

Are My Christian Beliefs Based on Truth or Error?

2 Peter 3:2: (NASB) ...that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and savior spoken by your apostles.



When Jesus was being questioned by Pilate in [John 18:37](#), he told him, *Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.* Pilate's answer was an important question because he asked, *What is truth?* This brief interchange brings us to similar questions. How do we know that we are people of the truth? Do the groups we follow - be they centuries-old denominations or newer Christian sects - hold to the truth Jesus was speaking about? How much of what we are being taught is based on biblical truth, how much is based on denominational tradition and

how much is just plain opinion? And to pile it on further, at the end of the day, does any of this even matter?

Is there a difference between the Bible and traditional Christian beliefs? How much of our personal belief system is based on the Bible or tradition?

We found two quotes on a blog called *Fraternized*, by Ted Bobosh, a retired priest of the Orthodox Church in America.

Let's look at these two quotes with a scripture in between to set a context for a particular denominational view of scriptures and tradition.

This first quote is from an Eastern Orthodox monk in the early 1900s:

"The Scriptures are not more profound, nor more important than Holy Tradition but...they are one of its forms - the most precious form, both because they are preserved and convenient to make use of. But removed from the stream of Sacred Tradition, the Scriptures cannot be rightly understood through any scientific research. ...Men are wrong when they set aside Sacred Tradition and go, as they think, to its source - to the Holy Scriptures. The Church has her origins, not in the Scriptures but in Sacred Tradition. The Church did not possess the New Testament during the first decades of her history. She lived them by Tradition only - the Tradition St. Paul calls upon the faithful to hold." - St. Silouan the Athonite, by Archimandrite Sophrony, page 88



This is a specific denominational thought from a huge Christian denomination: *The Scriptures are not more profound nor important than holy tradition.* We beg to differ on every level conceivable! Where it says *men are wrong when they set aside sacred tradition and go, as they think, to its source*, we will see the Scriptures debunk this thinking on their own. This is a dangerous mindset, and we will share what we believe to be the scriptural proof.

Do the Scriptures tell us to be forward thinking beyond what was written through the time of Christ?

2 Timothy 3:13-17: (NASB) ¹³*But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.* ¹⁴*You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them,* ¹⁵*and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation*



through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

In Paul's farewell address, he is writing to Timothy. He knows his life is coming to an end and is encouraging Timothy to stay strong in the most important things. It is interesting that he says, *all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching*. Paul is cautioning Timothy and reminding him that Christian truth is only from God's own power. That word for *inspired* essentially means all Scripture is "God-breathed." The holy spirit is the unseen influence and power of God.

Inspired \Rightarrow God-breathed

All Scripture comes directly from God through the individuals who were privileged to write it. This is an important understanding as a basis for who we are and what we believe.

We do not believe we have the authority to add to the Scriptures by using traditions and teachings of men.

Some may say Paul was just focusing on the Old Testament and, therefore, they might have the idea that the New Testament had to be built on tradition. We will address this shortly.

The second quote we found was by John Behr in a book called, *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West*:

"Scripture cannot, in fact, stand alone as a source of authority, for it is always the Scripture of a particular community and always needs interpretation—the inspiration of Scripture cannot be separated from the inspired use of Scripture within the Church." - John Behr in *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West*, by Andrew Louth, page 163

The idea that Scripture cannot stand alone is wrong. The Apostle Paul told us Scripture is God-breathed! Orthodoxy is telling us something different.

ORTHODOXY VIEW:

Scripture is a
PIECE OF TRADITION.

Tradition is built on
INTERPRETATION of Scripture.



TWO EXAMPLES:

Tithing and gifts in the churches
are traditions built upon an
interpretation of Scripture.

The "mass" is another tradition built
upon an interpretation of Scripture.

Are we looking at the Scriptures interpreting them in a traditional sense based on where we are and who we are - or are the Scriptures absolutely the final word of God?



