

Words of

Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

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First Things First: Understand God’s Word

This series of articles about “First Things” illustrates a basic fact—YOU can understand what God has said.

Adam and Eve understood God when He told them to be fruitful, rule the animals, eat of most trees, and avoid eating from one tree (Genesis 1-2). Israel understood the law which they often rebelled against (Exodus 19). When Jesus spoke, did people understand? Yes, and that is the reason many people wanted Him dead, while a few followed Him!

You might be surprised to know how many churches do not believe this. A Catholic Cardinal wrote, “Is the Bible a book intelligible to all? Far from it...”

(The Faith of our Fathers www.cathcorn.org/foof/8.html). Many Protestant, especially *Reformed*, churches say you cannot understand the Bible until your mind is miraculously changed--making a simple matter seem complex. God *desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth* (1 Timothy 2:4). Humble yourself before the Creator, learn “first things first,” and accept and obey what you learn. Herein, you understand the fear, will, and words of the Lord (Prov. 1:7; Eph. 5:17; 3:3-4). Send us your comments or questions on this or any Bible topic.

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First Things First: Marriage

Imagine a baseball team claiming many championships who later admitted that they had thirteen players in the field. “First things” matter in all of life—in marriage too! Jesus used Adam and Eve to show the first things of marriage--*He...made them male and female...what God has joined together, let not man separate* (Matt.19:4-6).

God joins man and woman (Matt. 19:4) God has never permitted anything else. Families, governments, or churches who differ write their laws to please man not God.

God joins one man to one woman (Matt. 19:6) Marriage is for “two.” Some people claim “love” cannot be limited by a number and seek “equal marriage rights.” God permitted polygamy before the gospel of Christ came but not since. Last year, the Mormon Church admitted that their founder, Joseph Smith, married dozens of women, even “a number of women who were already married.” www.lds.org/

God restricts divorce to the cause of adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9) Many religious groups and people strongly defend some parts of God’s plan but compromise this part.

If you do not teach your children these things, how will they know what true marriage is? (Ps. 127:1; Eph. 6:4).

First Things First: Sin & Death

Without God you would know nothing about sin or death.

Most complex questions begin to be answered by returning to first principles. There are few events in life that raise more questions than death. Understanding death begins with sin.

Sin is lawlessness (1 Jn. 3:4) Any decision, inward or outward, that is outside of God's law is sin. Decisions are not inherited, but by the teachings and traditions of man, people today believe that we inherit Adam's sin. Learn first things: *the son shall not bear the guilt of the father* (Ezek.18:20).

The wages of sin is death God warned Adam and Eve that death is the result of sin (Gen. 2:16-17). The prophet Ezekiel told Israel *The soul who sins shall die* (Ezek. 18:20). The apostle Paul said *The wages of sin is death* (Rom. 6:23). We all deserve this death—separation from God.

No escape from death without God *What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave?* (Ps. 89:48) This is not only true of physical death but once separated from God (because of a lie, sexual sin, etc.) you cannot return to God without His help. No man-made religion nor kind deed can remove sin, but there is hope because God has taught us the “first things” about spiritual life---salvation through Jesus' blood.

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.
Colossians 1:18

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**

First Things First: Worship

The less people know of any activity, the less likely they are to participate, and without knowing the basics, they cannot participate correctly. Fewer people today worship God because they do not know the “first things” of worship.

Worship is God's idea, not man's Man, including the church, did not invent the practice of worship. Learn about the worship of Abel, Cain, Israel, and Christians in Scripture and see that worship begins with God, not man.

God seeks worship in spirit (John 4:23) Worship that is from man's spirit is sincere and thoughtful. The purpose of all true worship can be understood. For example, the purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remember Jesus' death (Lk.22:19). There is no mystery in that. It is a simple memorial.

God expects and seeks worship in truth God expects man to let His word define true worship (Jn. 4:23; 17:17). Truth has not changed since the apostles' preached and neither has true worship. Neither truth nor true worship develops from a Catholic or Protestant tradition. Are you interested in learning more about worship?

Questions from this issue's articles:

1. How do you know you can understand the Bible? Do all religious groups teach you can understand?
2. What are the “first things” concerning marriage? Where do you see those things ignored today?
3. We all know there is no escape from physical death---what about spiritual death?
4. Where did the idea of worship originate among man?

* 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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