

Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Issue 10

Are We Guilty of Proof Texting?

Introduction

This is an introduction to the first in a series entitled; **Are We Pulling Bible Texts Out of Context To Prove We Are Right?**

It is possible to be guilty of proof texting without realizing it. Proof texting is when we take a passage of Scripture out of context to support a position we hold concerning Bible doctrine or our philosophy of ministry. When I determined to check myself out, I found I was guilty of proof texting even though I strongly preached against it.

We Can Know The Truth

There are many issues and many opinions concerning the issues of our day; however, we can know the truth!

Jesus said, “why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?” (Luke 12:57).

Jesus said, “the Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth” (John 8:32).

Jesus said, “ye shall know the truth” (John 8:32).

In this age of compromise we are confronted with many issues.

Jesus commanded us to “judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24).

The Greek word translated “righteous” in this verse is *dikaios*. It has been translated “right” in six places in the New Testament.

The difference between knowing the truth and confusion concerning the issues of our day is the little word “study.”

We are commanded to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (Second Timothy 2:15).

Compromising Leadership

The context of the verse above has to do with God’s leadership. The focus is on “the man of God” (Chapter 3:16,17). The Bible tells us that in the last days God’s **leadership** will not endure doctrine without mixture. Second Timothy 4:3 says, “The time will come when **they** will not endure sound doctrine.”

...continued on page two

“This verse will prove I’m right!”



A Text

“A portion of Scripture.”

The Context

“The circumstances that form the setting for an event or a statement.”

A Pretext

“A reason given in justification of a course of action that is not the real reason.”

A Prooftext

“A passage of the Bible to which appeal is made in support of an argument or position concerning theology or a philosophy of ministry.”

This is the first in a series entitled **Are We Pulling Bible Texts Out of Context To Prove We Are Right?**

We will consider the subjects of the local church, separation, modesty, calvinism, repentance, and other issues. The first subject we will deal with is the local church.



...continued from page one

Sound doctrine is entirely free from mixture. The Apostle Paul wrote the pastor at Ephesus saying, “**They** will not endure...But watch **thou**...make full proof of thy ministry.”

To endure is to suffer through something especially when it causes personal hardship. Second Timothy 3:1 says, “in the last days perilous (hard to do) times shall come.” It is talking about it being difficult for the faithful pastor to do right.

We want to be sure our doctrine is without mixture; however, we also need to be sure that we are not taking Scripture out of context to support our position on issues that we believe to be right.

Many Issues - Many Opinions

How Can We Be Sure To Judge Righteous Judgment?

Sincere Christians will make an attempt to “judge righteous judgment,” concerning every issue; however, if we take a definite and public stand on any issue we are going to find ourselves being challenged by someone. At that point, we want as many Scriptures as we can find that support our position; however, when being attacked we must be very careful not to take verses out of context to prove we are right.

Consider And Understand

Paul the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said, “Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee (**the Pastor**) understanding in all things” (Second Timothy 2:7). To consider something is to “think carefully about it before making a decision.”

First and Second Timothy are written “that thou (**the Pastor**) mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (First Timothy 3:15).

Who Is Influencing Me?

Pastors are commanded to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (Second Timothy 2:7).

Forty Minutes In A Commentary Or Forty Hours In The Bible?

Solomon said, “much study is a weariness of the flesh” (Ecclesiastes 12:12). Solomon was right! For years, I found it much easier to spend forty minutes in a Bible commentary than forty hours in the Bible letting the “Spirit of truth...guide (me) ...into all truth.”

I found it less tiring for me to mimic what I learned in someone’s article or follow the footnote in my Bible than to “study the Word of truth,” to show myself “approved unto God.” We should check everything we read, **including this article**, with the Scriptures asking the Holy Spirit to “guide” us into all truth.



Proof Texting To Prove Our Position Concerning The Local Church

Our next article will deal with proof texting concerning the local church. The purpose of this study is not to determine when the church started but to determine if we might be proof texting to support what we already believe.

...continued on page three

Article



Fighting Discouragement In The Small Church

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Message



R.A. Torrey

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Points To Ponder



Were They Deacons?

Acts 6:3, “Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”

In this list they’re only three qualifications.

- “of honest report.”
- “full of the Holy Ghost.”
- “full of...wisdom.”

In First Timothy, Paul listed fourteen qualifications for deacons.

- None of the qualifications in Peter’s list are included in Paul’s list.
- None of the qualifications listed in Paul’s list are included in Peter’s list.



...continued from page two

Perhaps no subject in the Word of God has been subjected to more proof texting than the subject of the church.



Let us consider again the meaning of proof texting. It is *“taking a passage of the Bible out of context to support an argument or position concerning a doctrine or a philosophy of ministry.”*

Not Mentioning Something Does Not Prove It Was Not There

The word *“church”* is not found in Mark, Luke, or John; however, that does not prove it was not there at that time.



The word *“chariot”* is not mentioned in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, however, chariots

are mentioned sixty-four times in fifteen other Bible Books. The *“Sea of Galilee”* is not found in the Book of Luke; however, the sea was there. The *“judgment hall”* is not mentioned in Matthew, Mark or Luke; however, we know it was there. We must be careful not to **assume** the local church was not underway simply because it is not mentioned. Neither should we **assume** it was underway if we have no Scripture to support it.

Two Messages - Two Subjects Or A Serious Contradiction!



The Kingdom Message



The Plan of Salvation

Jesus commanded His disciples to stay away from the Samaritans.

Matthew 10:5,

“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not”

Jesus said they needed to go to the Samaritans.

John 4:4,

“We must needs go through Samaria.”

John 4:5,

“Then cometh he to a city of Samaria.”

Christ plainly told them to stay away from the Samaritans and then He spent two days in Samaria and *“many”* Samaritans received Christ as their personal Saviour.

The Salvation Message Was For Everyone



Romans 10:12,

*“For there is **no difference** between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.”*

The salvation message has always been for *“whosoever will”* (Revelation 22:17). It was this message that Christ preached in Samaria and we read, *“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him”* (John 4:39). We also read, *“They preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans”* (Acts 8:25).

Samaritans Were Among The Earliest Christians

Acts 8:25 tells us they, *“preached the gospel in many villages of the **Samaritans.**”*

Acts 9:31 tells us after Paul was saved, *“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and **Samaria,** and were edified.”*

Obviously there had to be churches there before Paul was saved since they had rest after he was saved.

Acts 9:31 says the churches, *“were multiplied.”*

Acts 15:3 says, *“they passed through...**Samaria,** declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.”*

There never has been one second since God made a way of salvation that *“all men every where,”* could not repent (Acts 17:30).

The Kingdom Message Was Strictly For Israel

The Kingdom message was only for the Nation of Israel. Concerning this message we read, *“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not”* (Matthew 10:5).



We must not have the mindset that says it was one message or the other.

Jesus said,

“I am come that they (whosoever will) might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

Jesus also said, *“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matthew 15:24).

Both messages were being preached during the earthly ministry of Christ.

...continued on page four



...continued from page three

Were Christians Meeting In Services Prior To Pentecost?

The word “church” is only found in two verses in all the Book of Matthew; however, that does not prove churches were not underway. It only means they were not the focus in the Book of Matthew.

The word “church” is not found in Mark, Luke, or John; however, that does not prove churches were not meeting. It simply means churches were not the focus in those Books.

The word “church” is not found in Second Peter, First and Second John, or Jude; however, we know Christians were meeting together during that period.

I might be wrong; however, it seems there are ample Scriptures to suggest that the local church was meeting prior to Pentecost. There was a time when I did not believe this and I often used verses out of context to prove it.

“Many Believed On Him”

Many people were saved during the earthly ministry of Christ.

- **John 2:11**, “believed on Him.”
- **John 2:22**, “they believed.”
- **John 2:23**, “many believed.”
- **John 4:39**, “many Samaritans believed.”
- **John 4:41**, “many more believed.”
- **John 7:31**, “And many believed.”
- **John 8:30**, “many believed on him.”
- **John 8:31**, “Jews believed on him.”
- **John 10:42**, “And many believed.”
- **John 11:45**, “many...believed on him.”
- **John 12:11**, “many of...believed.”
- **John 12:42**, “many believed on him.”

The hyper-dispensationalists would have us believe these new Christians were just left to wander on their own, without instruction, for about fifteen years. Would Christ do that?

John And Matthew Record Two Different Messages



We will emphasize again, and again, that one message does not nullify the other message. The Gospel of Matthew focuses on Israel’s earthly kingdom. The Gospel of John says nothing about a literal kingdom for Israel. Both messages were being presented during the same time period.