Peter expands on what Paul said by opening up how the gospel itself would be able to be taught and learned in accordance with the same level of sacredness:

2 Peter 3:1-2: (NASB) *¹This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ²that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your **apostles** <652>.*

Apostles: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #652; *apostolos*; a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ ["apostle"] (with miraculous powers)

King James Version translates this word as "apostle," "messenger," "he that is sent"

Apostles: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders. 1a) specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ
1b) in a broader sense applied to other eminent Christian teachers

There were only 12 Apostles - foundations for the true church. However, the word *apostle* means a delegate or messenger, and there are several examples of those called "apostles" outside of the twelve: Barnabas in Acts 14:14, Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25 and James, the Lord's brother in Galatians 1:19. James wrote the book of James and was a leader at the conference in Jerusalem. He grew up with Jesus and was a very strong influence in the early church. This word, *apostle*, is used to describe several individuals outside of the 12 Apostles who were begotten by God's holy spirit, had a very specific mission and authority and were sent along with and by the actual 12 Apostles.

There are 24 "apostles" listed in the New Testament:

1. Simon Peter (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
2. Andrew, Peter's brother (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
3. James, son of Zebedee (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
4. John, James' brother (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
5. Philip (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:14)
6. Bartholomew, Philip's brother (also known as Nathanael) (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:14)
7. James, son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:15)
8. Thaddaeus, James' brother (also called Judas and Lebbaeus) (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:16)
9. Matthew, son of Alphaeus, perhaps brother of James and Judas (Mark 2:14; Luke 6:15)
10. Thomas (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:15)
11. Simon the Zealot (also called Simon the Canaanite) (Matthew 10:4, Luke 6:15)
12. Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10:4, Luke 6:16)
13. Matthias (Acts 1:26)
14. Barnabas (Acts 13:1,2; Acts 14:4,14)
15. Andronicus (Romans 16:7)
16. Junia (Romans 16:7)
17. Apollos (1 Corinthians chapters 3-4, specifically 4:6-9)
18. James, the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19)
19. Silas (also known as Silvanus) (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:6)
20. Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:6)
21. Titus (2 Corinthians 8:23)
22. Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25)
23. Paul (Galatians 1:1; Galatians 2:8)
24. Jesus Christ (Hebrews 3:1)

All of these are called *apostles*, but they are not what Revelation 21:14 refers to as *the twelve apostles of the Lamb*.



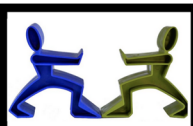
With the understanding of the word ***apostle*** meaning “those sent” with the responsibility of defining the gospel, Peter gets specific about what the sacred text of holy writings would include:

2 Peter 3:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things (a new heavens and a new earth), be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, ¹⁶as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. ¹⁷You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,

Peter agreed with Paul and confirmed that everything Paul wrote was sanctioned by God and called ***Scriptures***. The 12 Apostles who were with Jesus are different than the others who were sent along with them. Jesus’ brother, for example, was a strong influencer in the early church.

There is a call to ALL who read Peter’s words to focus on the truth of the gospel and NOT the interpretations of those who would distort it for gain.

Many Christian denominations challenge Paul’s writings because they do not mesh with their doctrinal teachings. Peter’s statement holds true today. We addressed this in our Contradictions Series.



**Episodes 1111 and 1112 :
Does the Apostle Paul
Contradict Himself? (Parts I and II)
Contradictions Series**

Examining several supposed self-contradicting statements by Paul



**Episode 1114 :
Did the Apostle Paul Contradict
Jesus? Contradictions Series**

Decoding Jesus’ treatment of the Law through the words of Paul

The letters from the apostles were passed around and handed to others. This was not just tradition; these were the words of God conveyed through these men that were put in place for that purpose.

The word of God stands on its own.

Wrestling God’s truth away from the errors of MANY Christian traditions and beliefs is not an easy task.



As Christians, we are bound to the sacred writings of Scripture first and foremost. Any Christian tradition we would be attracted to must be thoroughly tested by the inspired words of truth we have in Scripture.



