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**October 4, 2020**

**1 Peter**

**Greetings from Peter**

**(2 Peter 1:1-2)**

**1Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,**

Peter is obviously the Peter the apostle of Christ one of the 12 chosen by Jesus. He directs this letter to “believers” calling them strangers scattered throughout five areas under Rome’s authority. It is believed he wrote 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter from Rome and the list of five provinces are in an order from west to east or towards the Holy Land. The term “strangers” according to Strong’s Concordance is;

Transliteration: parepidémos

Phonetic Spelling: (par-ep-id'-ay-mos)

Definition: sojourning in a strange place

Starting in the next verse we get into the tall grass, a place where it is hard to see over, so we must walk through this Biblical

doctrine to understand a number of Commandments from Jesus not the least of which is the Great Commandment;

***Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.***

One would want to ask the question; Why; why go throughout the world and preach the gospel which means “Good News” to every creature. So, let’s start the walk through the tall grass of ideologies.

The end of verse one is a comma so lets go back and read the first two verses together;

***1Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,***

**2Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**

There are two principal ideologies that are found in America and within Christianity and Judasim; and if we look harder, we can probably find more ideologies held by various religions relative to “elect”, “election” or “chosen”.

As an example, an an extrabiblical belief by the Mormon’s; they believe that they existed as a spirit being before they were born

and they were with God and had some sort of covenant with Him. At the moment of conception, their spirit was joined with their body.

Here is a quote from Mormonbeliefs.com

*“Mormons believe in a life preceding our existence on earth. Mormons call this the “pre-existence,” “pre-earth-life,” or “premortal existence.”*

*“Before we were born on the earth, we lived in the presence of our Heavenly Father as His spirit children. In this premortal existence, we attended a council with Heavenly Father’s other spirit children. At that council, Heavenly Father presented His great plan of happiness or the “Plan of Salvation, which was ratified by all of us.”*

If you know your Bible you will know that there is no Biblical basis for this Ideology but literally millions believe this. The problem with non-Biblical and even some biblical ideologies is that they are based on either false prophets or a misunderstanding of a Biblical principal that IS consistent throughout scripture.

As for the two main groups of “chosen” the first is that only those whom God specifically identified as the selected humans He would save would be the “elect”. Now the elect can be considered in this ideology in perhaps two categories; “Israel” being selected by God and/or SECONDLY any human that is saved; was first selected by God before their birth to be saved.

The New Testament Ideology is that Israel was “chosen” by God in the Old Covenant and are still “chosen” by God in the New Covenant, but those “chosen” has now expanded to New Testament believers. In this very narrow ideology, it is believed by some that “believers” were chosen to be believers before the foundation of the world. Those who adhere to this belief will cite several New Testament verses. The most dominate verses taken out of context with the rest of Scripture appears to be partially the basis of the Mormon belief in “pre-mortal existence”, as well as those who would be considered Calvinists.

***Ephesians 1:4 4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,***

***1 Thesalonians 1:4Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.***

***John 15:16 16Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.***

***Jeremiah 1:5 5Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.***

This verse in Jeremiah was written specifically to Jeremiah the prophet to convey to him that God had foreknowledge of him before he was formed in the womb.

Likewise, the John 15 verse was written to the disciples to help them understand God's Omniscient foreknowledge and that Jesus as part of the God Head knew them and ordained them to be His helpers in starting His Church on earth.

Christianity has taken many if not all of these verses and cast them upon us even though they were not written to us specifically. Lest anyone doubt that I believe as you do that these verses are to be used by us as guideposts; realizing that if they were good enough for the disciples and prophets as a means of educating them as to God's Omniscience then we would be amiss not to claim them as ours as well. However, fully understand the context in which they were written and to whom they were written and why they were written or said to specific people.

Back to the first group of "chosen"; all of Israel by their kinship would be the first group that this doctrine would have to consider as the "elect" or "chosen" by God. God was quite specific on this selection;

**Deuteronomy 7:7 [7](#)The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: [8](#)But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. [9](#)Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;**

God had promised Abraham that He would make him a mighty nation and give him land to dwell in and that his posterity would be the channel which God would use to save all of mankind! We all agree on that principal that the only way to God the Father is through the Son and the Blood on the Cross that Jesus shed for believers. Is that what it really says that Jesus died for “believers”?

Not really;

**Hebrews 7: [27](#)Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then **for the people's**: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.**

**2 Corinthians 5: [17](#)Therefore if **any man** be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

We can see in both verses the terms used do not specify someone who was “predestined” but for “peoples” and “any man”.

