

Welcome Visitors,

First, THANK YOU! We are excited to know that you are interested in worshipping God. We want you to feel very welcomed here among our group. Our goal is doing God's will. You will find that our teaching and preaching are strictly from the Bible so we encourage you to open a Bible and follow along as the lessons are presented today.

God's word is the complete guide for our life of service and worship. The all-sufficient word of God—the Bible is what we need (John 8:31-32; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). We desire to help one another in doing God's will. If you are interested in learning more please ask one of our members today.

Main Street Church of Christ Newbern, Tennessee

Schedule Of Services:

Lord's Day:	9:45 a.m.	Bible Study (All ages)
	10:20 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6:00 p.m.	Evening Worship
Wednesday:	7:00 p.m.	Bible Study

Our Elders:

Johnie Dodds
Harry Elliott
Austin Willis

Our Deacons:

Danny Carpenter
Wayne Hulme
Tommy Sawyers

Our Preacher: T. Sean Sullivan

The Gospel Plan

HEAR THE GOSPEL MESSAGE Romans 10:11-16

BELIEVE IT !!! Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6

REPENT—CHANGE Luke 13:3; 2 Peter 3:9

OPENLY CONFESS—JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

Romans 10:8-10; Acts 8:37

BE BAPTIZED—FOR REMISSION OF YOUR SINS

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Peter 3:21

LIVE ON FAITHFULLY Hebrews 10:35-39 I Peter 1:6-9

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The Main Street Church of Christ

Messenger

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

Not Standards of Truthfulness

Introduction:

Truth should be placed on the endangered list. There are fewer and fewer people every day who consider truth to be absolute. Many seek "situational truth" or "flexible truth" today.

Over time our culture has adopted a sentimental view of truth. We have drifted from things being "right" or "wrong". We have a desire to see right or wrong being dependant on the "who" or "what" and mostly on the "why". In this emotional slide away from absolute, as a culture we have departed from truth's true essence—we have left truth behind.

The greatest danger in this cultural shift is that you and I are living in this culture

The toxins of the world will come into the minds of the church and soon will rob us of God's will, which is absolute, and replace it with situational emotion-based decisions. To guard against these dangerous ways let's expose three things that have begun to creep in as standards—that are not truth. Let's open our Bible text to consider these thoughts.

Faithfulness Does Not Determine Truthfulness

This is one of the most popular emotional points of reasoning that we encounter

Some admire how determined and faithful "religious people" are and just know God will save them. This view also enters into statements like: "I was born in this belief; I will die in this belief" or "I

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won't change even if the Bible says something different", and even, "Go to the church of your choice". These ideas circulate with no scriptural validation. Faithfulness without truth is not sufficient for salvation.

On the day of Pentecost, in devotion to their faith, men from every nation had gathered in Jerusalem—their faithfulness was not sufficient; they were told to change. Later in Paul's letter to the Romans the Jews were rebuked for their "*zeal without knowledge*" (Romans 10:1-3).

Think about the specific example of Paul. He was zealously faithful to his belief (Philippians 3:5-6). If faithfulness were a marker of truthfulness, it would be rare to find a more truthful man than Paul. Paul however was not acceptable in his faithfulness—he had to obey the gospel (Acts 26:12-18).

Tradition Does Not Determine Truthfulness:

It is a common to hear things justified by the words "we have always" or things denied by the words "we have never". We must be careful to not expect from others what we ourselves would not do. We expect others to leave their traditions and come to the obedience of truth (Mark 16:15-16). What do we demonstrate by not questioning our own traditions, by the truth?

The Bereans search daily to verify truth; so should we (Acts 17:11). We are all told to "*test all things, hold fast to what is good*" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We must seek God's approval by rightly dividing the word (2 Timothy 2:15).

It has been said, "If it's right we will do it. If it's wrong we will stop." Has that declaration become unfit? There are two ways that the scriptures look at "traditions": Those things proven steadfast (2 Timothy 2:15) are to never change. Traditions handed down from the apostles that we must maintain (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Then there are the things of men's devising (Mark 7:7-9)—the inappropriate traditions wherein we declare ourselves unteachable, refusing to change, regardless of what anyone says—even God. In these traditions the adherents refuse to search the scriptures for validation (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and refuse to accurately know what God approves (Ephesians 5:8-10). These who refuse to be taught—acting like the first century Jews described in Acts 28:27.

Opinion Does Not Determine Truthfulness:

Opinion plays a limited role in religion. This may not seem to be the case in today's world—but this fact comes from the greater reality

called truth. There is a place for opinion, only when God has approved, but not specified. Example: God approves only the Lord's Day the first day of the week for our specific worship practices; He has not specified which time during the Lord's Day we should gather (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). It is the opinion of this congregation to gather at a specific time for a Bible study session and then specific time for worship. We have also in our opinion deemed it necessary to offer the opportunity again at a specific time in Sunday evening. This is an area where we are called upon to have an opinion, however, our opinion does not determine the truth for any other congregations—our brethren can meet whenever it is most appropriate for them during the Lord's Day and they are just as right as we are.

Another example is the gathering place for worship. God approves of gathering, but has not specified the type of place. By our opinion we own a building to secure a place for gathering, this is what is best for us and we are right in doing so. If others borrow, or rent a facility they are also right.

The danger is when we allow our opinion to determine the truth for everyone. We must remember that opinions are only allowed in areas of liberty. Which means that if you are allowed to have an opinion, so is everyone else—all opinions are equally right. We must not curtail anyone else's liberty by enforcing our opinion (1 Corinthians 10:29). We must also love enough to not offend anyone conscience by expressing our liberty against their own decision (Romans 14:15).

Conclusion:

When we begin to believe that we are the standard of truth we are treading the wrong path. When we believe that our faithfulness will cause God to overlook error—we are wrong. When we see our traditions as more important than truth—we are wrong. When everyone whose opinion differs from our own is in our eyes in error—we are wrong.

God has set the standard of truth and we can know it (John 8:31-32). We need to grow toward: Being faithful to God's will—not just some religion we favor. We need to be students of the truth—not willing to be unteachable. We need to be careful with opinions—not enforcing them on anyone else.

There is a great message of truth that we need to understand today. The truth about a soul's salvation—the opportunity to obey in truth is yours. ~tss