The Book of John focuses on, “eternal life.”

- **John 3:15**, “have eternal life.”
- **John 3:16**, “have everlasting life.”
- **John 3:36**, “hath everlasting life.”
- **John 4:14**, “everlasting life.”
- **John 4:36**, “life eternal,”
- **John 5:24**, “hath everlasting life.”
- **John 6:27**, “everlasting life,”
- **John 6:40**, “have everlasting life.”
- **John 6:47**, “hath everlasting life.”
- **John 6:54**, “hath eternal life.”
- **John 6:68**, “eternal life.”
- **John 10:28**, “eternal life.”
- **John 12:25**, “life eternal.”
- **John 12:50**, “life everlasting.”
- **John 17:2**, “...eternal life.”
- **John 17:3**, “life eternal.”
- **John 10:10**, “I am come that they might have life.”

The Book of Matthew focuses on, “...the kingdom.”

- **Matthew 3:2**, “...the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 4:17**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 5:3**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 5:10**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 5:19**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 5:20**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 7:21**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 8:11**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 9:35**, “gospel of the kingdom.”
- **Matthew 10:7**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 11:11**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 11:12**, “the kingdom of heaven...”
- **Matthew 13:11**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:24**, “The kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:31**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:33**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:44**, “...kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:45**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:47**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 13:52**, “the kingdom of heaven.”

- **Matthew 16:19**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 18:1**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 18:3**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 18:4**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 18:23**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 19:14**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 19:23**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 20:1**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 22:2**, “The kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 23:13**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 24:14**, “gospel of the kingdom.”
- **Matthew 25:1**, “the kingdom of heaven.”
- **Matthew 25:14**, “the kingdom of heaven.”

Peter & Paul Record Two Different Messages



Acts chapter fifteen records an important council meeting that took place at the local church in Jerusalem. Referring to that meeting, in Galatians 2:7 Paul said, “the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me.” Paul continued saying, “the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.”

The word gospel means “good news.” Peter had some “good news” for Israel. Paul had some “good news” for everyone. Paul’s good news to the Gentiles included “ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:12).

Understanding

“The Kingdom of Heaven” And “The Kingdom of God.”

These terms are used interchangeably and are not difficult to understand, if they are studied in the context in which they appear.

For example, in Matthew 19:23, Jesus spoke of, “the kingdom of heaven.” In the very next verse, the phrase is translated, “the kingdom of God,” in the same context.

...continued on page five



...continued from page four
 Mark and Luke used the phrase “kingdom of God” where Matthew used “kingdom of heaven,” concerning the same subject. In each of the instances below, Matthew used the phrase “kingdom of heaven” while Mark and/or Luke used “kingdom of God,” while discussing the same thing.

Compare:

- Matthew 11:11-12 with, Luke 7:28.
- Matthew 13:11 with, Mark 4:11.
- Luke 8:10, Matt. 13:24 with, Mark 4:26.
- Matthew 13:31 with, Mark 4:30.
- Luke 13:18, Matt. 13:33, Luke 13:20.
- Matthew 18:3 with 10:14/ Luke 18:16.
- Matthew 22:2 with...Luke 13:29.

Do We Believe In Eternal Security?

Matthew 21:43 says,

“The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

It is obvious that this verse is referring to the literal kingdom that was available for Israel.

Was It God’s Plan For Some Not To Know How To Be Saved?

Matthew 13:11 says,

“He (Jesus) answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.”

It is a result of taking verses like this out of context that we are plagued with the heresy of Calvinism.

Jesus Said I Need To Understand

Matthew 15:10

“Hear, and understand.”

Matthew 15:16

“Are ye also yet without understanding?”

Matthew 15:17

“Do not ye yet understand.”

Matthew 16:9

“Do ye not yet understand?”

Matthew 16:11

“How is it that ye do not understand?”

Matthew 24:15

“whoso readeth, let him understand.”

Mark 7:14

“Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand.”

Mark 7:18

“Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive.”

Mark 8:17

“perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?”

Mark 13:23

“How is it that ye do not understand?”

Paul Said I Need To Understand

First Corinthians 14:20

“Brethren, be not children in understanding...in understanding be men.”

Ephesians 5:17

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

Colossians 1:9

“desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;”

Second Timothy 2:7

“Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.”

Proverbs 4:7 plainly

commands us saying, “with all thy getting get understanding.”

