

Jesus the Word

John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Jesus the Christ. John taught repentance (turning) from sin (evil deeds) and beginning right living. He said that One would come after him that would baptise with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Upon evidence of fruits of repentance, he baptised the people who had changed their ways. The problem is we are mortal and we all fail. Also, exactly what standard are we to live up to? Everyone has a different opinion. Johns' baptism was one of repentance unto righteousness.

When Jesus came to John to be baptised, John recognized that Jesus had no sin and therefore did not need to be baptised. He therefore refused. Jesus told John that he must baptise Him to fulfill all righteousness. You see, if we do right living we will always come up short. Jesus plan was to take the responsibility for that right living on Himself. (Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*) He would be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and our redemption; just as He would be our armour. (1 Corinthians 1:30-31 *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*) When we are baptised into Jesus Christ we receive all that. After Jesus death and resurrection He became the only way to enter Heaven.

The message of Johns' baptism of repentance had reached the synagogues of Alexandria , Egypt. Acts 6:9 references Alexandrians coming and disputing with Stephen. When they could not resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spoke, they found some people to falsely accuse him, and had him stoned. Acts 18:24 tells of Apollos from Alexandria, a man mighty in the scriptures, but only knowing of Johns' baptism. When Paul found out that the people were only being baptised with Johns' baptism he had everyone re-baptised into Jesus Christ.

Acts 11 says that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew/Aramaic and the New Testament was written in the language of the day, Greek. We basically have two sets of texts of the New Testament: the majority text, a Byzantine text type found around Antioch; and the critical text, Alexandrian text prevalent around Alexandria, Egypt. The 'majority text' is thus named because of the over 5000 manuscripts that agree with each other. Some of the oldest surviving manuscripts were found within 80 miles of Alexandria, Egypt. These manuscript were different in that they emphasized the message of Johns' baptism. They were very much in keeping with Apollos teaching. In the process of creating this emphasis, it allows for many contradictions within the context of the Holy Scriptures. There are about 45 manuscripts; very few agreeing with each other, therefore the 'critical text'.

An effort was made in 1966, through Vatican II, to bring about a 'common bible work' for all faiths between the Roman Catholic Church and the Bible Societies. The 1987 "*Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible*", *affirming the spirit and following the principles set forth in the historic agreement first published in 1968*' reiterates and clarifies the criteria for all future translations of the Holy Scriptures. (A copy can be found on the Vatican website.) It is stated that all future works should use the 'Critical text' as a base. The 'Byzantine text' when required may appear in the footnotes with appropriate markers to the text.

Within both texts the truth of the gospel can be found. The dilemma comes when reading only the 'Critical text', as contradictions are noticed, confusion exists as to what is right and whether the Scripture is actually inspired. An example is:

Fine Linen

Our Right Living Vs. Jesus Christ (the cause of our justification)

Translation: KJV 'Hebrew/Aramaic '

Isaiah 64:6

⁶But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Translation: KJV 'Byzantine text'

Revelation 19:8

⁸And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Translation: KJV 'Byzantine text'

1 Corinthians 1:30

³⁰But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Translation: ESV 'Hebrew/Aramaic '

Isaiah 64:6

⁶ We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Translation: ESV 'Critical text'

Revelation 19:8

⁸ it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure"—
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

Translation: ESV 'Critical text'

1 Corinthians 1:30

³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 that Jesus will not return until there come a falling away first. The Lord God says in Amos 8:11 that in the last days He will send a famine in the land, not for food and water, but for hearing the word of the Lord. As the Holy Scriptures are revised they are now no longer seen as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice because the contradictions between the different translations are becoming overwhelming.

Jesus in Matthew 24 says that in the last days many will come in His name claiming new revelations of who Christ is and deceive many. His disciples will even be killed. He goes on to say that the deception will be so strong that unless those days are shortened even the very elect could be deceived and no man should be saved. Jesus is not talking about being saved from physical death but from spiritual because he already has said some will be killed. Jesus has said that the love of many will wax cold. They will no longer think that His return is imminent. Jesus warns us to watch and be ever expectant.

In Revelation 2 and 3 Jesus speaks to the seven churches. Each individual disciple can be represented by one or more of these churches. Note that each one of the churches were known, which means they had accepted Jesus as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. But for some reason five of those churches had walked away from that truth in some way and were warned that unless they repented their candlestick would be removed. What deception could be so strong that they would change directions and still think they were on track.

Many people believe that once they have accepted the simplicity of Christ that God will not let them go astray and that He will correct them before they die. In John 10 we find that Jesus says that no one will be able to pluck them out of his hand but in Matthew 24 he says that many will be deceived. To be deceived you first have to have believed something. Jesus warns his disciples not to fall for the deception. Some people also feel that God will not allow their leaders to teach false doctrine, yet the Lord in Jeremiah 50 warns that it will be the shepherds who lead the people astray and take them from the simplicity of Christ. Jesus goes on to say that unless those days are shortened, no flesh should be saved.

In Acts 17 Paul commends the people from Berea for not just accepting what he preached, but for going home and searching the scriptures to see if it was true. In many of his letters he warns of people preaching another gospel, which he says is not even a gospel at all. It is no wonder that we have two different texts.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:15 that we are to *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

What is Truth