

# Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:24



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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Northside Church of Christ  
4217 Highway 39 N  
Meridian, MS 39301

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## What does “my judgment” mean in 1 Corinthians 7:25 and 40?

By Kevin Cauley

Please explain the phrase, “my judgment” in 1 Corinthians 7:25 and 40. How could Paul be giving his opinion and also be inspired of God?

Some translations (such as the NASV) render the word judgment in this passage as “opinion.” There are others as well. Most speak of this “judgment.” But whether we use the word “judgment” or “opinion,” we are basically faced with the same question. Was Paul giving personal advice to these Corinthians? Was Paul stating his opinion? And if so, how can that be inspired of God?

In order to correctly understand God’s word, one of the things that we need to remember is that there are several recorded statements in the Bible of uninspired people. For example, when Satan said to Eve, “Thou shalt not surely die,” it was a lie. Note also that in Matthew 4:1-11 we find Satan tempting Jesus and uttering words. These are the words of Satan. Are they inspired? These lies that Satan spoke are recorded in the Bible, but that doesn’t mean that just because it is recorded in the Bible that the statement itself is true. It is recorded that Satan spoke it; that is, the fact of his making the statement is true and we can be sure of that, but the statements themselves are falsehoods spoken by Satan. So for something to be inspired doesn’t guarantee the truthfulness of quoted statements of others within the Bible. Inspiration merely guarantees the truthfulness that those statements were spoken by the person the Bible claimed to speak.

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### SUNDAY MORNING

Triple E  
Edify, Exhort,  
Evangelize  
Reasons to Believe  
8:30 AM

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Thru the Bible in  
52 Weeks - 1  
Corinthians  
9:30 AM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship Service  
10:30 AM

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Matthew 26:17 - 56  
Mark 14:12 - 52  
Luke 22:7 - 53  
John 13:18-38; 18:1-12  
The Last Supper  
Jesus prays in Gethsemane  
7:00 PM



# Bible Question on Baptism for the Dead, 1 Corinthians 15:29

By Kevin Cauley

When we come across a passage within the Bible that is difficult to interpret or seemingly means something that contradicts another plain teaching of scripture, we must look at it through our understanding of the plain teaching of scriptures. Many choose to interpret the difficult passage first and then take perfectly plain scriptures and twist them to fit their interpretation of the difficult passage. Such we must not do, for such is handling the word of God incorrectly. We read in 2 Peter 3:16 the words of Peter who describes some of Paul’s epistles. He says, “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” We must make sure that we do not wrest the scriptures to our own destruction.

So with those things in mind, we come to 1 Corinthians 15:29. “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” The context of this particular passage is that of Paul’s proving to the Corinthians that the resurrection is going to happen. There were some in that day who were teaching that there was no resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12). The Sadducees believed this too (Matthew 22:23). Some were teaching that the resurrection had passed (2 Tim. 2:18). Paul, however, was teaching that the resurrection was still coming and he used every available means to prove this to those in Corinth. So whatever this phrase means—that is, whatever the phrase “baptism for the dead” means—its significance is that the resurrection is still coming.

This phrase does not mean what those of the Mormon faith believe that it means. Mormons believe that one may be baptized for someone who is dead who was not a Mormon, and that person will then have the opportunity, after death, to accept the gospel. The long and short of this teaching is that you get a second chance to be saved after you die. This doctrine just does not mesh with other clear teaching that is within the scriptures. We read in Hebrews 9:27, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” In Luke 16:24 we read, that the rich man wanted Lazarus to come cool his tongue. Abraham replied, “And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence” (Luke 16:26). The rich man knew that there was no escape because he then asked that Abraham send someone so that his brothers would escape this place. Jesus said in John 9:4 “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” The night when no man can work is after death. There are no more works that a person can do to affect one’s salvation after death. Perhaps a statement made by Isaiah makes this quite plain. He says, “Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth” (Isaiah 38:17-19). Isaiah makes it clear that the time for forgiveness of sins is now. The time to be delivered from the pit of corruption is while one is living. Once one has died and is lost, there is no more hope for truth. The living are the ones who have the obligation to make known God’s truth. Paul says, “For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). Today is the day of the living. Today is the day of salvation.

So what does the phrase “baptism for the dead” mean? To be honest, I am not sure that I know what it means. There have been many different suggestions. Some have suggested that it refers to Christian baptism. These suggest that the phrase “the dead” refers to those who have died to sin and are being made alive in Christ. When they do this, they affirm the resurrection of Christ according to Romans 6:1-11. In this understanding, “the dead” is actually short hand for “the resurrection of the dead.” So that it would be baptism for the resurrection of the dead, i.e. in order to obtain the resurrection of the dead.

