

# Bible Bulwarks



“Mark ye well her bulwarks” Psalm 48:13

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## PROSPECTUS

“Another paper?” Reading brethren may inquire as they hold this, the first issue of Bible Bulwarks, in their hands. “But why another paper?” Indeed, there are many papers, magazines, bulletins, and quarterlies published by brethren in churches of Christ. So why another paper sent forth unto people in an already too-busy, hectic world?

The question deserves answer, and said answer, we trust, will justify the humble birth and continued existence of Bible Bulwarks.

Notice our title: Bible Bulwarks. First, the word “Bible” is the word that will mandate the scope and extent of the views offered on these pages. That which is taught in the sacred Scriptures will be expounded, defined, and defended. That which is contrary to God’s written revelation will not be upheld or defended, but, refuted.

Second, the word “Bulwark,” meaning “a solid wall-like structure raised for defense; a fortified rampart,” will define our undertaking. By employing the word “bulwark,” and connecting it with the word “Bible” we assign the nature of this periodical: the Bible, as the only authority in religion, will be recognized as the fortification which both envelopes and embraces truth while it concurrently excludes and expels error! Thus, “bulwarks”-- walls of protection and defense! And, “Bible” -- the very wall itself!

There are many papers in our brotherhood providing worthy service in calling to our attention men and movements contrary to New Testament Christianity. We appreciate that work. There are other papers of a more general, perhaps even

evangelistic or news-reporting, emphasis, whose thrust is more sweeping, and by no means controversial. We also recognize this need. There are papers that deal more specifically with a particular area of doctrinal interest, and we value their contribution. Then there are liberal papers and compromising papers among us that betray primitive Christianity; these we depreciate and scorn.

So, where does Bible Bulwarks fit in this scheme of religious journalism? There are four areas of interest to which we propose attention.

### **1. THE INTEGRITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.**

Under this heading, we shall examine such matters as the reliability and power of the Bible, religious authority, and contemporary Bible versions. The subject of authority in religion must be clearly emphasized and promulgated to a contemporary world too easily given to the opinion of man as the doctrinal standard. Regarding modern Bible versions, we are convinced there is a real problem with many of the modern versions, we are concerned at their easy acceptance, and we are convinced that more needs to be written and spoken on this matter, as they often jeopardize the very integrity of God’s revelation itself.

### **2. INNOVATIONS IN WORSHIP.**

There are innovations in worship which many today are unequivocally accepting, in spite of the fact that said novelties are departures from the New Testament pattern. To the voices of protest, Bible Bulwarks raises her voice as well, and will stand against any and all unscriptural departures, fads, foibles, and fancies!

**3. ORGANIZATIONS.** This covers a broad territory of systems and arrangements which, while often popular in the religious world and frequently embraced by brethren, nonetheless operate and propagate contrary to the teaching of God's Word. Organizations are not wrong because they are organized; they are wrong, if they are erected upon an unscriptural foundation, or espouse unscriptural tenets.

**4. DENOMINATIONALISM.** The preaching and teaching of brethren in the past drew razor-sharp distinctions, in clear, clarion calls, against the doctrines, divisions, and departures of denominationalism. The plea against denominationalism is not, as stout, strong, ringing and robust, as it once was. Bible Bulwarks is presented to assist in filling this void and standing in the gap.

We also anticipate running, from time to time, columns targeting particular matters. These columns will appear under such headings as "Sword Swipes" (which will uncover antics of brethren not in harmony with truth); "Doctrinal Discourses" (which will deal with denominational doctrines, their advocacy and advocates); and the "Pioneer Pulpit" (which will contain ripe gleanings from the writings of brethren in former times).

Our ambition is not a rehash of material generously, boldly, and correctly covered by other publications, but rather, we hope to touch upon areas deemed as needing more attention. If that goal is accomplished, we will feel our effort justified, and the time of the busy reader vindicated.

We strive not to be "positive" or "negative" but simply scriptural, whether that includes words of reproof and rebuke (emphatically negative), or words of exhortation (emphatically positive), as the subject under consideration may dictate. The war in which we engage is not fought on the battleground of personality, but principle; not demagoguery, but doctrine.

That there is much positive influence in religious publishing that is true to God's revelation and strongly contends for the faith of Christianity, we doubt not. A faithful preacher and writer of a previous century, brother Benjamin Franklin, wrote regarding religious journalism the following words worthy of sober reflection.

