

DO WE BELIEVE PAUL'S EPISTLES?

The Lord speaking to the so-called religious scribes and Pharisees of Israel, the Jews, during his earthly ministry in preparation for setting up of the kingdom of heaven on the earth:

Mark 7:1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, **This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.**

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

From these scriptures we find that Israel rejected the commandments of the Lord by their traditions, therefore making the word of God of none effect. But what do we, the members of Christ's church, and most all nations do today?

The apostle Paul tells us from the Lord's direct words to him by revelation, that what he writes in his epistles unto the Church, the body of Christ, that these words from him to us are the **COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD:**

I Corinthians 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.**

Paul further states that before God, he lies not:

Romans 9:1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

II Corinthians 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

Galatians 1:20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

Paul further states that we are to follow Paul as he follows Christ:

I Corinthians 4:16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

I Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Therefore, if we are to follow the commandments and the words of the Lord, then quite naturally, our instructions are to follow the words of Paul to us. Paul's words to us were a mystery, never made known in "time past." It was hid in God from before the foundation of the world, but now made known to the Church.

Ephesians 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Paul tells us that the Lord gave him an office:

Romans 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

THE QUESTION NOW IS: DO WE BELIEVE GOD'S WORDS GIVEN UNTO US BY PAUL?

- Do we believe Paul, or do we reject Paul?
- Do we make Paul a liar, thus making the Lord a liar? (Remember it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18, Titus 1:2).
- Do we make Paul a liar, when he says that it was given unto him to complete the word of God (Colossians 1:25-26)?
- Do we make Paul a liar, when he says that he prayed three times to be healed by the Lord, and the Lord answered his prayer by not healing him? Telling Paul that his grace was sufficient for him. Also, the Lord's strength was made perfect in his weakness? See II Corinthians chapters 11 and 12.
- Do we believe Paul when he says that the gospel which he preaches is the "gospel of our salvation"? Do we preach the death, burial, and the resurrection of the Lord for our justification unto eternal life? See I Corinthians 15:1-4.
- Do we believe Paul when he tells us that we have a hope and a home laid up for us in heaven, and not on the earth? See II Corinthians 5:1; Colossians 1:5, and 27.
- Do we believe Paul when he tells us that it is appointed unto us to suffer for Christ's sake?

Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Do we believe Paul when he says that if we deny Christ now, and the suffering with him now in this body of flesh that we now live in, that He will deny us reigning with him then in the heavens?

II Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: 13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

Do we really believe any of Paul's epistles? If not, what is our hope? The answer is simple. After Pentecost and after the Lord's ascension to heaven, he came down from heaven and spoke to Saul (also known as Paul), and gave him a brand new message. He set Israel's program aside for a time, and made Paul the apostle of his grace. Unto Paul the Lord committed the revelation of the mystery, his secret purpose to save the Gentiles and all nations. See Romans 16:25-27. The scripture must be "rightly divided" if we are to be approved workmen (II Timothy 2:15).

IF WE REALLY BELIEVE PAUL... THEN SHOULD WE NOT REJECT THE EARTHLY MINISTRY OF CHRIST AS OUR COMMANDMENTS FOR TODAY!

Romans 16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel (THE APOSTLE PAUL'S GOSPEL), and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, **according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:**

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen