

Words of

Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

DECEMBER 2014 – VOL. IV, NO. 12
CHURCH OF CHRIST—QUAIL VALLEY

The End

The year 2014 is over but many lessons are still available and worth thinking about.

How we track time Tracking time by “years” is not a modern invention. Nor is it merely the result of human observation of the earth’s journey around the sun. In Genesis 1:14, we learn that on the fourth day of creation God declared that the heavenly lights are *for days and years*. What God told man before He revealed the book of Genesis to Moses we do not know. What we do know is that neither ancient, nor modern scientists invented “the year.” It was God’s idea first. Hence, *the heavens declare the glory of God* (Ps. 19:1). Remember that at the end of this year.

Your life on earth will end As the memories of this past year cause you to weep or smile, be sure to also think of the future. You will die, your body *will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it, and God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether it is good or whether it is evil.* (Eccl. 12:7, 14) Considering these facts should humble and motivate you to diligently seek and serve God. May we help you do that?

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Unfamiliar Bible Words: Fornication

One reason people give for not reading the Bible is that they do not understand it. Some words in the Bible are not commonly used by the average American, like *fornication*. God often warns of it in the Bible, but when did you last hear it used negatively in a movie, song, or news report? (Mk. 7:21; 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19)? Was it present in recent, alleged “Bible-based” productions such as *Son of God* or *Noah*?

The sexual relationship is a gift from God to mankind. For our benefit, He teaches us to only “unwrap this gift” after He has joined us to the opposite gender in marriage (Heb. 13:4). When this gift is shared by people not married to each other, they commit the sin of *fornication*. This is sin against God because we abuse the gift He gave and against man because we involve another in this sin (Gen. 39:9; 1 Cor. 6:13-18).

Why is *fornication* an unfamiliar word today? In the 1960s many present-day grandparents rejected this word and later allowed their children to be entertained by shows and music which presented fornication as normal. Many “ministers” do not believe it is sin. Why is homosexuality so controversial? Because many have grown up unfamiliar with Bible words, like *fornication*.

“By What Authority Are You Doing These Things?”

This question, once asked of Jesus, is a useful question today

Jesus was asked this question by the priests and elders as He taught in the Temple. Though asked with sinful motives, Jesus approved of the question itself and was willing to answer it if the “askers” were willing to answer the same question concerning John’s baptism—whether it was from God or man. Jesus knew that the priests and elders rejected John and his baptism, so His question exposed their hypocrisy in front of all the people at the Temple (was this loving preaching? Yes!). When they refused to answer His question, He refused to answer theirs because the point had been made. Plenty of evidence had been given to prove that John and Jesus were sent by the Father (Matt. 3:16-17). The priests and elders were not interested in evidence and truth from God but in their traditions and teachings (Matt. 15:1-9).

Today, we all need to think about the question, “By what authority are you doing ___---by the authority of heaven or of men?” People who think they don’t need God’s authority or only assume they are following His authority are lost in sin (1 Thess. 1:8; Matt. 7:21-23). Avoid this, walking in God’s love, commands, and authority (1 Jn. 5:3; Rom. 13:1).

*Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
Matthew 16:16 (NKJV)*

You are invited to:
Sunday AM Bible classes:
10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship:
10:45AM
Sunday PM Worship:
5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes
& Worship: **7:00 PM**

Christmas: By What Authority?

In the previous article, we challenged you to ask yourself the general question, “By what authority are you doing ___---by the authority of God or man?” Apply that question to Christmas.

Christmas is “traditionally” a holy day of the church, in memory of Jesus’ birth, but who first had the idea of making Christmas a holy day of the church? Christ is the head of the church (and knows the importance of His birth!), but He did not assign any annual holy day to His church, only the first day of the week (*the Lord’s Day* Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7). Even Peter and Paul never heard of or wrote about a Christmas service. Why not, if it is a holy day of the church?

Be sure you understand---yes, we rejoice in the fact of Jesus’ miraculous birth, but God gave no annual holy day in memory of it. Do you notice that Christmas is often elevated above the Lord’s Day? No man-made holy day deserves more (or even equal) honor than the Lord’s Day! This is why we ask you and your church, “By what authority do you celebrate Christmas as a holy day of the church—by man’s or God’s”? We are interested in your comments, questions, or even your answer to this question.

Questions from this issue’s articles:

1. Who originally had the idea of tracking time by days and years?
2. When does God consider two people guilty of fornication?
3. How did Jesus show that the question He was asked was a valid question?
4. Which day is found in Scripture as a day for all Christians: The first day of the week or Christmas?

* Mail your answers to the church of Christ in Quail Valley 4104 E. Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501
OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**

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