The other ideology that we need to consider is at odds with the first ideology in this respect. The first ideology believes that before the earth was formed God identified those humans that would be saved; no free will at work in that ideology.

The second ideology is of the opinion that it was God's Foreknowledge. According to Stong's Concordance;

Transliteration: prognósis

Phonetic Spelling: (prog'-no-sis)

Definition: foreknowledge

Prognosis according to Websters Dictionary

### **Definition of *prognosis***

1 : the prospect of recovery as anticipated from the usual course of disease or peculiarities of the case

2 : [forecast](#), [prognostication](#)

If we read on in Webster we find this;

### **Prognosis Is Not Just a Medical Term**

With its prefix *pro-*, meaning "before", *prognosis* means basically "knowledge beforehand" of how a situation is likely to turn out.

*Prognosis* was originally a strictly medical term, but it soon broadened to include predictions made by experts of all kinds.

God has foreknowledge, He knows what is going to happen, it is not a guess or an assumption as to how a situation is likely to turn out; NO with God it is not a prognosis or prediction, it is simply

knowing in advance of what will occur. We believe that God knows all things because He can see the entire future of the earth and every human that lives or has lived on the earth.

How do we know that God laid out a plan before the creation of the earth? He tells us so and according to Strong's Concordance and Help Words;

Transliteration: katabolé

Phonetic Spelling: (kat-ab-ol-ay')

Definition: a laying down

Usage: (a) foundation, (b) depositing, sowing, deposit, technically used of the act of conception.

#### HELPS Word-studies

**2602** *katabolé* (from [2596](#) /*katá*, "exactly according to," down from the most general to the most specific detail, "following all the way along," and [906](#) /*bállō*, "to cast") – properly, a *foundation*, cast according to a blueprint (original design); the *substructure* which determines the entire direction (destination) of all that follows; the foundation-plan, upon which the entire super-structure is built; (figuratively) the *beginning (founding)* that purposefully designs all that follows.

[2602](#) /*katabolé* ("foundation-plan") typically relates to Christ's incarnation, i.e. coming to earth in the flesh to be our Redeemer. This divine plan was set *and sealed* (guaranteed) *before creation* (Heb 9:26; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8). In general, [2602](#) (*katabolé*) refers to *the basis God has established*, upon which **all** people can *know* Him. This was laid down before the first ray of sunshine or drop of water touched the earth.

**1 Peter 1: [20](#)Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,**

A good deal of what is spoken of in these verses is about Jesus and not us. It is clear that God through His Foreknowledge knew each person that would live and every detail about that person. In that knowledge by seeing the beginning from the end God could see those that would accept Jesus as Savior. In that knowledge God then could “set aside”, “ordain”, “call out” “establish” “predestine” “ordain” that person to receive Salvation. Not due to overcoming the person’s free will but by knowing the choice they would make when given the Truth.

Let’s consider it like this; there is a list that God made before the foundation of the earth was laid. Your name was on that list. How did your name get on that list? God saw your entire life play out before He created the earth. In that view unrestrained by time, God saw that you would hear the Good News and submit your life to His Son Jesus. When He saw what you would do your name was entered onto that list; also called the “Book of Life”. He did not call your name out before He saw what you would do, He observed that first then entered your name in the Book of Life. We are simply walking out what He saw us do before He created the earth.

God nowhere in Scripture describes His removing man's freewill; It is quite the opposite. God is Omniscient, meaning He is all Powerful, there is nothing beyond His reach in all of creation. He Himself decided to limit His Omniscience in only area, and that was in the ability of mankind to "freely" love Him. Or, "freely" reject Him. God does not dictate that you have to love Him. He gives us a choice but also explains the outcome of either decision.

If man did not have freewill and the ability to use it, then what possibly could be God's motivation to tell believers;

***Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.***

Strong's Concordance Word Help says this about "Freely"

**Cognate: 1432** *dōreán*(the adverbial form of 1431/*dōrea*) – something *freely* done (as *gratis*), i.e. *without "cause"*; unearned (undeserved); freely given (without cost) hence not done out of mere obligation or compulsion. [See 1431](#) (*dōrea*).

It is that sense that God would like our love, unforced, just simply a desire to Love the Creator God. No one is forced to Love God and we can see that all around us. We ourselves were not forced to love God; it was a free gift of Salvation that we in our freewill chose for ourselves to love the One Who Loved Us First.

Do you think God knew we would make that choice? Of course, He did He knows the name of every person that will make that positive choice and He knows every person that will reject that choice. God told us time and time again;

***1 Timothy 2:4* “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”**

***Ezekiel 18:32***

***For I take no pleasure in anyone's death, declares the Lord GOD. So repent and live!***

***2 Timothy 2:25***

***He must gently reprove those who oppose him, in the hope that God may grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.***

***Titus 2:11***

***For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.***

There are many more verses in Scripture that give us a clear picture that God's desire, His hope was, that “ALL” men would come to a saving knowledge of Him, but in that hope we see the truth and that is that not all would come to Him. He gave us Free will to choose and it is clear that we are not predetermined to be saved; it is up to each person to choose that themselves.

If there were those who were predestined, prechosen, predetermined to Love God, why would Jesus have to die on the Cross?

## A Living Hope

**3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

The point here is that it is through God's Mercy; that we have hope and that hope is pinned on the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. If we were simply told that we would be resurrected from the dead and there was no actual evidence or anyone that experienced that resurrection; it would be hard to believe.

We are frail and God knew that we needed to see that He had the power to raise up His Son from the Dead so that there would be no doubt that He had the Power to do so. It had to be coupled with the payment of sin and that was the death of the perfect Lamb, Jesus. Once the payment for sin was made then God's Power was reverified within the law that He had the Power over death. His power over death had to be reverified because God Himself said;

***Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

We could go back to the Old Testament/Covenant and find this to be absolutely true in the Law. Unrepentant sin would receive death, eternal separation from God.

God did not have to exercise that power over death; but because of His Love for mankind and the Mercy and Grace that He has in abundance He extended that Mercy to us to follow in His Son's foot steps to raise up from the grave to eternal life.

**4To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

This Faith that binds all of these promises together is a gift from God. We as humans do not have the capacity to have Faith; it had to be given to us by God as part of His Grace and Mercy.

***Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:***

The verse in Ephesians clearly says that this **Faith is not of yourselves; it is THE gift of God.**

**6Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:**

If we can keep our eyes on Jesus and walk each day in His Righteousness then we rejoice greatly, and these days are only for a short time; really a blip in the timeline of eternity. But to us each day is a struggle to walk in Righteousness.

God recognizes that there is immense pressure on humans to sin. And as we can see this pressure is increasing year by year to the point where children today hardly have a chance at finding the truth.

It is our nature passed on from Adam and Eve; it is part of our DNA make up. When Satan caused man to sin, it changes I believe down to the molecular level of humankind, reaching into the DNA of man that it would be passed on from generation to generation. God is aware of our personal individual struggles with sin every day. Satan has not given up; his intent is to cause us to sin out of hate and spite for God. To recant our belief in Jesus Christ by our actions and then by our words. God tells us the formula to perceive;

***James 4: [4](#)Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. [5](#)Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? [6](#)But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.***

***[7](#)Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8](#)Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. [9](#)Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. [10](#)Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.***

**11Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?**

When we violate this principal of God, of gossiping and other evil deeds, we are opening ourselves up to an attack by Satan. We are willingly walking out from under the umbrella of protection God has given us. We are “RESIST” physically, mentally and spiritually the devil. If we do that God promises that Satan will flee from us. But we can’t resist if we are engaging in self destructive sin that God listed above.

**7That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

**Q.** Why do we desire to walk in righteousness?

God describes this Faith that He gave us as more precious than gold that “**perisheth**”. Fire does not destroy gold, it purifies it, when gold is exposed to intense heat the dross, pools and falls away from the purest of the gold. The Gold God speaks of is our Faith; it is Faith that will be tested by fire and comes forth as pure Faith that Honors and Glorifies God at the appearance of His Son Jesus Christ.

**8**Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: **9**Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

God declares that **“having not seen ye love”**. That is all believes since Jesus resurrection and ascension into heaven. God had declared that those who believe without seeing are in an incredible category.

*John 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

This is no small matter; it is one thing to see something and after seeing it, believing in it. However, to believe without seeing, taking the word of someone that has seen it, as in the disciples seeing; Jesus in the flesh, seeing Him perform miracles, raising the dead, healing the sick and then dying on the cross and raising up from the dead Himself; these are things we consider as fact, without contestation; we Believe, we have Faith. It is this Faith that when tested will not fail us; it brings Glory and Honor to God.

