

The Old Paths

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“Show Your Work”

Jarrod Jacobs

A while back, a dear brother in the Lord wrote an article which stirred my thoughts about the concept of “showing your work.” Perhaps we remember math classes where the teacher said it is not enough for the student to work the problem in his head and write an answer. Students in that class were expected to write out the calculations so that someone could read their paper (namely the teacher) and see how they arrived at the answer. (i.e., “Show your work”!)

Brethren, are we not also guilty at times of not “showing our work” when teaching others the truth? It is easy for Christians who have studied and learned various Bible truths to speak about the things “we” are “opposed” to, or the things “we” are “for.” In stating such convictions, we can be “sound” (Titus 2:1), “true” (Jn. 17:17), and “respecting Scripture” (II Tim. 3:16-17, 4:2). Yet, do those listening to us know “why” we believe what we believe, and “why” we take the stand we do? Do they know “why” we are encouraging them to do what we do? Or, are they merely hearing “do this,” and “don’t do that” without understanding the “why” behind it?

We are a people who continually say, “don’t trust in man’s word, trust in God’s word.” This

is a true statement (I Pet. 4:11; Rom. 3:4a). However, if we are not “showing our work,” and letting people see how we have arrived at certain conclusions, are we not in essence telling them “trust me”? Are we not basically doing the opposite of what we teach?

If folks are told what to be “against” and what to be “for”, but are never told “why” it is this way, then it is past time that we slowed down, and “showed our work” to them!

Bible Authority

At the heart of this subject is the need for establishing and respecting Bible authority. It helps to “show our work” when we show people we have authority for what we are doing and teaching (Col. 3:17). In truth, this is what needs to happen. Let us show others by direct command or statement, apostolic-approved example, necessary implication, or a combination of these, “why” we are teaching and practicing what we do.

An example of folks using these same points to establish authority, is found in Acts 15:7-17. The early Christians were determining what place fleshly circumcision had in the Lord’s plan of salvation in the New Covenant, and they came to the proper conclusion by reasoning that was based in the: direct commands of God (Acts 15:15-17), apostolic-approved examples (Acts 15:12), and necessary implication from the Scripture (Acts 15:7-9).

This is “why” we establish Bible authority the way we do — it was what the apostles did in the first century!

Parents, Are You Listening?

When Christians who are parents are considering the training necessary to bring up their children “*in the training and instruction of the Lord*” (Eph. 6:4), let them remember that children need to know “why” also. Parents, do not make the mistake of thinking that since we know certain Bible truths, and are “established” in them (II Thess. 2:17; Jas. 5:8; I Pet. 5:10; II Pet. 1:12), that our children are automatically “established” as well! They need to hear, believe, and obey the truth just as we. They need to “*grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” just as we (II Pet. 3:18). This principle was made very clear in Old Testament days when God continually impressed the adults in Israel with the need for teaching their children. He said when the children ask “why”, answer them! (Ex. 12:14-28, 13:8, 14; Deut. 6:20-25, 32:7; Josh. 4:1-7; Ps. 78:3-6).

There is no question parents are an “open book” to their children, but are we showing them “why” we are wor-

“The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (James 5:16).

Are you praying daily for our work here at Caneyville? Are you constantly asking for God’s blessings on our elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers, our elderly, the widows, the spiritually weak, and every brother and sister in Christ? We have a great and powerful tool in prayer. Use it!

shipping God and serving Him? Are showing them “why” faithfulness to God is best? If not, why not? Parents need to teach their children “why” (II Tim. 2:2). How can they live the life of a Christian faithfully otherwise? Let us raise our children so that their faith is their own!

Conclusion

Yes, let us as Christians slow down and “show our work” before others. Let others, whether they be family, friends, or strangers, see and understand why we do what we do. Let us show them Bible authority for all we do and teach (Col. 3:17). It is not enough to say, “do it and I will explain later”. Take time and “show your work” now!

“Calling On The Name Of The Lord”

Jarrold Jacobs

I am sure that our dear readers have heard people say words to the effect, “If you are not a Christian, all you need to do is call upon the name of the Lord, and you can be saved.” Some will tell you to pray a prayer saying, “Lord be merciful to me a sinner,” or similar things. Such teaching is a misapplication of what is said in Romans 10:13. The apostle Paul wrote, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord? Let us read the context of Romans 10 and find out.

“For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are

they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:13-17).

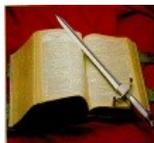
Please notice that after the apostle Paul says we must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved, he asks a series of questions that point out what this means. To call upon the name of the Lord, we must: 1) Hear the gospel (Rom. 10:14); 2) Believe the gospel (Rom. 10:14); and 3) Obey the gospel (Rom. 10:16)!

Therefore, “calling upon the name of the Lord” is a comprehensive thing, not simply saying, “Lord.” In Acts 2:21 we read another time when folks were told to call upon the name of the Lord. Here, Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32. Peter shows that the events happening on the day of Pentecost were a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:16), and said, “And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:21).

What did he mean? Were they commanded to simply say, “Lord”? No! They were told to “hear these words” (Acts 2:22). Peter then proves that Jesus truly is the Son of God (Acts 2:23-35), and said, “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). In this text, to “know for certain” means to believe. When the people who heard the gospel on this day were told to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, they then asked what they needed to do to be forgiven of murdering the Son of God. Peter responded by saying, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:38-41). Based upon hearing and believing the truth, they obeyed! In so doing, they “called upon the name of the Lord”!

Therefore, when one calls upon the name of the Lord, he is simply obeying God’s plan of salvation to hear God’s word, believe that Jesus is the Son of God, repent, and be baptized! Is this not simple? Of course, it is! Let us be about encouraging people to call upon the name of the Lord as the Bible directs us to do, so that all might be saved before it is too late (II Pet. 3:9)!

Have You Read Your Bible Today? Bible Reading Calendars Are Found At: <http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com>



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