

An Answer To An “Unanswerable” Question

Some time ago David Martin, minister at the Solid Rock Baptist Church in Bartlett, TN, authored an article entitled “Common Sense Questions A ‘Church Of Christ’ Preacher Cannot Clearly Answer.” This article contains 13 questions that address subjects such as the necessity of baptism and instrumental music. Through much study and reading on these subjects I have formulated answers that cite “book, chapter, and verse” references showing what the Bible teaches regarding these questions. This article addresses Mr. Martin’s first question.

It is my prayer that anyone who reads this article will study the verses cited with an open mind to truly learn what God’s Word teaches. Obedience to God’s Word, nothing more and nothing less, is what will get us to Heaven. We all want to go, but we have to remember that those who reach Heaven will do so on God’s terms, not man’s.

QUESTION

According to the history of the "Church of Christ," God used certain men to "restore" the New Testament Church in the early 1800's. Where was the true New Testament church before then? Jesus said that the gates of hell would not prevail against His church (Matthew 16:18). What happened to the church and where was the truth it was responsible for preaching before God restored it?

BOOK CHAPTER AND VERSE ANSWER

This question indicates a couple of false assumptions by its writer. There is an assumption that the Lord’s church teaches that the “restorationists” were inspired of God as the apostles were. This is simply not true. We see from I Cor 13:8 that the spiritual gifts were to cease and have since ceased. Those who were involved in the restoration movement were not inspired of God.

1Co 13:8

(8) Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

The writer of this question also assumes that the Lord’s church was not in existence prior to the restoration movement. The assumption is that at some point the entire church fell away and ceased to exist and then it was then brought back into existence by the reformers. This assumption is also false. The Lord’s church has existed continuously from the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) until the present. It will continue to exist throughout eternity.

Dan 2:44

(44) And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Mat 16:18

(18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Luk 1:30-33

(30) And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

(31) And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

(32) He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

(33) And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

The church that Christ established has continued to exist, but man has chosen to ignore it. In the 1700's – 1800's there were men who recognized that the Catholic church was not the church that Christ established. They set out to return that church to the truth. We know they failed. Martin Luther was the "founder" of the Lutheran church, for example.

Whenever man turns from God, he is in need of restoration. There are many in our community who are in need of restoration, but the church exists in our community. When those who recognized error in the Catholic church tried to correct that error, the world labeled their efforts "The Restoration".

We must realize that a person begins to be in need of restoration when he or she reaches the age of accountability. That restoration begins with someone teaching them the true Gospel (Rom 10:17)

Rom 10:17

(17) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

It continues then with their belief (John 3:36)

Joh 3:36

(36) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Their repentance (Luke 13:3)

Luk 13:3

(3) I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Their public confession of their belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Rom 10:9-10)

Rom 10:9-10

(9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

(10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Their baptism into Christ (Acts 2:38)

Act 2:38

(38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

At the point of obedience man is restored to fellowship with God. He then must live faithfully in order to remain in fellowship with God (I John 1:5-7)

1Jo 1:5-7

(5) This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

(6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

(7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If man does not remain faithful, he is again in need of restoration. (Acts 8:22-24)

Act 8:22-24

(22) Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

(23) For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

(24) Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

Donnie Autry