

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
7:00 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofchrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—33
Wednesday—14
Contribution—\$

For meditation:
Proverbs 31.23–24
What effect will a
godly wife have
on her husband's
position, character,
and influence?
What sort of businesses
can a woman do from home
that helps the family
finances?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Four tests of personal faith, 1

The expressions “justified by faith” (Rom. 5.1) and “justified by works” (Jas. 2.24) are both found in the NT. Appearances to the contrary, justification (being acquitted, pronounced righteous) by faith and by works are complementary, not contradictory.

Justification by faith primarily refers the change of our spiritual *state* when we believe in Christ and are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28.19, Mk. 16.16). This stage of discipleship is analogous to a wedding ceremony in which a man and woman's state is changed from “single” to “married.” To have our spiritual status changed from death (Eph. 2.1) to life (Eph. 2.5), faith is how we extend our hand to God to accept the gift of forgiveness He offers. And our hand is empty; no quid pro quo is involved in the change of our spiritual status; we are not giving something in order to get something. Justification, says Paul, is free (Rom. 3.24). *Nothing in my hand I bring / simply to Thy cross I cling.*

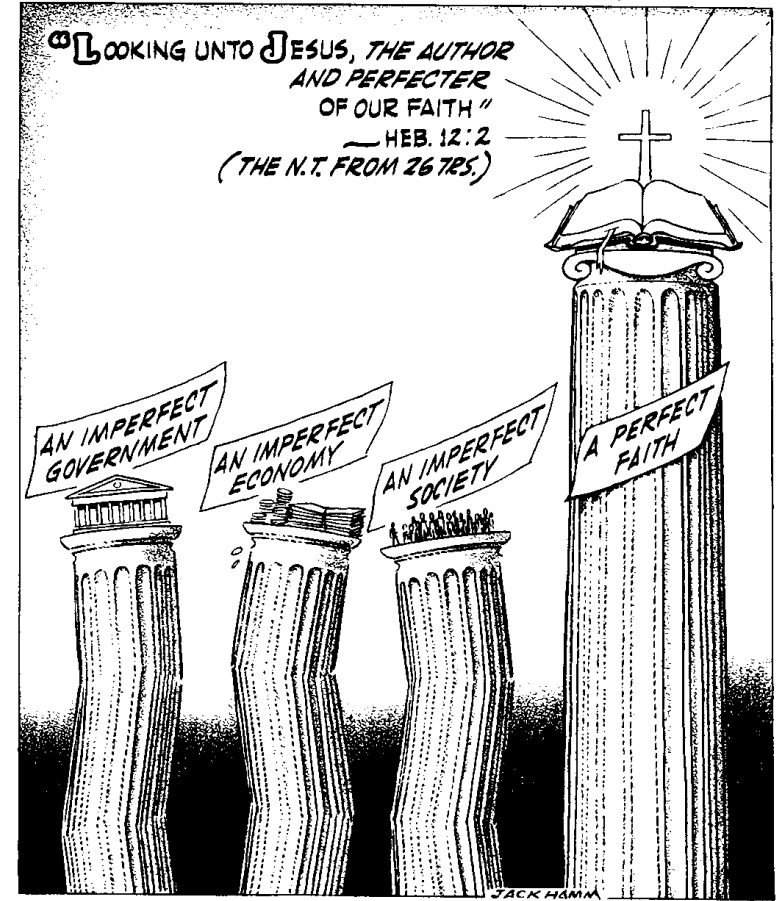
Justification by works primarily refers to the change of *character* that is to occur after there has been a change of state. A person's marital status changes when they say “I do” and are pronounced “man and wife.” And married people are to act like they're married, not single. Just because one's marital status changes doesn't mean their character will reflect the change. Every relationship (spiritual, marital, social, etc.) requires individuals to *work* at bringing their thinking and doing in line with their responsibilities in the relationship. When Christ told the apostles to teach men to “observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” He was talking about justification by works—living like a Christian. *Next: the four tests.*

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Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

THE VERY NATURE OF THINGS



Sermon: Philippians 4.1–4

A problem in Philippi

20 October 2024

The Gospel and tradition

In His teaching, Christ appealed to truth, not tradition. More often than not, however, those He sought to teach evaluated Him by tradition, and by that standard they judged Him a heretic.