The Centurion the first gentile believer;

*Matthew 8: 5*And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, **6**And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. **7**And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. **8**The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my

*roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. [9](#)For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. [10](#)When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great **faith**, no, not in Israel. [11](#)And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. [12](#)But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [13](#)And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.*

We walk in Joy, due to our knowledge of the Truth. The Truth is Jesus Christ and He Risen. That is the Truth and that Truth fills us with unspeakable joy, to the knowledge that we are saved by the Blood of the Lamb. Our Faith demands of us to believe without doubting that we are Saved, not to boast but do fall to our knees and worship the God of Creation and His Son who died for us that we might say the words "I am saved".

## **October 11, 2020**

**[10](#)Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:**

The prophets were tested and most often killed by evil kings and evil priests all the time Satan was at work behind the scenes doing whatever he could to bring about this hatred of God. Yet

they did not waiver from their appointed tasks. They were told of a Grace that would come in years far from their own. Of a Grace that would save the world; they themselves would not get to see it as humans but as regenerated souls waiting in Paradise. The very Grace that would descend to the earth and raise from the Dead to the Glory of God, His One and Only Son Jesus Christ. These prophets desperately wanted to see this amazing Grace and they searched diligently for understanding from God.

**11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.**

These amazing prophets were empowered by the Holy Spirit the Spirit of the Living Christ. That Spirit within them testified of what the Messiah would endure, of what He would accomplish.

**12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.**

Prophets carried messages from God to mankind; first to Israel and then to the gentiles that a Redeemer was coming. A Redeemer that fulfilled the Law. The Law which none could keep, but all fell short of the Glory of God. A Redeemer that was

described in all of the Temple aspects; but hidden behind the veil, until the day that God determined that He would reveal what man and especially the Prophets had sought for several thousand years.

These messages had such hidden Truths that the Angels longed to look at it. The Angels were amazed at the Love God showed mankind. Mankind created a little lower than the Angels but Loved by God with a Love that astounded the Angels.

No provision was made by God to save fallen Angels, but here they could all see the provision of God subjecting His Only Son to the hands of man to be beaten and killed on a cross for the purest and simplest of reasons; that God loved mankind and would sacrifice His most precious possession to save them. The Angels are to this day in awe of this Love that God possesses and shines on man.

### **A Call to Be Holy**

**[\(Hebrews 12:14-17\)](#)**

**13Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;**

It is a frightful thing to have God tell you to “gird up your loins”, in today’s vernacular it would be similar to “put on your big boy or

big girl pants”. In other words, to set aside childish ideals and childish ways and act like an adult; searching with diligence and determination the Truth about God. There are many people that attend church on a regular basis and don't touch their Bibles the rest of the week. They do not seek out God, they do not seek out what He wants of them. They do not grow from head knowledge to heart knowledge. It is only through this dedicated adult approach to learning in our hearts the Truth of Jesus that really changes the way we walk out our lives.

**14As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:**

In a way we are to be as children; but only in our innocent belief, abandoning our former lives filled with the lust of many things out of ignorance.

*Matthew 18: 1At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

So, the issue Jesus points out is; being humble as a child and believing without questioning as a child.

**15But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**

This should strike a never for all of us. We immediately likely think of swearing is the point here, but it goes way beyond that. We are to be holy in “all manner of conversation”. Do we complain about things; is that a holy manner? Do we talk behind others backs; is that a holy manner. Do we curse; is that a holy manner. How many other things do we do with our mouths that are Unholy? Jesus told us in several different ways;

***John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.***

***Leviticus 11:44***

***For I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, because I am holy.***

Is there any question as to how God wants us to use our mouths? If you are having problems with that, REPENT and ask God to help you. He has the power to do so.

**17And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:**

Did God just say that we are to pass our time here in FEAR?

Yep pretty much, but FEAR of what?

**Matthew 10:28** *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

**Psalm 119:120**

*My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

As a Christian, what is God's view on our continued sin?

**Hebrews 10: 26** *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27* *But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28* *He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29* *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30* *For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31* *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

How serious is God's view on whether or not we need to repent and start walking in His Righteousness?

**18** *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

How does man made religion "from your vain conversations received by tradition from you fathers;" and manmade science and history impact Jesus' Church, His Bride?