With the big picture of the importance of Scripture in place, what are some errors to watch out for?



The mere fact that there are thousands of Christian denominations and sects tells us that there is a myriad of errors out there. Our objective today is to isolate a few things to talk about, some of which may be familiar and some of which may come as a surprise. Our bottom line: What does the Bible teach?

What about churches that will perform a “church wedding” that does not include a civil, legally-binding license? Is this appropriate?

I have spoken to individuals who experienced this. They were married in a church, but it was not really a marriage. They had to go and get a legal license elsewhere, and there was a time lapse between those two things. They seem to think it was okay and say, “Well, we were married before God.” That sounds kind of romantic and wonderful, but it is not scriptural. I don't care how it sounds; I don't care how it feels - what do the Scriptures teach us about these things? In fact, it is a gross misrepresentation of how the Scriptures read on marriage.

Interestingly, the Bible does not dwell on the civil aspect of marriage, but it does emphatically support it. Let's begin with the first marriage:

Genesis 2:23-25: (NASB) ²³The man said, *This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.* ²⁴For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.



All the rules and guidelines given to Adam and Eve were civil - they were the “laws of the land” that God had put in place. God proclaimed marriage to be a lifelong, legally binding civil contract, but the Law allowed divorce to be introduced into the picture.

The physical joining of a man and woman is not a marriage without the binding legal contract.

Jesus supports and comments on this very plainly when asked by the Pharisees if you can divorce for any reason:

Matthew 19:4-8: (NASB) ⁴And he answered and said, *Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? ⁶So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let no man separate. ⁷They said to him, why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away? ⁸He said to them, because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.*

Jesus clearly states that marriage is for life!



In Deuteronomy 24, the Law outlined the process for divorce. Divorce was clearly a civil process that canceled a civil contract. Jesus said this was NOT a good thing, because the civil contract of marriage was in fact called “a covenant of God” (see Proverbs 2:13-17 and Malachi 2:13-16). Such a promise, though civil, was invoking God's own presence to seal that promise by the highest power anywhere.



In the Christian age, Matthew 19:9 states, there is only one thing that justifies divorce, and that is if your spouse has sexual relations with someone other than you. This scripture also debunks the idea of churches that say you need their permission to remarry. The point is, Jesus says if you divorce for the proper reason, you are free to remarry.



As Christians, we need to be aware when churches step beyond the authority of Scripture and institute “church authority.” Such steps can assume control in our lives that is not in accordance with true Christian principles.

While this marriage question is not necessarily common, it lays out a principle of deep importance: Christianity is a calling to Christ. However, we are still IN the world (but not OF the world) as we serve this call.

We are instructed to be obedient to the civil laws in accordance with our highest spiritual conscience:

1 Peter 2:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. ¹⁵For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. ¹⁶Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. ¹⁷Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

Peter was basically saying: Be a good citizen and *act as free men*, but do it as *bondslaves of God*. Our freedom has the reins of godliness that guide it. We need to keep within our godliness when we *act as free men*. Our lives should be examples of good citizenship, serving God first and always.

Our reasonable demeanor should extend to all aspects of our lives, no matter our circumstances:

Romans 13:1,2,4-7: (NASB) ¹Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Remember, Paul was writing at a time of strict Roman rule. His point is that we are called within the context of our own experiences.

This means God's providence is providing us with a Christian growth environment, even if we were or are socially or economically disadvantaged.

²Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. ⁴for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. ⁵Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

Whatever circumstance we are called in, we should grow and be the best citizen we can be. We should not be a rebel. We are being developed for eternity.

Christians must always remember to do their part in supporting whatever freedoms we may have by paying our fair share:

⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

We should put ourselves in a position to witness the gospel of Christ - the good news and hope of the kingdom - and see beyond the mess of this world. If our churches are saying we need to stand up and make changes - question this because we do not have scriptural authority to go down that road.



As Christians, our modeling of good citizenship according to our highest spiritual conscience is actually witnessing appropriate Christian behavior for all to see.

