


 "I used to be a Bible teacher."  
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# TC's Thoughts for Discussion

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Take a really short nostalgic trip back to the days of your childhood: Remember how you felt when you first learned that your parents and their adult relatives and friends had lied to you about Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy? Did you begin to question other things they told you, too...especially when they added that you must just have faith to believe it? That's how I felt decades later, when I discovered that my parents and their relatives and friends and our religious leaders had all misinformed me about the nature and scriptural meaning of faith. Disillusioned. Embarrassed. Angry. Confused.

Why would they have done that? The short answer is that they didn't intentionally lie. Instead, they were driven by the universal forces that yield abusive behavior in adults who were themselves abused as children. By *innocently* repeating those lies the people you and I have trusted most have perpetuated one of the most damaging forms of emotional and mental abuse. Compounding that problem is this: Whenever Christians express doubt, their mentors often cite the "just shall live by Faith" scriptures—Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38. The message? Even if it makes no sense at all you must have Faith to believe it, anyhow; so don't be "a doubting Thomas!"

Given such a strong guilt trip, most Christians stop questioning those who presume religious authority over them. Me? I stopped questioning them openly. Inside me, though, the questions kept gnawing away, and I just didn't know how to gain peaceful resolution. Was there something wrong with me? Actually, no. The visible church teaches people what to study—to confirm doctrine. What they hadn't taught me is how to study—to gain 1st-Century truth. You?

Just know that you are not likely to learn how to do that in church, either. Why? The visible church would quickly lose its control over you and all the faithful. Many would even start questioning its credibility and its *authority*...and their questions would enjoy the full support of Scripture. Is the mindset of the visible Christian church unique? No. Mind control is the primary tool of organized religion and government.

- > "What luck for rulers that men do not think." —Adolf Hitler
- > "In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Samuel Clemens
- > "Skeptical scrutiny is the means, in both science and religion, by which deep insights can be winnowed from deep nonsense." —Carl Sagan

Jesus never permitted his feelings to interfere with his thinking. His responses were rational; never hyperspiritual, and rarely emotional. Want to be like him? That's how. "God's gift of a sound mind is a terrible thing to waste."

The apostle, Paul, pronounced high praise of the Bereans of Acts 17:11. Why? Both they and the Thessalonians had initially responded to the Gospel with extreme skepticism. The Thessalonians simply rejected the message. The Bereans went home and studied the scriptures, again, to learn whether the things they had heard just *might* be true. Paul called those Bereans "more noble" because of a characteristic that prompted them to respond intelligently. By that measure, might Thomas have been our Lord's more noble disciple? At 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul (also the author of those "The just shall live by faith" scriptures) wrote, "Study to shew THYSELF approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed..."

As again evidenced by a memorable email exchange with a former pastor, the vast majority of clergymen think (perhaps subconsciously) that they're "called" and all the rest of us "not called." I reminded him that, though many are called, few are chosen. He was quick to agree, based on the apparently prevailing mindset that preachers are "the chosen ones" and we, the "not called" and "not chosen," are their subordinates. He wrote, "My earnest prayer for you and all those who are taking part in your studies is that you will be sure that you don't trade Faith for Understanding." Hmmm...

- > "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?...and fools hate knowledge?" —Proverbs 1:22
- > "knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth." —Proverbs 14:6
- > "My people are destroyed for lack of *sincerity? prayer? worship? church attendance? holiness? faith? righteousness? hyperspirituality? believing what 'we' believe? knowledge...*" —Hosea 4:6

I was a successful Bible teacher for a LOT of years—big sanctuary classes.

I knew what my denomination believed and that's what I taught.

Yes, I should've checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn't I do that? Well, maybe I didn't do that for the same reason that you haven't really checked out what your denomination teaches. "In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Mark Twain



- > "...they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge..." —Paul, at Romans 10:1,2
- > "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age..." —Paul, at Hebrews 5:12-14  
(See, also, Jesus' words at Matthew 15:14, re: the blind who presume to lead the blind.)
- > "If any man desire to be first, [the same] shall be last of all, and servant of all." —Jesus, at Mark 9:35

Surveys by The Barna Group and others indicate that surprisingly large and growing percentages of Christian believers perceive that much of God's written word is fiction. For many, that appears to be a conscious conclusion. For many others, it is apparently subconscious. I think that phenomenon is directly attributable to childhood disillusionment. Who'll be accountable for that?

Feel very free to send us your questions and scriptural rebuttals: [www.DYPK.org/contact](http://www.DYPK.org/contact). But, please, no arguments from 3rd-party "experts."

—T. C. Newsome 

PS: To participate in Bible discussions about articles like this one – or to just read and enjoy them – join us at TC's Friends Club. Here's the hot link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/136708110091989/>

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