Some men want a paper of this kind: one that would circulate palatably any place, touch no place, defend nothing, and amount to nothing. We know a few poor unhealthy, feeble creatures, who would have us send forth a kind of milk-and-water concern, that a man might read half a year without knowing where we stand. This, however, we shall not do. We are not trying to please man, but God. We shall, to the extent of our ability, describe Christianity, discriminate between it and everything else, and defend it. We shall at the same time try to do this in the utmost kindness, the most respectful terms, but as plainly as it can

be possibly done. Christianity never was maintained, manfully and nobly advocated, without a struggle. It never will be...no success attends sermonizing or theorizing that does not define, illustrate and advocate the pure Christianity as it was in the beginning...Christianity must be maintained, as the Lord gave it, against all encroachments, subversions, and attacks of every description...We are right in aim, and what remains for us is to push on, illustrate, unfold, and maintain the cause" (**Biographical Sketch and Writings of Elder Benjamin Franklin**, John F. Rowe and G.W. Rice, editors, 1880, pp. 412-13).

We shall seek to teach and preach, by means of this printed page, the simple truths of undenominational, New Testament Christianity, and make application of her precepts. May both saint and sinner be encouraged along the paths of righteousness. May the cause of Christ be strengthened by our feeble effort. May the light of truth shine ever more brightly. If we can accomplish but part of these results, then we respectfully submit for your consideration, dear reader, this endeavor called Bible Bulwarks, from two unworthy servants of the Master.

Join us in launching forth Bible Bulwarks, as we lock minds and hearts together in holding high God's Word as the fortification which both clasps truth and repels error.

**John M. Brown & Steve Miller, Editors.**

# Sword Swipes

## INNOVATIONS IN WORSHIP

**Steve Miller**

**Bible Bulwarks** is committed toward a straightforward course in defense of pure, New Testament worship! The New Testament being our pattern, we aim to maintain the five divinely prescribed acts of worship that man is responsible for engaging in to our Creator.

We are opposed to **ALL UNSCRIPTURAL INNOVATIONS!** These innovations may come as additions, subtractions, or, modifications to the divine pattern; all of which we will stand foursquare against! We will raise our voice against such unscriptural vices

as mechanical instrumental music, hand clapping, singing during the Lord's Supper, Drama, choirs, solos, quartets, dedicating babies, religious holidays, children's worship, women in leadership roles, and every other imaginable innovation.

Let us review briefly, what we will uphold in regard to New Testament worship.

Man is to worship the one true and living God. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm. 29:2). "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psalm. 95:6).

The Bible records that the wise men looking for Christ, were going to worship Him (Matthew 2:2). Jesus let Satan know that God is the only one to be worshiped (Matthew 4:10).

Christians worship Almighty God by the authority of Jesus Christ. God delegated his authority to His Son (Matthew 28:18). Inspiration has also revealed "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17).

In John 4:21-24, the Master teacher revealed to the Samaritan woman that the time would come when God could be worshiped anywhere. Jerusalem would no longer be the specified place to worship. God would seek people who would sincerely and truly worship him with the heart and mind, not in mere form. To worship in ignorance, and vanity is to worship without the authority of God. In the new dispensation, Jesus Christ presented the way to worship, which is, in spirit and in truth.

How are we to worship God? (1) We are to worship God in spirit, (2) and in truth (John 4:24). "In spirit" suggests the proper attitude of worship and further brings to our attention that worship is spiritual; not material or mechanical. This is accomplished with the right guide; the Bible, our introduction to worship in truth.

To worship God in truth, is to worship Him using the Bible as our pattern. The scriptures are truth! "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). To worship God in truth: "... rendering such homage to God that the entire heart enters into the act, and doing this in full harmony with the truth of God as revealed in his Word" (*Exposition of the Gospel of John*. William Hendriksen, p. 167).

Worship engaged in by New Testament Christians is regulated by divine law, which involves (1) the proper object-God; (2) correct attitude and source--in spirit; and (3) the proper manner--in truth.

It is necessary that we heed the command of Christ in verse 24 of John, chapter four; "they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." The word "must"

obligates us or all to worship in spirit and in truth to be acceptable to God.

