

The "New" Church of God Messenger  
A Newsletter for the People of God  
February 26, 2022 --- Issue No. 56  
Special Edition

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(Lisle, Illinois)

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**Contributors:** Nathaniel Burson, Darwin Lee, Laura Lee, Jim Patterson

**Website:** Church of God, Bismarck <https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org>

## Articles

# The Doctrine of the Stones

by Jim Patterson (Lisle, Illinois)

Anyone will become aware of the various contentions that arise over doctrine; often surrounding points of view about the nature of God or proper worship. Although in this article we will touch on a couple of specific teachings that give birth to contentions and controversy, we do so only to illustrate and shed light on a greater over-riding perspective of the New Covenant regarding worship and proliferation of the gospel that may be often lost on us. The intent here is to step back for a moment to hopefully get a proper healthy perspective on learning and growth, and to re-affirm our appreciation of the scope of the gospel message that was intended to transcend generations and nations.

We are not attempting to enter into the arguments with exhaustive proofs often demanded by those involved, nor do we have a vested interest in proving or disproving a particular doctrinal point of view.

Some may meet this article with some resistance, however we would like our readers to take an open mind to the content, as it is written to promote a more mutual understanding. We are not going to advocate tolerance of those who take contentious doctrinal positions that are not supported by scripture.

In my experience, the longer a person has had an adamant position, the more difficult it is for them to see their error. It seems there is an unhealthy situation in the Church of God where it has become more about being right and correct on an issue or a doctrine, than actually giving glory to God and giving Him the credit that He alone is right and had the foresight to ensure that His offering of the gospel was to reach everyone. After all, when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14:10-12, 2 Corinthians 5:10), do we plan to say "Yes, Master" or do we plan to argue our doctrinal understanding? When we admit error in our own thinking and accept the correction of scripture and the work of the Spirit, we give God the glory. So, is it not better to admit error than to try to defend wrong thinking?

### BE CAREFUL HOW YOU LEARN

To begin, given all the ideas that have proliferated in the Church of God and the Sabbath keeping world, and all the teachers making themselves available, let us turn to the Savior on His advice that we would be well to heed regardless of our self-confidence:

"Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him" (Luke 8:18).

Regardless of the century in which the Christian lives, Jesus Christ foresaw the potential in our nature to lock into erroneous mindsets regarding the faith that limit our potential to experience and share the gospel. Notice that I use erroneous mindset, not doctrine as we traditionally understand doctrine, which can limit our potential. The reality is your doctrine is what is truly sewn in your heart and mind that controls your behavior. A devout Sabbath keeping individual who refuses to love his enemies as Christ commanded has an element of false doctrine. A devout Sabbath keeping individual defending the faith who refuses to love his brother is a liar (1 John 4:20) and does not represent Christ on this earth, no matter how well he confidently espouses sound doctrine otherwise.

Another trap seems to be finding doctrinal security through a man rather than in the One, the Christ, Who saves. We have seen more than a few who find security in the group they associate with; repeatedly being told they have the most doctrines right and others are disobedient for not recognizing their teaching. Some on a more individual basis can begin to identify with their particular doctrine or revelation they believe brings them closer to God and have zeal to promote their truth by any means possible.

All of this happens to varying degrees, but any deviation from security in Jesus Christ invariably leads to arrested development. Jesus Christ even tells us by this verse the believer is unaware of what he is losing, even though he still believes he has it, or growing in it; a sobering reality.

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So, in the zeal for their own teachings some have brought their growth in Christ to a grinding halt or have derailed their walk altogether. More fruitful learning and the joy in the Christian experience in Christ has eluded them. From what I have witnessed over the years they seem to have plenty of knowledge and experience, but Christ’s prophecy of losing what they seem to have has already come to be.

Let us look into more detail how this may be occurring. I believe there are two approaches we can take a look at as to where we get derailed in doctrine that leads to unnecessary division. One is failure to grow in grace alongside doctrine, and the other is confidence in the flesh.

**KNOWLEDGE AND GRACE**

Knowledge must grow together with grace (2 Peter 3:18). The knowledge, if not understood with the grace that God has in Himself and given to us, can actually become a detriment to our ability to freely worship. Knowledge that has not grown with grace will also limit our fruitful interactions with both believers and unbelievers.

