

## Making Decisions Based on Opinions or Truths? A Very Big Difference!

Our last Blog Posts: *A Very Big Difference! I Believe or I Assume? and Assume? • Faith? – A Case Study.* The question of this Blog Post (*Making Decisions Based on Opinions or Truths? A Very Big Difference!*) is related and equally significant.

An example of this issue arose as a result of someone indicating their church had, sometime in the not too distant past (similar to many other churches recently), met to discuss and vote on whether or not to allow a certain “class” of people to preach there or not. Their decision, as to be expected, resulted in some people leaving the church.

But it did not sound like they (as is true in the vast majority of similar cases) discussed the underlying larger and greater question of HOW to make better decisions based on anything more than superficial opinions and relative power – the basis of most decisions with their typically unsatisfactory consequences.

Much frustration and many arguments could be alleviated by deciding to whom or what we will look to and accept as true, not by looking at specific issues and discussing the various opinions and options. Trying to make good decisions based on opinions and opinions make any hope for agreement unlikely – feelings will be hurt, people will leave more hardened in their personal opinions, the strongest will win, but nothing positive will result.

Churches today, as throughout history, have faced the same problem and issue of how to best make good decisions: The cumulative traditions of the Church? An elected individual? Where “progress” has led us? Majority rule? . . . Against these pressures there has always been a minority (larger or smaller from time to time) that have understood (by looking around and seeing the vacillations and foolishness of the world) that the *Bible* is the hope for truth and good decisions emanating from the truth.

Pity those who do not believe in ultimate truth because they do not know an important objective of life: finding true and lasting security is looking for a rock on which we can confidently stand; otherwise we stand on insecure and ever shifting sand (and we are standing, more and more, on sand each passing day). As quoted in one of the two prior Blog Posts:

“Therefore **everyone** who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But **everyone** who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." Mt 7:24-29

### Opinions – Sand • Truth – Rock

Expect God to change, to stay current and relevant? Should the majority rule? Or maybe two-thirds just to make sure? Want and need any hope and help? Expect to need them in the future? Have we been satisfied with opinions (our own or of others)? Hint: of one thing we can be sure, we will not find truth on CNN or Fox, we won't find it in the polls, any polls – if we cannot fully depend on God's eternal Word then we have no hope!

Yet God's Word is like any gift – if we choose, for whatever reason, not to accept it (meaning, of course, we must read it!), it is of no value to us, while if taken it can be tested and found to be of

real and lasting value. Millions find this true today and many many millions have done so throughout history – have you?

One of the great and profound questions of the *Bible*:

When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Ps 11:3

For unless someone lives in a deep hole in the ground they can feel and see the key foundations of life are being destroyed. Does the *Bible*, then, provide this as an excuse we can use when we die and face God? No, the LORD is where He has always been, waiting for each person individually to answer what they did with the opportunities and gifts offered them.

The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD is on his heavenly throne.

He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them. Ps 11:4

God's Word is a great gift for those who take, read and find the truths that allow them to stand and indeed make progress in spite of the fact that the surrounding and supporting foundations are being destroyed, have been built on sand. In fact, obvious shifting of foundations is a great Grace to those who need a wake-up call or reminder that there is no security here on earth; we are going to die soon and need to prepare for this, by far life's most significant event – our transition into eternity.

This issue of living a life, making decisions based on personal opinions versus faith in a source of truth, is closely related to our prior post that highlighted the important difference between superficial assuming versus saving faith, asking:

Have we been assuming what we have heard about Jesus (and what He says) is true or can we say we both know and believe in Jesus, in the manner outlined in the *Bible*, with a true and saving faith? This is without question the ultimate and defining question of life.

And this is the similarity and connectivity: opinions and assumptions are superficial and facadic, not the rock of assurance (truth) required for meaningful and saving faith required in an authentic Christian life!

## Assumptions – Opinions versus Truth – Faith

On what do you (and what would others who know you) say you are living and basing your life? Your eternal life?

And how can we move from the left side to the right side? Only by accepting the Grace of God's Word revealed and increasingly (over time and through experience) better understood by His on-going Grace as we read it to become people of truth and faith versus joining the increasing number of vocal disciples of assumptions and opinions. One of the hallmarks of an authentic Christian life, then, must be that of seeking wisdom and truth from God, not settling for the ever-changing assumptions and opinions of the world.

What will we say when our personal end-time comes (and it is coming soon!)? What will we offer as an excuse if we fail to take this great gift of God's Grace – if we do not care enough about what God says to read it?

Just imagine the true value of this offered gift – not only is it God's Word, but He makes it personal to every Christian! Likewise, picture the consequences (now and eternally) of ignoring this great gift.

Assumptions – Opinions • Sand or Truth – Faith • Solid Rock

For, as the refrain of the old (*The Solid Rock*) hymn proclaims:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;

All other ground is sinking sand,

All other ground is sinking sand.

Which best defines your life?