The New Testament pattern authorizes us to meet and worship God upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

The New Testament pattern gives five divinely prescribed acts of worship for man to engage in when he worships God.

**1. Prayer.** The Bible exhorts us to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). We must engage in prayer when we come together to worship God. The early disciples prayed together. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

**2. Partake of Lord's Supper.** The disciples came together "to break bread" (Acts 20:7). Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ instituted this feast. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28).

**3. Preaching and Teaching.** The Bible reveals that the disciples were taught when they assembled for worship. "And they continued in the apostles' doctrine" or teaching (Acts 2:42). Inspiration records that Paul preached the gospel to the assembly. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..." (Acts 20:7).

**4. Congregational Singing.** New Testament Christians sing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" in their worship to God. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

**5. Giving.** The early Christians gave as they had prospered. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:2).

The Bible gives us five specific acts of worship that we are to engage in when we come together. In his work, **Short History Of The Christian Church**, (1892) **John Fletcher Hurst** wrote about the worship of the early church.

The services consisted chiefly of reading selections from the Old Testament, the apostolical epistles, and, latest of all, the gospels. The reading was attended with copious exposition. The day of the elaborate homily, with a short scriptural passage as a mere motto, had not yet arrived. All that was said was meant to give to the hearer a deeper knowledge of the divine word. Singing of psalms and hymns was an important part of the service. It might be led by an individual, but the music was by the whole

congregation. The Psalms of David and the rhythmic parts of the prophecies furnished the favorite basis. Prayer was connected with the singing, and the congregation responded "Amen" at the close. The concluding part of the service was the Lord's Supper. Until about A.D. 150, the agape, or love feast was connected with the communion service, but because of its abuse, was afterwards separated from it. After the prayer the kiss of charity was given, and the apostolical benediction was pronounced (pp. 20-21).

There is danger of having vain (Matthew 15:9), ignorant (Acts 17:23), or will (Colossians 2:23) worship, as opposed to Biblical worship, as commanded by God. Acts of worship must not be tampered with by mankind. The Bible warns of mishandling the word of truth (Leviticus 10:1-2; Galatians 1:6-10; Revelation 22:19).

**"Evasion of the authority of Scripture can only lead eventually to an apostate church."**

Carl F. H. Henry,  
**God. Revelation and Authority. VI, p. 63.**

# Integrity Of The Scriptures

## THE MATTER OF MODERN BIBLE VERSIONS

**John M. Brown**

The word "proliferate" means "to reproduce in quick succession; to grow by multiplying." The word certainly applies to the multiplication of Bible versions we have seen in our time. There have been more than 190 English versions (including the Old Testament only, the New Testament only, or the whole Bible) in this century alone. Yet this conglomeration of translations provokes, in many instances, no reaction or response of any kind from some brethren.

A study of Bible versions must begin with the thesis that the Word of God is given by inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16-17). No other foundation will do justice to

any study of this matter. We must also remember that the Bible is an unshakeable Book that cannot be obliterated or destroyed (see 1 Peter 1:24-25; Matthew 24:35). We can rest with assurance upon the promises of God that, in our world, there is one thing upon which death and decay cannot lay its rotting finger: the living, active, penetrating, vitalizing, saving, strengthening, converting, powerful Word of God (Hebrews 4:12).

However, having said that God's Word is ultimately indestructible, we must bear in mind another fact, that the word of God can be corrupted! In 2 Corinthians 2:17, Paul wrote: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God..." And again, "But we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully..." (2 Corinthians 4:2). There are those who "hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18) and have even "changed the truth of God into a lie" (Romans 1:25). Some men and women can be, have been, are being, and will be, deceived (Galatians 6:7; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 3:18).

The Word of God is pure (Proverbs 30:5), but that purity must be kept and guarded, for God's Word can be corrupted by deceitful handlers of Scripture who twist, distort, dilute, change, pervert, and pollute truth. God's Word has been substituted for the traditions and theories of men; other gospels have been preached; and God's Word has been adulterated countless times across the centuries.

Enter the subject of "Modern Bible Versions." A study of the multiplicity of Bible versions is an actual and real-life demonstration of the power of man to corrupt God's Word and pervert truth. The battle over versions is a battle for the purity of the Bible! A fountain is no purer than its source, and Christianity can be no purer than the Bible that guides it.