Grace may be best described as divine enablement; it is something that comes from God and increases from God. Even beyond unmerited pardon, it is the ability to overcome in our lives for the purpose of realizing greater possibilities (As Paul recognized in 2 Corinthians 12 for example). It is given with perfect wisdom and allows us to live more peacefully with others and our lot in life. Grace is a word that describes the multifaceted condition under which the Christian lives.

If knowledge is not balanced with grace, we will find ourselves spending a great deal of our energy proving a doctrinal point and disproving anything that opposes us. Knowledge without grace must be a frustrating and perhaps a lonely experience in increasing isolation. The grace of God understands our limitations that knowledge alone cannot correct. Even with the right knowledge, without grace we may not be able to apply it correctly.

Conversely, grace without knowledge lacks structure and direction. Worship and obedience requires the knowledge of God’s expectations.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6).

The good Christian that has wisely learned the law of God and has balanced his learning with grace will be effective in communicating the gospel:

Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old” (Matthew 13:52).

With that background, let us advance our discussion on the subject of grace and the extent of its implications with our covenant with Jesus Christ.

It takes a while for a developing believer to understand the totality of the following verse as recorded by John: And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:16, 17).

This statement shows the superiority of the New Covenant over the covenant that Moses inaugurated. John was contrasting the dominant characteristics of the two covenants. Whereas law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ. Scripture reveals to us that the law expresses God’s standards and structure, but grace and the truth behind these His laws help us to fulfill His will. Grace existed in the Old Covenant, but it is now expressed fully to us through Jesus Christ.

There are two examples in this article of the grace of God that believers today have substantially overlooked. I believe the Church as a whole would have benefited greatly regardless of what side of the fence, they were on regarding these two doctrinal matters. Not only these two examples, but also in numerous others. Before we look at them, the second item we need to discuss is confidence in the flesh.

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**CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH**

Every one of us at some point has carried ourselves in the faith with some confidence in the flesh and not in God, and it is likely to some degree we still do. It is in our nature to do so, and any degree of self- awareness should bring us to admit it. God’s grace has made provision for us in this regard, but it does not give us permission to continue with fleshly confidence, or to try to build with it. If we can still be taught and are willing to submit ourselves to the will of God, which is to say to be led by the Spirit of God, we will come to this awareness and find and accept the correction that is needed. This is not always the case, as experience has taught us, as there are those who have arrested their growth in Christ by not letting go of their own confidence in themselves, but have developed a self-confidence in:

- Secular knowledge of evil and scandal
- By the group they belong to and their leader(s)
- A unique observance or understanding of the Holy Days; accusing others of being in error.
- Attempting to orient their faith with Hebrew roots – either in language, dress, or identification with a Tribe of Israel (Anglo-Israelism).
- Self-exalting ideas about their calling.

Confidence in the flesh is a common occurrence in Church of God circles, and scripture tells us this is nothing new. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul spoke of a right to claim confidence in the flesh: For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law blameless.

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:3-11).

As Paul excelled in the law and the prophets, it is fair to assume he also knew the Psalms and Israel’s history well. As a Pharisee he dressed the part, wore the right clothes and hats, and probably had an appropriately trimmed beard. He knew and practiced his stuff.

There are at least a couple of important things for us in this passage that we need to bring our attention to. The first is that it suggests worshiping God in the Spirit and rejoicing in that same Spirit is not in union with confidence in the flesh. Confidence in the flesh limits worship and rejoicing regardless how we might try to stir up worship. Anything that we allow to interfere with our worship is disobedience.

Secondly, even with the extent in which Paul confidently excelled in the knowledge of the law and Judaism, he compared it as rubbish to knowledge of the Person of Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection. So here we have an example to consider for us all: whatever confidence one may have in the Old Testament scriptures, their own genealogy to Jacob, what is really going on in the world, Biblical symbolisms and typologies, when a new moon is appearing or when the barley is ripe in Palestine, they do not compare to a personal relationship with God, the gratitude, the simple joy in salvation, and the power that comes by faith in His Son. Worship comes about naturally this way.

