

# The Simple Truth

Most truth is pretty simple. What confuses us are the efforts of men to either over-simplify or over-complicate the truth. As Einstein famously said, we should strive to "Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler!"

Jesus' statement regarding salvation in Mark 16:16 is about as simple as it gets. He said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." That is about as complicated as  $2 + 2 = 4$ . Yet, when it comes to the matter of who is saved and who is lost, men continue to come up with a different answer than the one Jesus gave.

Paul's concern for the Corinthians was that

By Steve Klein

"somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (**2 Corinthians 11:3**). The problem was that the Corinthians were accepting preachers who preached "another Jesus . . . a different spirit . . . or a different gospel" (**2 Corinthians 11:4**). Anytime we believe what men say instead of the simple and plain statements of God's word, we're going to wind up with the wrong answer.

If you think that you were saved by belief alone, and then baptized later, may I ask as Paul asked the Galatians, "Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?" (**Galatians 3:1**)



### Classes This Week

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Sun 5:15 PM</b><br>Kid's Class at the Bldg. | <b>Mon Night</b><br>Men's Class at the Davis' | <b>Wed 10 AM</b><br>Ladies Class at the Rouse's | <b>Thur 7 PM</b><br>Joshua Study ay Jillian and Hannah's |
|--|---|---|--|

### Sick

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)                  | Lori Holloway                                  | Chick Wade                             | Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)    |
| Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters) | Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)       | Jared Nixon                            | Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle) |
| Ross Folmar   | Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts               | Joe Perry (Anna Miller's Relative)     | Marsha (Toni Herd's Cousin)             |
| Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)                       | Kenn and Ellen Smith (Ken Sullivane's Parents) | Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)    | Lee (William Herd's Cousin)             |
| Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)        | Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)            | Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)        | Mike Reed (Friend of the Long's)        |
| Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)            | Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)          | Herbert Missildine (Toni Herd's Uncle) | Jo Faust Williams (Manna Jones' friend) |

### Febuary Birthdays

- 2 - Ken Sullivane
- 2 - Maghen Smith
- 2 - Wesley Herd
- 3 - Chris Long
- 5 - Mark Zeanah
- 5 - Josh Redden
- 6 - Jackson Fowler
- 8 - Grant Burton
- 13 - Megan McMurry
- 13 - Leslie Freeman
- 14 - Leighton Daniels
- 15 - Ella Miller
- 15 - Terria Burton
- 16 - Seth Humphrey
- 17 - A J Wilkerson
- 18 - Caralise Hunt
- 20 - Haley Chittam
- 20 - Lara West
- 23 - Lisa Lanier
- 24 - Jeff Jerkins
- 27 - Julie Johnson

### News and Notes

- Our next Gospel Meeting will be Feb 27- Mar 3 with Alan Cornet
- We will have our monthly men's business meeting today.
- The Prattmont church will have a meeting Feb 6-8 with Harold Carswell
- Tim Morton is currently serving our country n Afghanistan. Please remember him in your prayers.
- Jon Coleman continues treatments and is receiving good reports.
- Perry Hill Road in Montgomery will have a meeting Jan 31-Feb 4 with J. R. Bronger on "Reverence".
- The series on Ephesians with our students was conducted this weekend. We want to thank all who worked to make this a success!
- Audio CD's will be available in the foyer after each service.

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# The Auburn Beacon



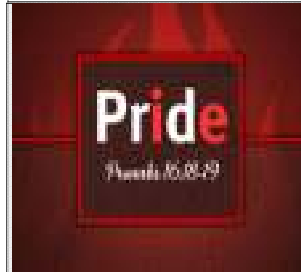
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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## Elitism

By Steve Wallace



### Thought to Ponder

In general, pride is at the foundation of all great mistakes.

In many countries, a sign of an important state event is the presence of the elite guard. If we find that the doctor treating us is among the "elite" in his field it gives us great comfort. It is an honor for a student to be considered among the elite in his field of study. However, the word "elite" also has negative connotations. This is seen in the form of the word we consider herein.

"Elitism" is defined by Webster: "consciousness of being or belonging to an elite" (404). "Elitist" is not found in either of the Webster dictionaries in this writer's possession. Roget's Thesaurus (II) defines it, "Characteristic of or resembling a snob" (adj.) and "One who despises people or things he regards as inferior, esp. because of social or intellectual pretension" (315). As we reflect on these definitions we can see that elitism would be a problem to most people. We consider herein some problems it can cause God's people.

Elitism can be fostered by any number of things. It may come when brethren see themselves as members of an elite group (**Isa. 65:5**) or think of themselves "more highly than they ought to think" (**Rom. 12:3**). It may arise when we use others as a standard for measuring ourselves, rather than using Christ (**2 Cor. 10:12**) or ascend too far too fast (**1 Tim. 3:6**).

were elitists among the Jews. In his parable in **Luke 18:9-14**, Jesus chose a Pharisee as an example of one who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous" (**Luke 18:9**). Today, one can be tempted to this by thinking about how long he has been preaching, how many crises he has come through, how many meetings he holds, etc. When one starts trusting in himself he is cutting himself off from God and falling into a state about which all preachers have tried to warn denominationalists (**Prov. 16:25; Jer. 10:23**).

**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail: LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

**1. It can lead one to trust in himself.** Certainly the Pharisees

**2. It can cause one to look down**

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**on others.** In the above mentioned parable Jesus says the Pharisee therein “despised others” (v. 9). The Pharisee in the parable looked down on “the rest of men” as “extortioners, unjust, adulterers” and especially on the just publican (**Luke 18:11**). This can lead to other symptoms of elitism.

