

# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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## Evidence Tampering

By

Jackie M. Stearsman

I am sure that you are aware of the trial of O. J. Simpson. One television station in our area is covering all the televised portions of it and most other stations are giving detailed analysis of the day by day happenings.

Presently there is a great deal of time spent on whether the evidence has been tampered with or not. "To *tamper* is to interfere by making unsought, unwelcome, often destructive changes or by trying to influence another in an improper way."

This is of great concern to all involved for if the evidence has not been handled properly it will not provide the truth. If those handlers of the evidence do not handle the evidence properly there can be no case made against O. J. by the prosecution.

As I read and hear of these charges and counter charges I could not help but relate it to the study of the Bible and how people mishandle the Biblical evidence. Let us consider some parallels that may give us insight into why the field of religion is so confusing and complicated for some. Ask

yourself some questions: Has the evidence been corrupted? Do those promoting religion do so on the basis of the evidence in the Bible or do they merely follow their subjective wishes and wants. When I hear religious issues discussed, do I know enough to tell if the evidence has been corrupted? When I listen to the case made by a religious person, do I at times find myself wondering if the financial items

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are not the most important item? When I talk religion, do I tamper with the evidence? Do I want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

The Bible demands that

we examine the evidence and draw proper conclusions. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21-22 ASV). "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The Bible demands that we not tamper with the evidence. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19).

### Rejecting Eye Witness Accounts

What would we think if a trial proceeding were to have more interest in the theories and opinions of would be critics several centuries away while at the same time ignoring the eye witnesses' testimony? Many books show interest in modern

theories but are fatally flawed because they do not compare the theories with the eye witness accounts of the Bible. Man often comes up with sophisticated means of suppressing the testimony of the Bible. When this is done then there is no way of determining whether Christianity is the one true religion of God or not.

### **Acting Without Authority**

If the action of the prosecution can be shown to be without proper authority then the court must reject it. Was the evidence gathered with proper authority? Was the arrest made by proper procedure?

If we can understand how important evidence is in a civil or criminal matter then we can understand how important it is in religious matters.

Much that is done in the name of religion would be discontinued if there had to be Biblical approval of the actions.

Some men act as though they cannot understand this simple principle but they must use it every day of their lives.

It will be informative to you the next time you discuss religion to ask for the authority for an action. Be ready for a variety of assertions that would be rejected by a novice in any other field. To act without authority is to trample evidence under foot.

In case you are not familiar with the demands of the Bible in this area consider the following passages. "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17). "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching,

the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into (your) house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (2 John 9-11).

### **Feelings Replace Evidence**

Most interviews of a religious nature have to do with what a given person feels or thinks. Time may be spent in citing "scholars" and what modern critics feel and/or believe. Would you want to be judged on the basis of what people feel? Are the feelings of people always reliable? I am sure if we were innocent and had facts to show this to be true we would not wish to be judged on feelings. We would demand that facts be presented.

How different we act in the field of religion. Many think no deeper than their feelings. Some are so subjective that they assert that "the heart has reasons that the mind knows not of." How would such nonsense play in any other field than religion?

### **Denying Persons Can Understand**

It is not uncommon to hear, read or have it implied that "we should not be expected to understand the Bible alike." After all, look at all the different religious bodies that have contradictory doctrines and positions. How could you expect individuals to understand such a complicated book like the Bible? It never seems to occur to some that those writing articles that cannot understand the Bible, expects that their writings and lectures are to be understood. They would likely react very

heatedly if their message has been treated unfairly or misrepresented.

If there can be no correct consensus of minds in the subject then the discussion is a waste of time. This dear reader is the direct result of tampering with the evidence.

### **Pick and Choose**

Another way in which the evidence is tainted is by people choosing what they want and ignoring or rejecting what they do not like. This may be easily seen in the discussion of marriage-divorce-and-remarriage. It will also be evident when the subject of worship is under review. Most have no problem understanding and applying the Bible on the subject of a contribution on every first day of the week. Some of the same people refuse to observe the Lord's Supper each Sunday. Why?

How would we look at a judge who refused, without justification, to permit all the evidence be considered? How would you feel if people would only take what they wanted of your explanation and outright rejected what they disliked about it? Would not this be tampering with the evidence?

### **Creating Prejudice**

Some are masters at turning the hearers against the

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evidence for Christ and His Will? "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn (upon them)" (2 Cor. 4:3-4). Have you ever heard it stated: "You think you are the only one right?" "You think all others are wrong?" The question ought to be, Is my position in harmony with the evidence (Bible)? Some do not like this direct approach for this causes them to have to make a decision. Some had rather feigned ignorance than to make difficult decisions with truth (Matt. 21:23-27). To refuse to accept evidence is to tamper with it.