One can examine the various modern versions abounding today and find the teachings of Calvinism, Pentecostalism, "faith only," denominationalism, premillennialism, perversions regarding worship, assaults on the Deity of Christ, and a host of other errors. When these false doctrines and theories become incorporated into the very text of the Bible itself, something dangerous and deadly has occurred and the purity of God's Word has been defiled by corruption. When God's Word does not teach the above theological extrapolations, but certain modern versions do, then one may know that corruption and contamination has taken place. The wise admonition that one need not eat a whole ham to know that it is rotten, is a principle applying acutely to the matter of modern versions. Have sense enough to not swallow the whole thing if it is composed of various putrid parts!

The old slogan, “Join the church of your choice,” which we have long rejected as unscriptural and untrue, must now have alongside it another new slogan, “Read the Bible of your choice.” As each one can have his own church, according to the theories of men, so each one can have his own Bible, too. But, as we have insisted upon the necessity of man taking the “church of Christ’s choice,” so also we insist upon the obligation that man read the “Bible of God’s choice,” that which correctly, accurately, and reverently teaches His truth and is His Word.

This proliferation of Bible versions has certainly not lead to an increase in Bible knowledge; Biblical ignorance abounds ! We have more Bibles, more Bible versions, and more access to Bible information, than at any age in the history of man, yet there is less conviction and less knowledge than before. Satan surely has been busy, hasn’t he? Neither accuracy, clarity, maturity, depth, nor spiritual productivity have resulted from the new versions rolling off the presses. Some congregations can barely conduct a Bible class because of the confusion generated by so many different versions (“But teacher, that’s not how MY Bible reads...!”).

The older, tried, tested, and proven English Bible versions continue to teach man of Christ, His way of salvation, and His church, and we are determined to “hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We propose, through the pages of this journal, to continue to investigate this matter in further detail, fully convinced that the purity of God’s Word is of supreme importance and necessary to the obtaining of eternal life. A corrupt way of salvation, and corrupt doctrine, set within the binding of a corrupt version, cannot lead one to an incorruptible inheritance! (see 1 Peter 1:3-4). We shall cry out against any and all perversions of truth, whether those corruptions take the form of a religious tract, a religious journal, a man-made creed, an oral discourse, or a perverted “Bible” translation. We shall contend for the inspiration, preservation, purity and authority of God’s word. Though versions come and versions go, “For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89).



# Pattern Principles

## THE ALL-SUFFICIENT CHURCH

Steve Miller

The Church of Christ was established in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 2:2-3; Acts 2). This church would have a distinctive founder, builder, head, body, mission, plan of salvation, membership, worship, name, doctrine, and work (Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:20; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 4:4; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:47; John 4:24; Acts 11:26; Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 15:58). The Church of Christ is the church of the New Testament.

Members of the body of Christ believe the Bible to be the verbally, inspired, inerrant, plenary, Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) We believe the Bible to be the only authority in religious matters (Colossians 3:17). Worship to God is accomplished in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

The organization of the church, as found in the New Testament, consists of Christ as head (Ephesians 1:22-23); elders overseeing the local congregation (Hebrews 13:17); deacons serving the physical needs of the church (1 Timothy 3:8-13); and evangelists and teachers who preach the word of God publicly and privately.

Under this column, “Pattern Principles,” Bible Bulwarks will examine “systems and arrangements which, while often popular in the religious world and frequently embraced by brethren, nonetheless operate and propagate in ways, arrangements, and methods contrary to the teaching of God’s Word.” The Church of Christ is all-sufficient!

The New Testament provides no legislation for organizations larger or smaller than the New Testament church! As brother H. Leo Boles penned many years ago:

When each congregation fulfills its mission as God directs that it should, then each church has done the work of the Lord and there is no need for any other organization or plan of cooperation. Put all the congregations to work as God directs them to, and we have all the cooperation and organization that are needed. Anything other than this is perversion of the New Testament order. Some have maintained that cooperation implies organization. In fact, the slogan of the society brethren was: “No cooperation without organization.” There was some truth in this as they viewed

cooperation. Many so-called “loyal” brethren and churches do not see how they can cooperate without organizing something. Any cooperation that calls for any officer or any organization not mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures is the wrong kind of cooperation. All Scriptural cooperation uses the New Testament order of work and officers and leaves each congregation free under the fear of God to fulfill its own mission. Individual Christians and churches can do all that the Lord requires of them by maintaining the simple organization of the local church. Hence, there is no need for societies, constitutions, resolutions, presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, or any other office or officer which is not mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures. No machinery in the way of human organization is needed to preach the gospel to sinners or to edify the saints; no machinery is needed for the local congregation to fulfill its mission in the world. Each congregation can do its work with the simple agencies authorized in the New Testament Scriptures. Let each Christian fulfill his mission as a member of the church and each church fulfill its mission as the New Testament directs, and souls will be saved, saints edified, and God glorified (**Gospel Advocate**, Sept. 17, 1931).

The divine wisdom of God was demonstrated in making each local church self-governing under Christ (Philippians 1:1). The church of Christ is the divine missionary society. Any missionary society larger, smaller, or different from the local congregation is unscriptural.

This not to say that churches cannot cooperate. The New Testament teaches that churches may cooperate in evangelism (Acts 11:21-22); churches may cooperate in benevolence (Acts 11:29-30); churches may cooperate in edification (Acts 11:23).

Congregational autonomy does not effect churches cooperating. As **Everett Ferguson** points out:

This independence by the local church is often called ‘congregational autonomy,’ that is, self-governing congregations. Autonomy is not a wholly satisfactory word. In regard to faith and practice, the church is a monarchy, subject to its Lord. But in matters of opinion, expediency, and human judgment each church is an independent, self-governing unit, and in this sense autonomy is an appropriate word. But autonomy is not isolation. The early churches practiced a fullness of fellowship, cooperation, mutual assistance, and communication (**The Church of Christ, A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today**, p. 345).

Some brethren have established organizations under the heading “work of the church of Christ” while in reality it is robbing the church of its work History brings to light the American Christian Missionary Society. At present, the Christian Jubilee Inc.; and Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Inc., are two of the several “missionary societies” among us. These man-made organizations have been created beyond the organization of the church of Christ. Jubilee and Disaster Relief teach by implication

and existence that the church is inadequate for its task and in so doing, deny God’s declaration of the all-sufficiency of His church!

The church is all-sufficient for salvation. The Bible teaches us that we are saved by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:5, 8-10). In order for man to get into the grace of God, he must do his part, which is through faith (Ephesians 2:8). The Bible plainly teaches that we must hear the word of God (Romans 10:17). After hearing the word of God we must develop a working faith (Hebrews 11:6; James 2:14-26; Mark 16:16). We are commanded to repent (Acts 17:30). The Scriptures then instruct us to confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-4; Galatians 3:27). By obeying the gospel plan of salvation we have forgiveness of sins, membership in the church of Christ, and are made heirs to the blessings found in Jesus Christ. This makes us a Christian only and the only Christians!

The Church of Christ pleads for a return to New Testament Christianity. We speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where it is silent, calling Bible things by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways. “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

### *Our Purpose:*

Bible Bulwarks is sent fourth to teach and defend the simple truths of New Testament Christianity.

Pure Bible doctrine will be upheld, while innovations in worship, unscriptural organizations, and denominationalism will be condemned!

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# Doctrinal Discourses

## DOES THE BIBLE TEACH MAN IS SAVED BY “FAITH ONLY”?

**John M. Brown**

An idea common in our religious world and explicitly taught by many religious groups is that man is saved by “faith only.” Consider the words of an old creed setting forth this teaching: “Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort” (**Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church**, 1924, p. 28). Justification is said to be by “faith only” and this teaching is called both wholesome and comfortable. But does the Bible teach this? No! In fact the Bible teaches the very opposite. Consider:

1. In John 1:12, the Bible says, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Notice that the ones spoken of here; receivers and believers, had the “power to become the sons of God.” If justification were by “faith only,” they would not merely have power to become sons, they would already be sons! Believers? Yes! Sons of God? Not yet!

2. In John 12:42-43 we read of some who, regarding Jesus, “believed on him” Did they believe? YES! – the Bible says they did. But as we read further, we learn that they “did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.” About one who would not confess Christ, Jesus said “him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32). Here we have the interesting situation of believers who will be denied by Jesus Christ. Are they saved? No! If the people in this text will be in heaven, then it is possible to go to heaven while being denied by the Son of God before the Father! To such a proposition we protest! What we have here are believers who are lost!