Jesus stayed within the guidelines of the Law and did everything for the good of others.

This is a lesson in paying attention to details. Just because a pastor says it does not mean he got it from the Bible.

**What about the way our church systems are organized?
Are they traditional or are they scriptural?**

This is a big point we will only touch briefly upon. There is a very specific organizational system found in the New Testament that is very different from what we see in most churches. Here again we want to be meticulous in absorbing the biblical teaching and then comparing it to what we see.

Did the early church have a hierarchy? Some say yes and take these next verses as positive proof:

Matthew 16:15-18: (NASB) ¹⁵He said to them, but who do you say that I am? ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. ¹⁷And Jesus said to him, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸I also say to you that you are **Peter <4074>**, and upon this **rock <4073>** I will build my church; and the gates of hades will not overpower it.

Peter: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #4074; *Petros*; apparently a primary word; a (piece of) rock; as a name, Petrus, an apostle

This word is always translated *Peter* or *stone* as a description of Peter's name, such as in John 1:42.

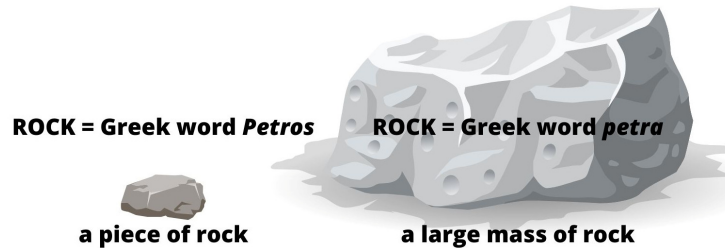


One traditional interpretation of this verse indicates Peter was to be the father of Christian church leadership. This would create a hierarchy with the proclaimed “authority” of Peter at its helm.

...you are Peter (as one of the 12 Apostles, Peter was foundational), and upon this rock - the second word *rock* here is different than the one first used for Peter’s name:

Rock: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #4073; *petra*; a primary word; a (large mass of) rock

New American Standard translates this word as *rock* ten times, *rocks* three times, *rocky* twice



All uses of this second Greek word - *petra* - in the New Testament symbolically refer to Jesus. One example:

1 Corinthians 10:4: (KJV) And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual **rock** <4073> that followed them: and that **rock** <4073> was Christ.



Uncovering what biblical church organization and leadership look like



If there is no hierarchy, then who is to guide the church?

The early church decision process regarding leadership was clear, though it is not well understood in our day.

Paul and Barnabas were on a missionary journey:

Acts 14:21-23: (KJV) ²¹And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, ²²Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. ²³And when they had **ordained** <5500> them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

When we hear the word ordained today, we probably think of being granted power by the authorities. But what does it mean in this verse?

Ordained: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5500 *cheirotoneo*; to be a hand-reacher or voter (by raising the hand), i.e. (generally) to select or appoint



The meaning of the Greek word is to raise a hand to vote. Elders were chosen from within the congregations. There is no reference to bringing in outsiders to lead.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Albert Barnes) The word here refers simply to an election or appointment of the elders. It is said, indeed, that Paul and Barnabas did this. But probably all that is meant by it is, that they presided in the assembly when the choice was made.

Paul and Barnabas would not have personally known those in the congregations, so it makes sense for the leadership to come from within. We get the sense of internal responsibility being built.



John 18:37-38: (NASB) ³⁷Therefore Pilate said to him, So you are a king? Jesus answered, You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice. ³⁸Pilate said to him, What is truth? ...

Jesus did not reply because it was not time to explain, and Pilate was not in a place to really want to know truth. Are we in that place? How do we determine truth? Biblical commentaries are helpful, but it all comes back to Scripture.

