

# **San Juan church of Christ**

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## **What Does God's Word Say About...**

### **Striving To Teach One Faith**

XNIV262020

Twenty-first century Christianity does not believe that it makes any difference what one believes so long as one believes. When the traditions of men add to God's word, it will create confusion as to what God commands us (1 Cor. 14:33). Americans frequently have a smorgasbord approach to religion that views choosing what religious beliefs one accepts to be somewhat like going through a cafeteria line and choosing what dishes one wishes to put on his plate for dinner. If there is something offered that one does not want, such as spinach, he simply passes by this offering and chooses strawberry pie. The result of this view of the Christian faith is that faith is not defined by the content of Scripture, but by the individual's personal preference. As in this example, every man defines and creates his personal faith.

God's will is revealed to mankind in His word, the Bible. The content of faith is defined by what is revealed in the Bible. One's personal faith is determined by his adherence to or rejection of that which is revealed in God's word. The apostle John wrote, "We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6).

In the Old Testament, Isaiah the prophet wrote, "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no light in them" (Isaiah 8:8).

The apostle John also wrote, "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God" (John 8:47). "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

Paul wrote, "If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. But if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized" (1 Cor. 14:37-38).

The faith that saves is a faith that takes God at His word and does what He says (Matt. 7:21; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 5:9). A faith that chooses to commit itself to human wisdom, scientific theories, philosophical theories, and popular opinion over that which is revealed in God's word has no power to save, regardless of how devoted one may be to that system of thought or how sincerely he may follow it. Many of the doctrines preached in the thousands of twenty-first century churches are incompatible with, and contrary, to what is revealed in Scripture.

Just as there were false prophets in the first century church, there are false teachers today. The apostle Peter wrote, "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be maligned" (2 Peter 2:1-2).

Even in the first century church Satan was causing confusion so much so that Paul wrote, "As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men?" (Gal. 1:9-10). Let's strive to please God and not the traditions of men.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:

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