If it wasn’t possible to understand, these verses would not be in the Word of God.

The Secret To Understanding

In Luke chapter twenty-four Christ was talking to two men.

We read,

“**Then** opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures”

(Luke 24:45).

That little word “then” is not there by accident.

Christ opened their understanding when they were concerned enough to want to understand.

Verse 14

“And they talked together of all these things.”

Verse 15

“while they communed together and reasoned.”

Verse 29

Christ opened their understanding when they were concerned enough to spend time with Him.

“they constrained him, saying, Abide with us.”

Verse 33

Christ opened their understanding when they were concerned enough to lose some sleep.

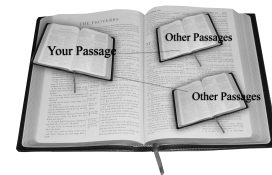
“And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together.”

Verse 45

“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”

Forty minutes in a Bible commentary or quickly reading an article like the one you are reading now won’t do it. The purpose of this article and the ones that will follow is to hopefully spark a new interest in the hearts of readers to study the Bible.

The way to the truth is to compare Scripture with Scripture.



“For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth”

(Psalm 33:4).

Gypsy Smith was once asked how to start a revival.

He answered:

“Go home, lock yourself in your room, kneel down in the middle of your floor. Draw a chalk mark all around yourself and ask God to start the revival inside that chalk mark. When He has answered your prayer, the revival will be on.”



Pastor Bob Kirkland



Our Adventure...part six In 1988 The Local Church Ministries Adventure Began.

Things were going well. The church had no bills, people were getting saved on a regular basis, the philosophy of ministry was now in line with the Word of God, and the Lord began to move me to turn the church over to my assistant pastor and travel the country of Canada to encourage pastors and their people in the many small churches in our land.



We purchased the unit pictured here and left on our first trip to help encourage small churches in Canada. We had a guaranteed income of only \$300.00 a month. It was costing us about \$1000.00 a week to travel across the country. We were going to small churches that usually had less than fifty people on a good day.

Since an adventure is a *"bold and unusual undertaking with risk or danger"* we could certainly classify this part of our lives as an adventure.

We travelled from coast to coast more times than we can remember; however, the bills were always paid on time. *"To God be the glory great things He hath done."*

We heard about a small group of people in Alberta who wanted to start a church.

We felt led to help them get it underway. Once again, God blessed and we were able to purchase the



building and the house pictured here. Recently, a missionary contacted me to tell me he was a young boy who came to our church when we were in Alberta. He said it was through our ministry there that God called him to the mission field. He and his family are now missionaries in South Africa.

Once again, this ministry was turned over to my assistant pastor and we resumed our travels across the country to encourage the faithful pastors and their people in our small churches; however, this time our meetings would be different.

The Need For Encouragement

I sent a bulletin across Canada indicating we had designed some special meetings to fight discouragement. I thought I might hear from one or two churches and then schedule other meetings around them. To my surprise I heard from every province in Canada with requests to please come.

This time we decided against the normal so-called revival services. We had previously conducted hundreds of *sing, pray, sing, announcements, special music, preach, and everyone walk the aisle meetings*. This time we designed meetings simply to encourage the faithful.



I suggested to the pastors that they simply announce the meetings. I also suggested they not waste any money on flyers. All we wanted was the faithful which is usually about ten percent of the church attenders. The faithful will not need to be coaxed to come. We set up tables, gave everyone a pad, a pen, and a cup of coffee. I announced that we would hold the meetings for about an hour and simply discuss what they were discouraged about.

Most felt like failures because they were small in number. I said *"let's discuss it and see if we are failures."* I said *"If we are failures I'm going to quit the ministry, take the motorhome, and go camping on the week-ends."* I said, *"If we are not failures we need to quit whining and start shining, and get on with our God-given responsibilities."* The meetings were tremendous. They usually lasted until ten or eleven P.M.

We could tell many exciting stories concerning every church we visited; however, suffice it to say people were greatly encouraged. We travelled on this trip having meetings every night and Sunday services for over seven months and finally, totally exhausted, we took a break.

After several warnings from our doctor telling us this lifestyle would kill my wife we decided we needed to pray about what we would do next as we travelled on in our adventure in Christian living.

I determined I would like to start a church in Toronto. This time I would raise the support needed before starting; however, God had a different plan.

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