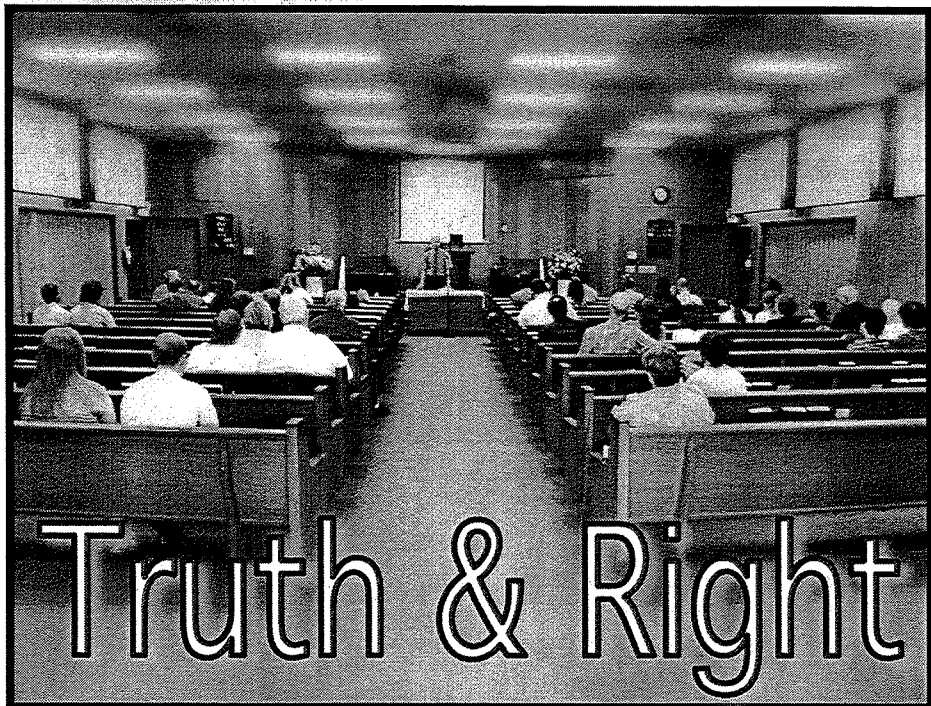


In search of...



Truth & Right

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Bible Talk

One of my evangelist friends hosted a radio program called "Bible Talk." He constantly worked to clarify our thinking about the terms we use when we speak about our faith. This brief article reflects some of his teaching.

Language is fascinating. It changes from generation to generation – sometimes from day to day. Each year dozens of new words appear in the English dictionaries. Recent new words are: biodiesel, ringtone, supersize,

agritourism, and aquascape. In everyday conversation, we even create meaningful words that appear in no dictionary, but still communicate what we intend. For example, we use a golf cart for many trips other than golf so we call it a go-cart. Mary Poppins created the term, supercalifragilisticexpealidosis; a word that apparently could be more simply stated as "good".

So, what's the problem?

There is no "problem" with language-creep in our everyday communications about our busy lives. Surely we could not be expected to live without being able to say, "double quarter-pounder with cheese" or "sandwich generation!"

However, when it comes to God's word, our creativity tends to develop more than just new words. It tends to go further and warp and distort and even add to the truths that God intended.

More than once, we are warned not to add to or take away from the word of God. Proverbs 30:6 says, "Add not to his words, lest he reprove you, and you be found a liar." Revelation 22:18 tells us, "For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Revelation 22:19 reads, "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

I fear that at times we think that God needs some help. Our solution is to just "fix things up" for Him. God, as the

above references make crystal clear, would have us understand His word as He inspired men to write it.

Here are some of the ways that we tend to try to supplement Bible in our everyday talk. These words seem to be common in everyday conversation about faith. But they have little to do with God's word:

Buddhist
Cardinal
Catechism
Catholic
Chapel
Christmas
Clergy
Conservative
Easter
Fellowship Hall
Last Supper
Liberal
Mormon
Muslim
Protestant
Rapture
Rosary
Second Coming
Synod
Youth Pastor

People commonly use these terms as though they are Bible words even though they are not. Some of them are easy to relate to Bible words, but none of the phrases is actually in the Bible (except for the unfortunate translation in Acts 12:4 of the Greek word for “Passover” that was rendered “Easter” by the King James translators). All of the terms require explanation to understand what we might be communicating.

For example, sometimes I say that I belong to a conservative church. A stranger may have no idea what that means. It may be that they would think I have certain political leanings. In Bible terms, I would more clearly communicate by saying I belong to a church that really works to use God’s inspired scripture to decide how to live and worship. Then, I can point to Second Timothy 3:16 where it says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

We may have a vague idea what a rosary is, or what a youth pastor does. But we are hard-pressed to really define what these words actually mean in Bible terms. Someone may admit that a term is not there,

but the idea is there. The common vernacular is, “Well, it’s not there in so many words, but . . .”

Let’s be frank: no matter how logical our thought process and advanced our hermeneutics — if it is not in the Bible, then it is not in the Bible.

Language is ever changing. Now we “tweet” and “Google”. We have “Facebook friends” and we talk about gigabytes, “iTunes,” iPhones, and websites. All that is to be expected and most of it is good, wholesome, and productive communication for our busy lives today.

Our languages are continuously changing. However, God does not change. Malachi 3:6 says, “For I am the LORD, I change not.” It will serve us well to use and have a firm grasp of the terms the Bible uses to describe the church and our faith.

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E L E N W K F P T N W P S I I M U V F B
 A W W U L X Z M O U T H D X N B X A F A
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 Q W X V W W L Q E B P L U G M G H X E V
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 B F L X M T E L Q Y M F G J G A E O A A
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- In Cana He turned W_____ into wine (John 2:1-11)
- Demons named L_____ were cast into pigs (Matt. 8:28-33)
- Jesus raised the daughter of a man named J_____ (Mark 5:21-24)
- In the garden He healed Malchus' E____ (Luke 22:50-51)
- The Lord saved his disciples by calming a S_____ (Mark 4:35-41)
- He healed a man whose hand was W_____ (Matt. 12:9-10)
- So many fish were caught, nets were B_____ (Luke 5:6)
- Unseen, the C_____’s servant was healed (Matt. 8:5-13)
- The temple tax was in the M_____ of a fish (Matt. 17:24-27)
- In G_____ many sick were healed (Mark 6:53-56)
- Seven L_____ and fish fed four thousand (Mark 8:1-13)