Others have suggested that Paul is referring to this group of people who are teaching that there is no resurrection for the dead implying some kind of self-contradiction among their own teaching. In other words, they were teaching that there was no resurrection, but they were practicing “baptism for the dead,” i.e. a vicarious baptism for those who had already died without being baptized. This, however, implied a resurrection because baptism is the form of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Those who hold this view say that Paul is not giving an endorsement to the doctrine, but merely stating that if one believed it, then it would imply that their doctrine of no resurrection is false.

Yet another interpretation states that those who had come to accept Christian baptism did so due to the influence of the faithful dead over the many years prior to their baptism. In this sense, they are being baptized for, that is, on account of, the dead who came before them. So if they were being baptized on account of the dead, then they should recognize that they would one day be raised. Finally, one view says that we have the punctuation wrong in the translation. Instead of reading as we would normally read, this view opts for the reading, “Else what shall they do that are baptized? If the dead are not raised at all, (baptism) is for the dead (spiritually). Why are they then baptized for the dead?” This view sees the phrase “the dead” as referring to people who are spiritually dead and thus baptism has no effect for them. I.E. if there is no resurrection, then baptism doesn’t take us out of death and into life, it just leaves us in a state of spiritual death and does nothing for us. We are merely being baptized to become dead. I don’t believe that I can say for certain that I know what this phrase means. I do know, however, that it does not endorse some type of proxy baptism for those who have died un-repented.

Similarly, sometimes in the Bible, we find opinions given by men. For example, in the case of Paul’s trial before Agrippa, Agrippa thought that Paul should have been set free (Acts 26:32). That was certainly Agrippa’s opinion, but it is recorded for us in the scriptures. Acts 26:32 is inspired in that it portrays an accurate representation of Agrippa’s opinion. We are guaranteed by God that these were the historical words that Agrippa said. However, the words that Agrippa spoke himself were not inspired words in and of themselves. The same could be said of Pilate and Festus as well.

The case with 1 Cor. 7 is a little more difficult, because we are dealing with an inspired apostle. The weight of the opinion of an apostle is heavy. But, nevertheless, Paul said that he was speaking in matters of his own personal judgment. So we must respect that fact. It is guaranteed by inspiration to be a true representation of Paul’s own personal judgment. Paul was addressing a special situation in which the people of that time were under “distress” (vs. 26). It is due to that distress that Paul gives his own opinion on how to deal with the question of marriage. The question as to whether to marry or not is ultimately always a judgment call. There is no biblical requirement to be married. So Paul is simply saying in this passage, “since we have some persecution going on, it would be better to remain unmarried during this time as opposed to getting married and consequently facing the prospect of seeing your mate tortured.” So, did Paul give his opinion? Yes he did. Is this passage of scripture inspired? Yes, it is. It is inspired in the sense that we are guaranteed to have Paul’s opinion on this matter. Would that opinion be binding upon us today? If we were in similar circumstances then we would do well to heed his advice. However, we note that even in this context Paul says that it is better to marry than to burn (with passion) (1 Corinthians 7:9). So the context clearly indicates that we are dealing with Paul’s own personal opinion and advice, given the situation of persecution that was upon the church.

## Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments (Maxine Powell)
- All those affected by COVID-19
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## Communion Preparation

- Sign up sheet for 2021 is in foyer
- February - Carlberg
- March - Rowell, T
- April - Juliano

## Announcements

- Baby Shower honoring Kylie Joiner, Sunday April 11 immediately following worship service

## March Birthdays & Anniversary’s

- Mark Potts - 6th
- Robbi Cooper - 20th
- Larry Montgomery - 13th
- Kylie Joiner - 23rd
- GiGi Juliano - 19th
- Greg & Maxine Powell - 16th

Every Sunday Morning  
@ 8:00 AM  
on WTOK-TV



## Sermon Notes

## Men to Serve

Announcements/Opening Prayer - Don Potts  
Scripture Reading - 1 Corinthians 15:12 - 20  
Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell  
Head of Lord’s Table - Shay Cooper  
Assist on Lord’s Table - Camden Cooper  
Scripture Reading - 1 Corinthians 11:23 - 29  
Closing Prayer - James Johnson

- Comcast Cable 6
- Comcast Cable 431
- Comcast Cable 1011
- DirecTV 11
- DirecTV 396
- Dish Network 11
- Over-the-air 11.3