**Acts 14: [8](#)And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: [9](#)The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, [10](#)Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. [11](#)And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. [12](#)And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. [13](#)Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. [14](#)Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, [15](#)And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: [16](#)Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. [17](#)Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. [18](#)And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.**

That is just one example of a “religion” albeit Pagan that through its traditions did evil. There are many religions even some that are called “Christian” today that do evil based on traditions. Be very wary of religions that point to books and traditions other than God’s Word and Commandments that rely on customs carried on for centuries; vain ideals and words.

This morning Ron Miller sent me an article;

*“The Cult of Covidism Has Invaded the Church*  
By [Fay Voshell](#)

*What should have been a purely scientific response aimed at control and cure of a disease quickly evolved into the political-religious cult of Covidism. Objective scientific analysis of and responses to what is the contagious pathogen COVID-19 were almost immediately suffocated by a plethora of arbitrary pseudo-religious rituals.”*

*After having read the opinion piece I was curious who the author was*

***“Fay Voshell holds a M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, where she was awarded the prize for excellence in systematic theology. Her thoughts have appeared as essays and quotes in many online magazines, including the Christian Post, Christianity Today, CBN, National Review, Russian Insider and American Thinker.”***

I will send you all the article because I think it has a bearing on not only the world view today of the church small “c”, but it has a bearing on how we as Americans can be so easily intimidated by local potentates; meaning state and county officials. As to the author, she holds a master’s in divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary. As I read the article, I could not help but notice that she equated today’s religious churches “c” with that of the Church that Jesus started and maintains as His Bride. In her summation she had this to say;

*“Resistance will require spiritual renewal. The Church must defend its symbols, rituals, and sacraments. It must desert the continually hovering and vacillation it has exhibited as it waits breathlessly for the latest word of the prophets of scientism.*

*As the Church repents of its capitulation, it needs to rededicate itself to the essentials of the faith it has maintained over 2,000 years.*

*It should renew its commitments to provide for its congregations, disciple its members, provide the rituals of the sacraments, reverentially bury its dead, and console the disconsolate and the penitent — without interference from any other entity.”*

I find myself in agreement with much of what she says about our willingness to simply do what we are told when it comes to walking out of Faith. Our Faith is in Jesus Christ not a doctor or a scientist or the local health board. Nowhere in the Constitution does it say that our 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Rights are guaranteed unless a virus shows up. And if that happens then we have to surrender our rights to the local health board?

I also find myself in disagreement as to what the “Church” “C” should be worried about “rituals of sacraments, reverentially burying the dead and consoling the disconsolate and penitent”.

In my opinion today's church's “c” need to abandon ritual, sacraments, pomp and circumstance and clearly tell sinners that they need to repent and believers to walk in Righteousness. And

as we do that, we need to show mercy and grace to all who would kneel to Jesus Christ, forsaking their lives in this world and turning from their sin seek Christ.

***18Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;***

As Paul and Barnabas were swept into the local religious doctrine, they had to fight to make it clear who they were and what they believed. We need to do the same today wherever we are. We need to simply obey God in humbleness and joy.

***Romans 12: 14Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.***

Paul and Barnabas did not simply sit down and allow the local powers that be, dilute the Word of God. We should try to be at peace with all men but not at the expense of buckling to the

whims of science and medicine or government. Either stand up and say no or stay seated and do as you are told. Paul and Barnabas chose to stand up. To stand up is not avenging yourself; it is standing for Righteousness, not our righteousness but the Righteousness of God.

*Hebrews 10: [19](#)Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, [20](#)By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; [21](#)And having an high priest over the house of God; [22](#)Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. [23](#)Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) [24](#)And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: [25](#)Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

**[19](#)But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: [20](#)Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, [21](#)Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.**

Those three verses are the summation of the Gospel of Christ; the Good News.

## The Word of the Lord Stands Forever

[\(Isaiah 40:6-8\)](#)

**[22](#)Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see *that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: [23](#)Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.***

Christians often wonder; what does God want me to do. Here is a pretty good place to start. If we are to have “unfeigned love” of the brethren, how is it that we can speak ill of a Brother or Sister in the Lord. If we see a sister or brother sinning what are we to do; gossip about them? No, when we think that is okay, we need to refer back to verse 17. As a matter of fact, we should refer to verse 17 before we do anything for the rest of our lives.

***[17](#)And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:***

**[24](#)For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:**

God is depicting our life span in these verses; it is brief, and we probably won't really recognize how brief until we enter the timeline of eternity and look back at the life we lived here on

earth. We will all have regrets but how can we limit the number of regrets that we have in this very short life span?

**25But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.**

**All verses are copied from <https://biblehub.com/> in King James.**