"**

- A. We believe the Bible is inspired from Genesis to Revelation (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21). The Bible is divided into two grand divisions, but the Old Testament was abrogated when Jesus died on the cross (Colossians 2:13-17).
- B. One who is familiar with law knows that when a man makes two wills, the last will supersede and abrogate the preceding will; so the last will and testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will abrogate the first (Hebrews 9:15-17; 8:13).
- C. Some want to make their stand upon the Old Testament, but yet do not keep the Passover (Exodus 12:1-20); the seventh-day Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5:12-15); sacrifices of blood (Leviticus 23:19-20); circumcision of the flesh (Genesis 17:10-14); the Old Testament feasts (Exodus 23:14-15); the burning of incense, the Levitical priesthood, the tabernacle services, and all other ceremonials and laws of the Old Testament. Why keep any and not keep all of them (Galatians 5:4, 18)?
- D. The Old Testament was given for the fleshly seed of Abraham (Genesis 17:2-7). It was given through the mediatorship of Moses (John 1:17). The New Testament, given through the mediatorship of Christ, is for the whole world (Hebrews 8:6; Matthew 28:19). While the entire Bible is inspired, only the New Testament is binding upon Christians (Romans 15:4).

II. ***"You Do Not Believe In The Work Of The Holy Spirit In Conversion"***

- A. We believe that the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost to abide with the church forever as Jesus had promised (John 14:16-17) and that the Holy Spirit convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7-12).
- B. We cannot place limitations upon the power of the Holy Spirit. This is not a question of power, but of method. The Holy Spirit is not the cause of confusion; the Holy Spirit is orderly in His methods and operations.
- C. There is no scriptural evidence that the Holy Spirit ever operated upon the heart of the alien sinner in any other way than through the written or spoken word. In the conversion of the Ethiopian and Cornelius, the Spirit sent the preacher to the sinner instead of going to the sinner directly (Acts 8:29; 10:19-20).
- D. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). It is the power of God because the Spirit is in it. The gospel is the sword of the Spirit, not because the Spirit wields it, but because the Spirit has revealed it (Ephesians 6:17).
- E. If the Holy Spirit operates independent of the word in the conversion of the sinner, why has not the entire world been converted? The Spirit of God is in the word (John 6:63), to such an extent that what is done by the one is said to be done by the other.

III. ***"You Do Not Believe In Heartfelt Religion"***

- A. Change of heart is necessary to conversion. Change of heart is not some mysterious emotion, with varying degrees of intensity, but an intelligent process that goes along with hearing, understanding, believing and obeying the gospel message (1 Corinthians 1:21; Romans 10:14; Acts 8:30, 31, 35; Romans 6:17; Acts 28:26-27).
- B. Just because we do not let emotions determine the path of truth, does not mean that we are cold to emotional feeling. The Bible states many times the pure joy found in believing and obeying Christ (John 16:20-22; Acts 5:41; 8:8, 39; 13:48). Every Christian must manifest true joy in their lives (Philippians 4:4).

IV. ***"You Teach Water Salvation"***

- A. The potency of baptism is not in the water, but in the manifestation of faith and obedience which it implies (Romans 6:17).
- B. Baptism is said to be the manifestation of an obedient and trusting conscience (1 Peter 3:21).

1. We do not baptize infants, which is evidence that we do not teach water salvation. If there is any effectiveness in infant baptism, it must be in the water.
 2. One fact is certain: it cannot be in the condition of the child's heart, because the child does not even know what is taking place (Romans 6:3-4).
- C. The New Testament authorizes us to baptize those who are old enough to believe and repent (Acts 2:38; Acts 16:31-33; Mark 16:16).

V. ***"You Are Selfish In Claiming To Be The Only Christians"***

- A. We do not claim to be the only Christians -- we are just Christians only. We do not set ourselves apart from other people; they set themselves apart when they try to serve the Lord in a way that is against the New Testament pattern.
- B. There are several points we must remember:
1. We can have no denominational name or designation (1 Corinthians 1:12, 15; Colossians 3:17; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 16:16; Hebrews 12:23).
 2. We can have no denominational creed, and recognize no authority but Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). The church is under law to Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2).
 3. We can have no denominational organization. We can only have the local church with its elders, deacons, and evangelists, the same as it was in New Testament days (Philippians 1:1; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).
 4. We can have no corrupted worship. It must follow the New Testament plan (Hebrews 8:5; John 4:24; Acts 2:42-47).
 5. We can have no entangling alliances. The church must not lose her identity in any movement and must remain free from political, economical and secular involvements (Ephesians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).
 6. We can have no denominational requirements for membership. We must ask people to do only what people were told to do in New Testament days (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:10; Acts 2:41).

Conclusion. Are you ready to meet the Lord with the divine name, taking Christ as your only creed, and the Bible as your only guide in religious faith and practice? We offer you this divine platform now, that God's people may be one, and that the prayer of our Lord may be answered. We plead with all men and women to go with us to New Testament ground.