Knowledge of the scriptures, genealogies, symbolisms and typologies and all that we listed above, and more are not in opposition to our faith in Jesus Christ. Some of these topics SVM has dedicated numerous articles on in the past.

Understanding the power of His resurrection includes understanding the grace of God that came by His resurrection. There is a power behind the grace! Grace is not a weak word expressing tolerance of ignorance; it is a powerful presentation of God’s capacity to enable a true believer in his overcoming and his walk with God.

It is unlikely anyone would disagree with the preceding paragraph, or admit confidence in the flesh, but let us bring this

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closer to home.

Paul, in reference to the law, does in fact include proper and correct observances of new moons, Sabbaths, God’s annual Holy Days at their most appropriate times, and all the ways to say the various Names of God; why and when. What we have just listed here is a sample of the things in which some today have developed an unhealthy confidence.

In regard to the Holy Days, they can be exaggerated in the mind of some to such an extent they would have others to believe that if they were not kept on the appropriate days, and for the right reasons, and even in the right way, an individual will fall under a category of disobedience, falling short of some kind of definition of acceptability, and subject to a new form of accountability. These kinds of assertions may have had a place in Israel under the Old Covenant, particularly as it pertained to Israel as a national theocracy, but they are entirely inappropriate for sincere Christians and their personal covenant under grace they have made with their Savior.

We want to emphasize at this junction to our readers that a personal belief in how to observe a day, a sacred name or timing of spring or fall festivals is between you and your Savior. If your conscience guides you in regards to these observances, then let your conscience be your guide, for that which is not done in faith is sin (Romans 14:23). We will point out however that experience has also taught us that certain belief practices are less innocuous than others in this regard, and we are looking at a couple of them in this article.

Confidence in the flesh is an attractive and alluring path as it does give a degree of self-assurance that one is saved and in good standing in Christ, so it does become prevalent. The carnal mind feels more in control, building on its own self-confidence. Submission to Jesus Christ, faith, hope, and love are things the believer must instead yield to continually. They are weapons against fleshly confidence.

Paul makes an effective generalization regarding confidence in the flesh: These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (Colossians 2:23).

We may think the kind of things Paul is talking about in Colossians 2 are of no concern to us, but anything that creeps into our thinking, regardless of how we might justify it Biblically or otherwise, must not enable confidence in the flesh. How do we detect it in ourselves and how do we prevent it from happening?

It is not hard to detect it in others. This writer has encountered it repeatedly, and the symptoms can become evident if we are paying attention. These symptoms vary but they all seem to revolve around adding some form of regulation into their faith. Often this seems to lead to attempts to promote such a regulation on others.

On one occasion I had a fellow at a feast site tell me of his past findings regarding the proper Passover date of observance, and proudly told me of his past contentions with ministry over the matter, eventually being asked to leave a congregation or two because of his continued assertions. He was quite proud in this regard. He then advised that if I believe the way I did regarding the day and way of observance that is perfectly fine, but I better be ready to explain myself to the Lord when I see Him. Is this what our faith is all about? Is it not better to be ready to accept what the Lord says, rather than to have confidence in our flesh that we will be right, no matter what He says?

**LET NO ONE JUDGE YOU**

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ (Colossians 2:16,17).

The context of this verse deals with Judiazers and Gnostics that were attempting to forward their doctrinal agenda on the brethren in Colossae. I am even confident that this short list is not exhausted in what we should not allow others to impress on us to doubt our worship. We know this as this encouragement comes from the simple fact expressed in a few verses earlier:

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and

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you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:8-10).

Those who argue the need for a certain calendar observance, name pronunciations, or adherence to rituals and dress rooted in Hebrew culture should soberly consider what the scriptures teach us above, which transcends generations of believers, evolution of languages and circumstances.

Let us be clear: nothing, no religious system or association, ancient or original language, or some kind of religious discipline of rules will add to your experience of your life in Jesus Christ.

**TIME TO GRASP THE MEANING OF “TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD”**

Let us refresh ourselves on the scope of the Great Commission.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).

And He said to them, “Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world” (Romans 10:18).

When Jesus instituted the New Covenant, it was instituted in a distinct form that opened the door wide for an international church, where neither Jerusalem or the Temple were at its physical worship center, nor the Levitical priesthood as the center of “worship authority”. The individual is now part of a chosen priesthood, and Christ promises His presence anywhere in the globe where 2 or 3 are gathered together, at any time for any reason under His authority (Matthew 18:20).

