

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever heard someone make the following statement? “I wouldn’t trust him (or her) as far as I could throw him (her)! What causes someone to say that about another? Usually the person who can’t be trusted has a history of not following through on a promise or takes things from others without their permission. Or perhaps the untrustworthy one will leave another in a financial or physical bind because it wasn’t beneficial for them to do otherwise. Whatever the case is, the person has built up a reputation of not being trustworthy. Then there are those whom you would trust with your very life! This is the type of person Timothy was in Paul’s eyes. Paul gave his son Timothy instructions that he knew Timothy would execute without question and without Paul being physically present. This was the type of trust Paul put in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul didn’t trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ in addition to the right circumstances, place, time, position or practice. Paul put his trust in Christ, and besides Him nothing else is needed or wanted! We too must trust totally in the gospel of Jesus Christ and trust no other gospel. The scripture says in **Galatians 1:8-9 (NKJV)**

⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

1 Timothy 1:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

² To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

³ As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

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In the first lines of this letter, Paul makes sure that whoever comes across it would know from the start who wrote this letter and to whom the letter is directed. It was customary in those days to identify the writer of letter in the beginning of the letter rather than at the end as we do today. Paul isn’t bragging on himself when he states that he is an Apostle of Jesus Christ, he just wanted to make sure that whoever came across this letter would know which Paul, of the many men named Paul, wrote this letter. However one can’t help but be impressed with the One Paul knows personally rather than in Paul himself.

Then Paul greets young Timothy as his own son with the big three, “**grace** (unmerited favor), **mercy**, (Punishment deserved but withheld. It’s because of His mercy we are not consumed), and **peace**, (A peace not as the world sees it or gives it but as the Lord Jesus Christ gives it. This peace is a peace that surpasses all human understanding)”.

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SOME OF THE FALSE DOCTRINES THAT CHURCHES MUST CONFRONT TODAY

The false teaching that salvation is by grace plus works (Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Church of Christ, Roman Catholic Church)

- The Bible says salvation is by grace without works and that works follows after salvation (**Rom. 4:1-6; Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-8**).
- The Bible says that grace and works cannot be mixed together (**Rom. 11:6**).
- Grace is a free gift. Salvation is called a gift 16 times in the New Testament. If salvation requires some works, then it is not a true gift. The gift of God is free for the sinner because Jesus Christ purchased it at great price with His blood and death on the cross.

The word “trinity” is not in the Bible, therefore there is no such thing. (Jehovah’s Witnesses)

- The word trinity is not in the Bible but the doctrine is (**Mt. 28:19; Jn. 14:16,26; 16:7-15; 2 Co. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Jn. 5:7**).
- The O.T. teaches that God is one in a plurality. Though the Old Testament does not fully reveal the doctrine of the Trinity, it does teach us that God is a plurality. It is left for the New Testament to open up this revelation fully.
- **Genesis 1:1**. The Hebrew word for God here is Elohim. This is a plural noun, but the verb is singular, teaching that there is one God in a plurality.
- **Genesis 11: 7**. Here again God is spoken of in the plural and in the singular at the same time.
- **Deuteronomy 6:4**. This verse could be translated, “Jehovah our Elohim is a united Jehovah.” The word “one” refers to a unity. The same word for one is used in Gen. 2:24, speaking of the oneness of a husband and wife. This verse summarizes the Bible’s teaching about God. He is one but exists in three Persons.
- **Psalms 45:6-7**. According to **Heb. 1:8-9**, God the Father is speaking in **Psalms 45**, and He is referring to the Son as God. Sometimes people ask, “If Jesus Himself was God, why did He address the Father as God?” The answer is that Jesus addressed the Father as God for the same reason that the Father addressed the Son as God—because they are both God!

The false teaching that baptism is necessary for salvation (Church of Christ, Baptist Church)

- Scripture teaches that baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (**Rom. 6:3-4**). It is the blood and death of Christ that takes away our sins, not water or religious rituals.
- The Bible says that baptism is not the gospel (**1 Cor. 1:17**). The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for our sins (**1 Cor. 15:1-4**). Baptism only symbolizes the gospel.
- The book of Acts teaches us that baptism follows salvation (**Acts 8:36-38; 16:30-33; 18:8**).
- Acts 2:38 does not teach that baptism is a part of salvation, because Peter later taught that baptism is a symbol (**1 Pet. 3:21**). **Acts 2:38** teaches that we are baptized because we have been forgiven of our sins not in order to be forgiven.

The false teaching that the believer can only eat certain things (Seventh-day Adventist)

- Dietary laws in the New Testament are a mark of false teachers (**1 Tim. 4:1-5**).
- The New Testament believer has liberty in such things (**Rom. 14:1-4; Col. 2:16**).