This is the only other time this Greek word for *ordain* is used:

2 Corinthians 8:16-19: (NKJV) ¹⁶But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. ¹⁷For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he went to you of his own accord. ¹⁸And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches, ¹⁹and not only that, but who was also **chosen** <5500> by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and to show your ready mind,

Chosen: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5500 *cheirotoneo*; to be a hand-reacher or voter (by raising the hand), i.e. (generally) to select or appoint

The same Greek word *cheirotoneo* previously translated into English as *ordained* is here translated as *chosen*. How would this brother Titus have been chosen by the churches? The congregation would have raised their hands and voted for him. The key was to not exercise personal preferences but to follow the leading of God's spirit, meaning His power and influence.



This subtle point of scriptural evidence shows how the early churches established internal accountability. The congregation had as much accountability as the leadership. Today, many churches appoint leaders through a board of directors, "headquarters" or the "home office" of the denomination. We have lost how the internal affairs for each location was governed from within the congregation. It is not true to say the holy spirit only works within the clergy system and not individuals.

There are three places in the New Testament that give guidelines for the qualifications of church leaders: 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4.

How can we be sure to be ordained scripturally depicts a voting environment and not “ordination” as we might normally think? Compare the following:

Ordain: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5087 *tithemi*; to place

Ordain: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) to set, put, place 1a) to place or lay 1b) to put down, lay down 2) to make 2a) to make (or set) for one's self or for one's use 3) to set, fix establish 3a) to set forth 3b) to establish, ordain

Here are two of the many uses:

Matthew 5:15: (KJV) *Neither do men light a candle, and **put** <5087> it under a bushel...*

Hebrews 1:2: (KJV) *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath **appointed** <5087> heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

Of course, there was no voting needed for the appointment of Jesus. That was God's unilateral decision.

Voting within the church was a group decision, guided by God's spirit. Both history and headlines today show us clergy scandals, corruption and dishonesty within various church organizations. We have seen repercussions over time in straying from biblical guidelines.

Early church eldership was a function of the local church's decision - essentially the vote of those whom the elder would be shepherding, and not the decision of one individual or a “higher” committee.



When it comes to our church leadership, we, as Christians, need to be willing to ask the hard questions. Are we willing to place ourselves in an environment that dictates what should be, instead of an environment that biblically gives us the responsibility to choose?

We should consider putting ourselves in a position of spiritual responsibility when it comes to choosing leaders, following the biblical example.

Looking at these various issues can create serious discomfort. We can either run from it or grow through it.

What about the doctrine of women NOT teaching in the Christian church? Why shouldn't they?

As with every other issue we have covered, we need clear biblical teaching behind our conclusions. One of the things we need to be careful of is the sense that something does not feel right or feel up to date, so we therefore need to change it. Biblical Christianity has things in a very specific order for very specific reasons. The Bible was not written by accident or on a whim - it was God-driven, so we are given the answers even if sometimes we do not like the answers. Are we willing to accept the answers given in the Bible?



- We know that one of the consequences of Eve's sin was to become subject to her husband.
- We know the Jewish Law clearly followed the precedent of what God proclaimed in the Old Testament. When we move into the era of Jesus and Christianity, the question is, would God remove what He had proclaimed from the very beginning? If we have a clear pattern established throughout the Old Testament, would God completely undo that when Jesus comes on the scene?
- We know Jesus had great respect for women, treating them with equal respect as he did men. This is easily provable when we examine exchanges Jesus had with several women.

The Apostle Paul also had great respect for women:

Romans 16:1-2: (NASB) ¹*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; ²that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.*

What a testimony of respect for this sister in Christ! Paul says whatever the church in Rome can do to help this sister out, please do. He is not looking at her in some subservient way; instead, he is pointing out that she is doing God's work and deserves their respect and support.



Treatment of and respect for women in Scripture

However, there are many scriptures (many written by the Apostle Paul) that give women a status subservient to men. This shows us that the consequences for Eve's sin were still intact, even within Christian culture.