3. In Luke 8:28 we read the case of a demon possessed man who said, upon seeing Jesus, “What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high?” Did this man recognize Jesus for who He was? Indeed! But was he a child of God? Emphatically no!

4. In Acts 26:27-28 Paul calls Agrippa a believer. But was he yet a Christian? No! A believer, but only “almost,” not altogether and fully, persuaded to be a child

of God. An unjustified believer; and unsaved, almost persuaded sinner.

5. Finally, in James 2:14-26, we find Bible verses that finally and forever destroy the doctrine of salvation by “faith only.” Faith without works, James tells us, is “dead, being alone.” Why even the devils believe and tremble-are they saved? They believed-but they were not sons of God. They did more than only believe-they also trembled at the prospect of God (which is stronger reaction than some in our society today; there are many who say they believe in God but do not tremble at the thought of Him!). The Scripture settles the matter by stating, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24). Faith without works, described in James 2, is dead. If man is saved by “faith only,” the faith only spoken of by James is dead faith. Salvation by “faith only” is salvation by dead faith! Pshaw! Who can believe it? Yet unfortunately, many do.

In every case of conversion in the book of Acts, faith, either explicitly or implicitly expressed, was necessary to salvation. But “faith only” was not sufficient. Believers expressed their faith by repentance, confession, and baptism. If “faith only” were true, then nothing further would have been required or necessary.

It is possible to believe, and yet not be saved. This very truth demonstrates that justification is not by faith only. It is of interest to note that the only time the Bible uses the expression “faith only,” is to negate the concept! Yet here are creeds, manuals, disciplines, and other expressions of religious sentiment, affirming the very thing the Bible denies. Man says “faith only;” God says not by “faith only.” The choice, it seems, is clear: will we believe man, or God?

There are many kinds of faith that will not save: faith that won’t confess Christ (John 12:42-43); dead faith (James 2); shipwrecked faith (1 Timothy 1:19); denied faith (1 Timothy 5:8); erring faith (1 Timothy 6:10. 21).

There is no doubt there is a kind of faith that justifies (see Romans 5:1). The error arises with the word “only.” When one professes justification by faith, he sets forth Bible teaching; when one teaches justification by “faith only,” he states something the Bible does not teach. Grace justifies (Romans 3:24); the name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God justify (1 Corinthians 6:11); the blood of Christ justifies (Romans 5:9); but none of these justify “only,” alone and by itself; none justifies to the exclusion of the other. Man lives by breathing, but not by breathing only; man lives by eating, but not by eating only. And likewise, man is justified by grace, but not by grace only; man is justified by the name, but not by the name only; man is justified by the blood, but not by the blood only; and man is justified by faith, but not by faith only!

What kind of faith, then, saves? The faith that

saves is the faith that obeys God (see Hebrews 5:8-9). A comparison of two verses, John 1:12 and Galatians 3:26-27, illustrates the point. John says that faith gives one power to become a son of God. Paul in the Galatians passage tells us when faith makes one a child of God. Those to whom he writes were the children of God; they became the children of God when they were baptized into Christ. It was not “faith only” that saved them, but faith put into action by gospel obedience. The difference between John 1 and Galatians 3 is obedience!

In Romans 1:5 we read of “obedience to the faith” and in Romans 16:26 of the “obedience of faith.” Saving faith is not “faith only,” not a faith that stands alone by itself without expressing subjection to the will of God. Saving faith is obedient faith! In Galatians 5:6, God says, “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, not uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”

Is man saved by faith? YES! What kind of faith: “faith only” or faith that obeys? Surely every careful Bible reader can see the answer.

## PIONEER QUOTE

“So in the might of the God of Israel and in the name of the Christ of the church, in the spirit of the indomitable Paul, with an all-out effort to stem the tide of digression again, to stay the subversive influences of compromise, and to uphold the truth in the midst of the multiplied defections and departures that confront and surround us, that the pure church of Christ may be preserved unto our children, let us all who honor this heritage and espouse this cause, and who are thus likeminded, say together in resounding unison –

**THEY SHALL NOT PASS!”**

Foy E. Wallace Jr. **Bible Banner**, April 1949.

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## Bible Bulwarks

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