

June 14, 2020

# **Viewpoint** from the **Valley Grove Church Of Christ**

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## **Pillar And Ground Of Truth**

By David J. Riggs

Catholics sometimes quote I Timothy 3:15 which states, “. . . The church of the living God, the pillar and mainstay of the truth” to prove that the church is invested with authority to legislate in divine matters. (See Father Smith Instructs Jackson, p. 35; The Question Box, p. 96).

The phrase “pillar and ground of the truth” does not mean that the church is the originator of truth or that it can make or change the laws of God, It simply means that it is the upholder, defender and proclaimer of the truth. The apostles often praised churches for proclaiming the truth, “for from you the word of the Lord has been spread abroad” (I Thess. 1:8). They commended them for defending the truth, “partakers with me . . . in the defense and confirmation of the gospel” (Phil. 1:7). However, there is not a single verse in all of the Holy Scriptures which indicates that the church has the authority to originate truth or to decree laws for God.

The apostles and prophets (and they alone) were commissioned by the Lord, not to originate truth but to reveal the truth. “For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens” (Psalm 119:98 Catholic Edition RSV). Their task was once and for all completed for they gave us the written New Testament of Christ.

The responsibility of the church today is simply to follow, defend and proclaim the truth which they revealed. The Catechism for Adults, page 54 says, “The Catholic Church alone has the authority to rule and to teach.” However, the authority is not in the body, but in the Head (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18). The ruling is not in the kingdom, but in the King (Heb. 7:1 2; Rev. 1:5 6). The authority is not in the church, but in Christ (Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22). The church is not the Savior, but simply the body of the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:22-24).

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***Visitors — We pray that you benefit spiritually from our  
worship together and hope to see you again.***

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# The Procrastinating Servant

By Jack Williams

**14 years old** — “I’ve just become a Christian, I don’t know enough and I’m still too young to be involved in the work of the church.”

**16 years old** — “I’ve just got my driver’s license. I have to work to take care of my driving expenses. And of course this is the time in my life when I am very busy with friends, and you wouldn’t believe all the school activities I have! I’ll get involved a little later.”

**18 years old** — “I just graduated from high school! Now I need a little time for myself before I enter the ‘real world.’ I’ll have more time for the work of the church later.”

**20 years old** — “I never knew college took so much time! When I get out and on my own I’ll have time for church work then.”

**22 years old** — “Boy, did you have any idea how hard it was to get started in the work place? It takes all my energy to get my career on line. And on top of that I just got married. . . I have to spend time to mold my new family life, too. In a couple of years I’ll be ready to really dig into the work of the church.”

**24 years old** — “Children! I never believed my parents when they told me how much time and money it took to raise them. I sure don’t have time for the work of the church now . . . but when my kids get older I’ll be able to do my share of the work then.”

**36 years old** — “It seems the older the kids get the more they are involved in! Home from work, then to the school functions, then sports . . . I’ll be glad when the kids get older so I can really be involved in the work of the church.”

**46 years old** — “I’ve never had so much fun! Grandchildren! I should have had them first (Ha!). I can’t deprive them . . . when they get older I’ll be able to really be involved in the church.”

**56 years old** — “I’m on my last push at work now. I’ve got to really bear down for a few years now so I can be ready for retirement. And of course we have our place at the lake we’re fixing up. In a few years I’ll be able to quit the ‘rat race’ and really get involved in the church.”

**66 years old** — “Retirement at last! I’ve worked hard so many years and now I can enjoy the fruit of my efforts. It’s time now for the young ones here at church to carry on and let us ‘veterans’ rest a little.”

Instead of such a person as described above, isn’t it great to see people who can use their abilities in God’s service NOW? Which are YOU?

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## Some Thoughts About Offering . . .

### Criticism

By William Barclay

**R**evelation 2:19 *“I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.”*

There is something very interesting about this verse. The letter to the church at Thyatira is to be a letter of warning and of criticism, and yet it begins with a verse of undiluted praise. Here is something which every preacher and teacher, indeed every Christian, must learn. Real criticism must always *encourage* and never *discourage*. When we have reason to rebuke or to criticize anyone, we must make it clear that we are doing so, not because we *dislike* him, but because we *like* him; not because we *hate* him, but because *love* him; not because we think that he is *useless*, but because we think that he has it in him to be *useful*; not because we wish to *hurt* him, but because we wish to *help* him. That is why criticism will often be most effective when it begins with praise. It is wise to point out that which is good before we begin to seek to eradicate that which is evil.

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## Is God Pleased With Just Any Religion?

By Erin Percell

**O**ften we hear people told to “attend the church of your choice.” Or we hear that churches are changing to “meet the needs” of the community, or to make their worship “more relevant to modern man” in order to attract people who might be dissatisfied or bored with traditional forms of worship. In practice, churches often try to make worship more “relevant” by adding things that the worshippers will find entertaining. But what is often lost in these efforts is a simple question: whom is the church supposed to please?

In Galatians 1:10, Paul asked, *“Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”* Paul knew that trying to please people instead of God always leads to apostasy. Too often, religious practice is determined by asking, “What do people want?” rather than, “What did God say?” But being a child of God comes from following *“not the will of man, but of God”* (Jn. 1:12-13). The point of worship is to please God, not to entertain the audience.

*(Continued on page 4)*

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In Exodus 32, Moses was receiving the Law on Mount Sinai, and the people grew impatient. They demanded that Aaron allow them to worship in their own way. He agreed and proclaimed “*a feast to the Lord*” (32:5). When Moses came down, he found the people dancing and making merry and worshipping. Their worship was a feast to the Lord that was contemporary, relevant, entertaining, and suited to their desire, but God was prepared to destroy them for it. God told them (Deut. 12:29-32) not to be attracted to the worship they saw practiced by the pagans. He told them, “*You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way . . . Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.*” It is not enough simply to direct worship to God — our worship to Him must follow His instruction.

In Matthew 15:1-9, Jesus found people who had made their own rules. They were attempting to worship God, but He rejected them because they taught practices that suited themselves. He said, “*in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*” When deciding how to worship God, do not ask whether something pleases you. Instead, ask whether God has said that it pleases Him. If He has not, then such worship is vain.

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### June Birthdays:

The 13th Ethan Collins  
The 18th Mary Randolph  
The 18th Joann Malone

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### Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.  
Worship . . . . . 10:30 A.M.  
Worship . . . . . 5:00 P.M.

### Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

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