Here is one example:

Colossians 3:18-19: (KJV) ¹⁸*Wives, **submit <5293>** yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love (giving without expectation of return) your wives, and be not bitter against them.*

Submit: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5293; *hupotasso*; to subordinate; reflexively, to obey

While the idea of submission by wives to their husbands might make us uncomfortable, when we look at the other side of this text, we see the husband is expected to love his wife with no expectation of getting anything back. This is how Jesus loves us! There is a high amount of responsibility here.



This idea of “being in submission” is not just for the husband/wife relationship:

Ephesians 5:21-27: (ASV) ²¹*subjecting <5293> yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.* ²²*Wives, be in **subjection <5293>** unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*

Both these uses of *subjecting/subjection* are translated from the same Greek word. This means everyone (all Christians) is in submission one to another. This does not negate the wifely submission to her husband. We are not trying to take away from that, but we want to put it into the context of the body of Scripture.

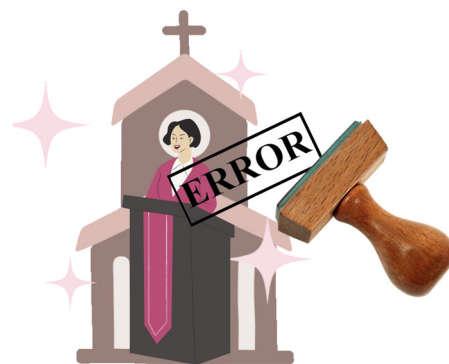
Original sin caused this declaration that the wife is subject to her husband. But there is something much bigger here. If we clearly see this next point, then we will understand why women are not supposed to teach in the church.

Now we are set up for the VERY SPECIFIC reason why we adhere to the standard of women not teaching in the church:

²³*For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body.* ²⁴*But as the church is **subject <5293>** to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.*

Here Paul is showing us that the husband/wife relationship models the relationship between Christ and his bride, the true church.

*As the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be subject - do we like being subject to Christ? Yes! Why? We love being **subject** to him because he died for us, he loves us and helps us to grow spiritually - it is the least we can do! Humility is a vital part of our Christian walk. This idea of “being subject” is important, giving us a picture to live up to.*



²⁵*Husbands, **love <25>** your wives, even as Christ also **loved <25>** the church and gave himself up for it;* ²⁶*that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,* ²⁷*that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Love: Strong's #25 *agapao*; to love (in a social or moral sense)

Should we not follow the model of what the Apostle Paul taught us? We cannot throw the model away just because it is not up to date, not 21st century, not what people want. It is so tempting to say, “That was then, this is now, and we need to get with the times.”

No, we need to get with discipleship! We want to follow everything we are taught to do because ours is a life of self-sacrifice. We should rejoice in following this picture. Our faithful adherence to this picture is showing our total devotion to Christ on both sides of this picture.

Wives are subject to their husbands, but men are to *selflessly* love their wives. Why would we not be obedient to such biblical devotion?



But remember, women worked side by side with men in the witnessing of the gospel. They were right there on the front lines:

Acts 18:24-26: (NASB) ²⁴Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; ²⁶and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

We think because Priscilla is mentioned before her husband, it shows her great value. Her spiritual wisdom, along with Aquila's, helped Apollos understand true baptism. The result was that Apollos became a very strong advocate for Christ. He was an eloquent speaker, very educated and spiritually passionate to deliver the gospel message. How did he get there? He had a sister who with along with her husband helped him understand the gospel. He willingly accepted it from them.

Women are DEEPLY respected and advocated for in New Testament Christianity.

And while we have this admonition:

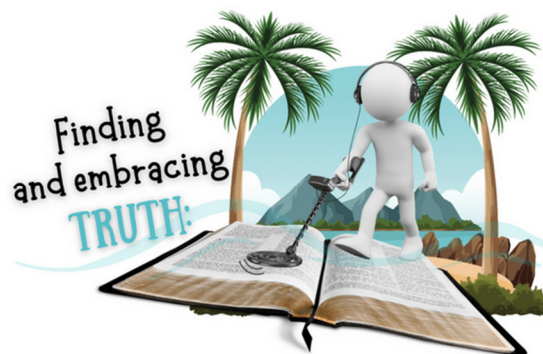
1 Timothy 2:12: (KJV) ¹²But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

We need to honor this consequence of Eve's disobedience because it came from God.