#### **Take Away Personal Responsibility**

There are those who would place most criminal guilt upon society. To do so is to remove the individual committing the crime from personal accountability. Some leave the impression that if one is well educated, that this person will not be criminally inclined. Yet, the evidence shows that some of those who are most educated commit or are the masterminds behind some very evil acts. Some would leave the impression that the social status and/or where we are born would determine our actions removing us from being responsible for our actions. Did you ever stop to consider where Jesus grew up? Why was he no criminal? Did you ever read of the wealth and education of Solomon? Why did he go wrong?

It is true that society and circumstance may play a part in our criminal actions but it is still the case that God will judge us as individuals and not by race,

social status, and/or educational standing (Ezekiel 18). We will be judged according to what we have done (be it good or evil), and our God is no respecter of persons. "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is (the book) of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. 20:12-13). "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things (done) in the body, according to what he hath done, whether (it be) good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).

#### **Twisting Evidence**

There are some who do not handle the evidence as they should. They are divided into two groups by Peter. He said one group is ignorant and that a second group is unsteadfast. He also warns of the tactics and makes us aware that this is no idle past time. He would have us know it is possible to fall from a position of faithfulness by following those who tamper with the evidence. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all (his) epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and

unsteadfast wrest, as (they do) also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, knowing (these things) beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pet. 3:14-17).

#### **Take Away the Key of Knowledge**

Some in Jesus day were accused by him of removing from the mind of the people the key that would enable them to understand and appreciate the evidence. Is not this a great evil? What could one do that would be more harmful than take away an appreciation for the Christ and what He came to do? His words are as follows: "Woe unto you lawyers! For ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered" (Luke 11:52).

#### **Conclusion**

We must be aware of how evidence is treated and appreciated. If we do not love and wish to do what is right we are asking for God to become our enemy. "(Even he), whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the

Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:9-13). The only way we can avoid the mistakes men make in handling the evidence is to place the love of truth and obedience to truth as foremost in our lives. "Buy the truth, and sell it not; Yea, wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Prov. 23:23).

Dear Brethren:

I appreciate all the help you are giving to one of our Bushnell young men, Greg Harmon. We can see his improvement each time he preaches. I'm sure he will be an earnest worker for the Lord.

Sincerely,

Margaret Chastain

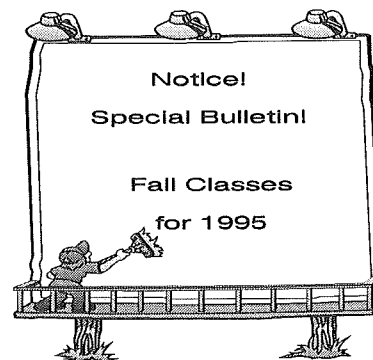
The fall semester will begin with registration on the evening of August 25, 1995, at seven o'clock in the fellowship hall of the South Florida Church of Christ. Please mark your calendar and plan to be here if you are going to be enrolling for classes. The first day of classes will be on the following Monday, August 28, 1995. The first evening class will be on Tuesday, August 29, 1995. The semester consists of sixteen weeks of classes. The week of November 20-24, 1995, there will be no school as this is the break

for the Thanksgiving holiday. The semester will conclude on December 22, 1995. Anyone who desires a catalog and application, please call or write the school office and one will be sent to you.

There is room for both full time and part-time students to enroll in the program. In order to assure that we have enough textbooks, please complete your pre-registatration as soon as possible.

Below is a complete list of the subjects to be taught for the fall semester along with the times and the instructor for each

class. Of special interest is the class on Computers. With the use of computers in every phase of life today, its use in the church is an area to be explored in this class.



**Schedule of Classes for the Fall Semester 1995**

HOURS	COURSE	INSTRUCTOR	CREDIT
<b>Monday</b>			
8:30-12:00	Romans	Davis	3
1:00-4:15	Logic	Burgett	3
<b>Tuesday</b>			
8:30-12:00	Greek I	Stearsman	3
1:00-4:15	Genesis-Exodus	Stilwell	3
7:00-9:30	Bible Study Resources	Blackman	2½
<b>Wednesday</b>			
8:30-12:00	Revelation	Stearsman	3
1:00-4:15	Isaiah & Jeremiah	McAnally	3
<b>Thursday</b>			
8:30-12:00	Computers & Churches	Stearsman	3
1:00-4:15	I & II Corinthians	Davidson	3
<b>Friday</b>			
8:30-12:00	Denominational Dogmas	Daugherty	3
1:00-4:15	Bible Geography & Archaeology	Franklin	3

**FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

1807 SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE  
LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33803-2653

**DIRECTOR:** Jackie M. Stearsman  
Phone (813) 683-4043

*Address Correction Requested*