Christ never denied men the right or propriety to study out and theorize about God's word; such is expected of men who have the capacity to think and reason. This is what Bible students do when seeking instruction for their intellect and guidance for their conscience, they form theories and speculate. (When Peter entered Christ's tomb, "he *saw* the linen clothes lying there" (Jn. 20.6); "saw" translates the Gr. word *theōreō*/theory).

But when men go beyond private theorizing and seek to bind their theories on others, they've gone too far. In the New Testament, the scribes were often guilty of this, and the Lord resisted them without reluctance or compromise. It's natural for men to theorize about truth; it is impudence to think more highly of their theories than they do God's truth.

The evolution of a theory is charted in Mark 7 using a Jewish practice known as *corban* (7.11). "Corban" was a gimmick whereby impious Jews avoided caring for their aged, infirm parents by pretending to be devoted to God.

As parsed by Christ, He shows the stages by which the practice of corban progressed from *theory* to *tradition* to *travesty*.

First, *tradition was made equal to truth*: the commandments of men were taught as divine doctrine, v 7. **TRADITION = TRUTH**

Second, *tradition was elevated over truth*: for laying aside the commandment of God you hold the tradition of men, v 8.

TRADITION > TRUTH

Third, *tradition canceled truth*, v 13: making the word of God of none effect through your tradition. **TRADITION . . . TRUTH**

Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish convert to Christianity, used the Mark 7 incident to illustrate how Jewish traditionalism destroyed the spirit of truth. "No commandment could be more plainly in accordance, alike with the spirit and the letter of the law, than this: 'He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.' Yet our Lord distinctly charges traditionalism with 'transgressing' it (Mat. xv.4–6)." Edersheim goes on to show that Jewish tradition absolved a child of parental contempt if the child did not mention the name of Jehovah while cursing his or her parents (*Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, 101–102).

Tradition often endorses the very thing the truth condemns.

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The King James Bible, 5

Among those chosen to produce a new Bible translation by order of King James was Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, the dean of Westminster, who was chosen as the chairman of the work.

In 1586, when he was only thirty-one, Andrewes (1555–1626) was made a chaplain to Queen Elizabeth, who delighted in his preaching. Of his preaching, it was said that he was an "angel in the pulpit." T. S. Eliot said he could take a word and derive the world from it and ranked his sermons among the finest English prose to be found. While dean of Westminster, Andrewes requested that the students' lessons in prose and verse be brought to him so he could regularly check on their progress. At least three times a week, he would summon the top students to his home from eight p.m. to eleven p.m. (he was a night owl) to go over Greek and Hebrew grammar with them.

He was with Queen Elizabeth when she died. He then assisted in the coronation of Elizabeth's cousin, James VI of Scotland, and it is said that the new king "admired him above all other divines, not only for his transcendent gift in preaching, but for his excellence and solidity in all kinds of learning. It's recorded that James had such respect for Andrewes that in his presence he (James) refrained from the lack of seriousness he indulged in at other times. A sermon preached at Andrews' funeral paid tribute to his scholarship in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and fifteen other languages. He was considered one of the preeminent linguists in Christendom.

Lancelot Andrewes was admired by all. Over a million words by and about him are in print. Inexpensive Kindle versions of his sermons are available from Amazon.com. Among the "learned men" assembled to render a new translation, he was among the most learned, while at the same time being among the most gentle and polite.

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News about us

- Keep Jerry and Carolyn in your prayers.
- We thank God that Kellee and Mike were able to be with us last Sunday! Continue to pray for them.
- Nancy has pneumonia and needs our prayers.