**3. It can lead one to make harsh judgments of others.** We see this in the Pharisees (**John 7:49; Luke 18:11**). If a group of men stand together for the truth of the Gospel elitism could lead one to call them a party. When it comes to handling given situations, the elitist can sit back and judge others as being “too harsh,” “too soft,” or generally not being able to conduct themselves on the high plain he has constructed in his own mind. Elitism can lead one to fail to allow for differences of opinion, personality, and ways of handling various matters. It can lead to a person rendering judgments while exempting himself from his own chosen standard of judgment (**Matt. 23:2-4**). Other manifestations of elitism can follow after this.

**4. It can cause one to believe the best about unworthy men and the worst about worthy men.** Again, the Pharisees provide an example of this, upholding their own and looking down others (**John 7:48-49; Luke 18:11**). In the current discussion on unity with error, men who are clearly leading others to commit adultery are being lauded while those who would warn of such men are being falsely accused and demonized.

**5. It can cause one to think his own way is always best.** The Pharisees exemplify this (**John 7:48-49**). They even reprovved our Lord! (**Matt. 12:2; 15:1**). It is a sign of wisdom to hearken to counsel and of foolishness to despise instruction (**Prov. 12:15; 15:22; 1:7**). The elitist has no time for those whom he views as being “beneath” him, which can tend to another manifestation of elitism.

**6. It can lead to stifling discussion.** When the Pharisees heard views at variance with their own, they blew them off (**John 7:45-52**). It can be impossible to discuss differences with one who looks down on others, makes harsh judgments of them and/or is convinced his own way is above theirs. Those who offer discussion are simply not worth the elitist’s time. (Brethren today who are refusing discussion of their views on the current issues need to hear this.) Thus, the elitist fails to learn from others and hears only from those with whom he agrees. This has consequences.

**7. It can affect one’s doctrinal position.** The Pharisees made “void the word of God by [their] tradition” (**Mark 7:12**), appealing not to the word of God but to opinions of learned men among them (**Matt. 15:2; 19:3; John 7:48**). Today, elitism can lead brethren to appeal to what “the church has always done” or the convictions of some well known brother in place of clear teaching from the word of God. Some are doing this.

**8. It can cause one to fail to do what he knows is right (John 12:42-43).** Who cannot but fear similar occurrences among God’s people today? Some brethren protest their “soundness” on a given issue (like MDR) — and then justify one whom they believe to be teaching error (e.g., by saying they are not false teachers). We will let them and the Lord decide if they are elitists.

### Conclusion

Elitism can be fostered by any number of things. It may come when brethren see themselves as members of an elite group (**Isa. 65:5**) or think of themselves “more highly than they ought to think” (**Rom. 12:3**). It may arise when we use others as a standard for measuring ourselves, rather than using Christ (**2 Cor. 10:12**) or ascend too far too fast (**1 Tim. 3:6**). However, all of us can see that it does not come from God and his word. Hence, we should not be surprised at the fruits of elitism.



## “Preach Christ and not a Plan”?

By Donald Townsley

Beyond polite ethics, Jesus Christ taught us to actively treat others, in all interactions, as you would want to be treated yourself, if the situation was reversed. This is sacrificial goodwill.

Down through the years since I have been preaching the gospel there have been (and still are) men who advocated that we should preach Christ and not a plan of salvation. They phrase it this way: “Preach the man and not the plan”. They seem to think that one cannot preach a plan of obedience to Christ (**Rem. 1:5; Heb. 5:9**) and, at the same time, preach Christ. What they need to understand is that Jesus Christ is revealed to us in the word of God, and that He is inseparably connected with every book of the New Testament. Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my word in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” (**Mark 8:38**) You can see from this passage that Christ is inseparably connected with His words. To fully preach Christ one must preach His commands, His promises, His warnings, His church, His supper, His plan of salvation and righteous living (**Acts 8:4-5, 12**). All of this being true, we cannot ignore any part of what He has said without ignoring that much of Christ (**James 2:10**).

The New Testament is filled with expressions that make it clear that a “plan of salvation” is taught therein. The Romans “obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine” (**Rom. 6:17**). In their obedience to that “form (or mold) of doctrine,” they were “called of Jesus Christ” (**Rom. 1:6**) and “made free from sin” (**Rom. 6:18**).

Paul also told the Romans, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that

love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (**Rom. 8:28**). They were called according to God’s purpose, scheme or plan. They were called of Jesus Christ (**Rom. 1:6**), called by the gospel (**2 Thess. 2:14**), and called by His (God’s) grace (**Gal 1:15**). To be called of Jesus Christ (**Rom. 1:6**), called by the gospel (**2 Thess. 2:14**), and called by God’s grace (**Gal. 1:15**) is to obey the plan of salvation, or “that form of doctrine” (**Rom. 6:17**).

The Hebrew writer said in chapter 9, verse 8 that while the old covenant was in effect “the way into the holiest of all was not yet manifest” - in other words, the plan (or scheme) of salvation had not yet been revealed. Then the writer goes on to tell us in chapter 10, verse 20 that now, under the new covenant, there is “a new and living way,” which is consecrated by Christ. Christ is “the way” (**John 14:6**), and there cannot be any separation between Christ and His “way” (or his plan of salvation). To reject His plan is to reject Him (**John 12:48; Mark 8:38**).

The plan of salvation that Christ “consecrated” (or, dedicated) for us (**Heb. 10:20**) is simple. One must hear the gospel (**Rom. 10:17**), believe the gospel (**Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37**), repent of past sins (**Acts 2:38; 17:30**), confess faith in Christ (**Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37**), and be baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**).

Friend, have you obeyed the gospel? (**2 Thess. 1:8**) If not, won’t you do so, and “hold the pattern of sound words”? (**2 Tim. 1:13 A.S.V.**)