We must also consider:

Galatians 3:28: (KJV) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

We are all looked at the same; we are all one in Christ Jesus. This is true, but there are roles in the structure of the true church which we are called upon to play or not play. Can we go by the one scripture while ignoring the other? Of course not. That would be a big mistake. We do not want to minimize scriptural teaching to make it fit our comfort level. We want to be in truth, not error.



As 21st-century Christians, we are still called upon to uphold the biblical teaching that women should not teach within church meetings as it illustrates the love of Jesus for his church and the church's love and submission to Jesus.

Just because women are not supposed to teach in the church does not mean women are "less than." This is one reason why Bible study is so important - it gives everyone an equal voice to share or participate in spiritual lessons. Also, testimony meetings help us to understand each other so we can be blessed by our collective experiences in Christ.



Both men and women are to participate in the election process of church leaders. There is a real camaraderie in this participation.



Most of the more than 50 volunteers working for Christian Questions are sisters in Christ. They dive into the work of God, pouring themselves out because they are contributing to the expansion of the gospel, contributing to the witness work, the encouraging message of the coming kingdom. We all work together. Not one of us is more important than another. Praise God for that!

As individual Christians, we need to focus on the sacredness of scriptural teaching as our highest and purest guide.

This focus is a proof of our discipleship:

2 Timothy 2:14-15: (NASB) *¹⁴Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

We are to *be diligent to present ourselves approved* - not by what our pastor tells us - by our work and effort to understand the word of God and to live by it the best we can. We do not have to be ashamed before Christ because we are accurately handling God's word.

We must find our Christianity in the truth of Scripture, not in tradition. Do not follow whatever seems to be convenient, but stand for those things that are most important and God-honoring.

*So, are my Christian beliefs based on truth or error?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on October 18, 2021
Ep. 1200: Could an Addiction Block
My Christian Growth?

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.

Study Questions follow

Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1199: Are My Christian Beliefs Based on Truth or Error?

<https://christianquestions.com/program/1199-tradition-truth-error/>

See:  **CQ Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. Which is more important, Christian tradition or the Scriptures? From where does Christian tradition come? From where do the Scriptures come? (See 2 Timothy 3:13-17)
2. Who was given the authority to reveal the gospel message? Were the apostles' writings tradition or "God-breathed" (directly inspired)? (See 2 Peter 3:1-2, 14-17)
3. What does the Bible teach about marriage and divorce? Why did Moses allow for divorce? (See Genesis 2:23-25, Deuteronomy 24, Matthew 19:4-8)
4. What does the Bible say about how should Christians behave themselves as citizens? (See Romans 13:1, 2, 4-7, 1 Peter 2:13-17)
5. According to the Bible, how should church systems be organized? Who should choose our church leaders? Who has accountability? Does the holy spirit only work within the clergy system? (See Matthew 16:15-18, Acts 14:21-23, 1 Corinthians 10:4, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4)
6. How is the word "ordained" (both Strong's #5500 and 5087) used in the Bible? What else can it mean? (See Matthew 5:15, Acts 14:21-23, 2 Corinthians 8:16-19, Hebrews 1:2)
7. What does the Bible tell us about women teaching during church meetings? Did Jesus see women as inferior to men? Did the Apostle Paul? Why does the subservience of women continue down through world history? (See Ephesians 5:21-27, Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Timothy 2:12)
8. What roles did women play in the early church? What role should women play in the church now? What are ways women participate in the church? Explain the beautiful picture in Ephesians 5:23-27? (See Acts 18:24-26, Romans 16:1-2, Galatians 3:28)
9. What should our Christian focus be on as our guide? (See 2 Timothy 2:14-15)
10. Do you follow a scriptural set of beliefs or Christian traditions? Why?