The gospel of the Kingdom of God is not custom centric, Jerusalem centric, harvest centric, moon centric or language centric. The gospel is Christ centric. This is necessary for the gospel to move forward without unnecessary restriction. Sabbath/Holy Day observing Christians who are by nature sincerely looking to obey and worship God in an appropriate Biblical manner without man-made influences may eventually be challenged to investigate the Hebrew Calendar. We find the same or others who come to terms for the same reasons on what really is the pronunciation of the name of their Savior and perhaps of the Father. This in itself is perhaps a good thing, but again, be careful how you learn.

How can we properly observe Holy Days without a central authority, and how do we justify modern languages in worship that pronounce the name of the Messiah differently than the original? Should we be concerned because Hebrew names have meaning, and that the Name of God as supposedly assumed, loses meaning in modern languages? God has made full provision for this by the fullness of His grace expressed to us.

In case the reader might be concerned or needs clarification regarding the direction this article is heading, realize that we are not rejecting the Ten Commandments or other clear commands of Scripture. We are discussing grace-covering questions of Scriptural interpretation and application. There is no section of the Bible saying: “These are the rules necessary for calculating your calendar.” There is no section of the New Testament explaining how to teach the pronunciation of divine names to those who do not speak Hebrew. If there were such Scriptures, and we ignored them, it would be a sin. But the actuality is numerous Bible teachers interpreting various scriptures and history in numerous ways, each concluding that they know the Father’s will on the matter. The grace of God gives us confidence not to fear these uncertainties.

**THE HEBREW CALENDAR**

It does happen when looking into the calendar that there seems to be the conclusion by some that those following the calculated Hebrew calendar are being disobedient, not being blessed, or falling short in some capacity for accepting the influences of man-made calculations and postponements. Those following the calculated Hebrew calendar have done their fair share of finger pointing as well.

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In regard to the annual Holy Days, it was Israel's religious authorities who were to declare, announce or officially proclaim the beginnings of the months and the precise days on which God's Feasts were to be observed (Leviticus 23:4). It was first given to Aaron and Moses, and then to the lineage of Aaron's offspring.

Jewish religious leaders (the priests) had a solemn duty, as well as God given authority, to make binding decisions concerning the Hebrew calendar. It was they alone who declared the New Moons. If it was agreed necessary to make an adjustment to observations, then they did so. This is known Biblically and historically.

Those days are gone now, so who has the authority? If I am not mistaken in reading my New Covenant scriptures, you have the authority:

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:4,5).

And

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy (1 Peter 2:9,10).

The above scriptures are not light-hearted religious speak to make us feel good. They are a powerful presentation of the authority we have in Christ in our worship and service toward God. Here is the grace of God to the believer, which is the divine enablement to do His will. These amazing words elevate reality of the believer in Christ beyond measure. In these brief passages of scripture, Peter lays hold of the entire wealth of Israel's identity and applies it to Jesus Christ and the believer. When we come to Jesus we come to a Living Stone, not the city of Jerusalem and not to Judaism. A royal priesthood is a priesthood with authority, and it is given to us to exercise this authority.

If the Levitical High Priest who had the authority to proclaim the Feasts, and alone had limited access to enter into the physical Holy of Holies, how much more authority does the believer who now boldly enters into the real Holy of Holies (Hebrews 10:19)?

Therefore in regard to worship practices, collectively believers who are being led by the Spirit can agree within themselves as groups just how they observe the Feasts of the Lord, and have the authority to do so. It is of little value now to try to argue there is an ultimate more God honored New Moon or calendar that only more obedient Christians will be observing.

#### **LANGUAGE AND SACRED NAMES**

Part of the enticement of the Hebrew roots movement is that the Hebrew language has meaning with its words, so the use of Yeshua, Yahshuah or Yehoshuah for the name of the Messiah, meaning salvation, or shalom (meaning peace) is getting more common, particularly among Sabbath keepers wishing to be as authentic as possible. This writer does not take exception to the use of Hebrew names or words if the believer does feel more comfortable with their use, nor do we wish to enter into the arena of arguments surrounding sacred names. Some folks here at our local congregation use “Yeshua” as they feel more comfortable with this pronunciation of the name. However, what is important to us, because it is important to Jesus Christ and the Father, is that the scope of the gospel is understood, and that no one limits that scope in any fashion, even if in ignorance.

On Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given, Jesus Christ sent a strong signal to all those present and to generations to come. The message was that language will not be a barrier to the expression of the Gospel. That famous message was heard “each in our own language in which we were born” (Acts 2:8)—not in their own language with added Hebrew words. No language, past present and future has any insufficiency in expressing the greatness of God as far as He is concerned.

This includes the fact that languages transliterate names and places. Do we think God did not anticipate this occurring? Jesus is an eventual transliteration of the Greek Ἰησοῦς (Iesous) and Greek was the language of the original gospels and

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commonly spoken at the time as the language of the people. If someone uses Jesus (English), with all its variants in pronunciation in English in the world it is of no less value than its pronunciation or writing the disciples used. Any argument to the contrary denies what the Lord mandated on Pentecost. Again, do we see and appreciate the grace of God?

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).

All Christians wishing to serve God and the brethren must come to terms with the overriding truth that Jesus Christ can save to the uttermost as High Priest. If there are those who continue to insist on presenting arguments for proper or better worship tied to the pronunciation of the Name, observation of new moons, genetic lineages, or other distractions, they may be causing harm and division, and harm and division are things that will weigh in on God's judgment of us.

**LET US HEAR THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER**

This sub-title is drawing from the conclusion of Ecclesiastes, where after the Preacher, having set his heart out by wisdom to set in order all things done under heaven, ended only knowing the vanity of trying to figure it all out and getting it all correct, and the weariness it is to the flesh in all that he may have done researching to get there. There are limits to wisdom and knowledge. This seems to be appropriate parallel to those who have an honest appreciation of the way in which they were called. An experiential awareness of Christ over time reveals the grace of God and what it does mean to live by faith.

Living by faith is, by definition, living a life without knowing. You do not know all that is happening and why, and you only see through a glass darkly. If there is something you really need to know, then through your study of His Word God will see to it you know it, and this especially applies to your overcoming.

The grace of God also tells us by definition that there will always be some degree of error in our thinking, whether it be about God, ourselves, the Church, or where we are in the universe. So, we all need to get over trying to prove it all out and figure it all out. Your ultimate decision in life, and in every day of your life, is that you continue to believe in His Son and what He did for you and what He will do, and this you can ONLY do by faith. This is not to be done without knowledge so that we do not believe in vain.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

However, if you want to take the above appeal by Paul to its very end, then consider that eventually your last proof or test will be that it is in the end, by faith, you are what you are in Christ, and you are saved by grace in spite of all the errors that still reside in your thinking and your ways, and the inaccuracies in even what you have right! So, there is no room for confidence in the flesh.

But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the Lord (Jeremiah 9:24).

This statement helps to embody the work and life of Jesus Christ. I believe that as a people we need more room for rejoicing that has been too often taken up by this need to be right about what it is we believe.

**IF NOT US, THEN IT WILL BE THE STONES**

Luke made the following account of Jesus' approach to Jerusalem on a colt: Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying:

“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out” (Luke

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19:35-40).

Let us ask ourselves where we find our place in this account. How sophisticated in doctrine were those who enthusiastically and selflessly proclaimed blessings and glory to God, laying out their clothes as an act of homage? On the opposite end of the spectrum, the sophisticated and learned Pharisees found themselves restricted in their praise, and wanted His disciples disciplined. Whose feelings did Jesus appreciate the most? Evidently the dead lifeless stones would do a better job of worship than the Pharisees. Confidence in the flesh leads to pride and eliminates selfless worship, so where would we really place ourselves in this account?

This answer depends on where you might spend much of your heart and mind these days. If you have been directing your attention to the evils of the world and conspiracies, or on past church grievances, or if you impose on others and even on yourself the kind of doctrinal discipline exposed in this article regarding Holy Day observances, calendars, genealogy to a tribe, or some form of Hebrew root/Christian syncretism (among other such things), or in summary trying to be all researched and right about it all, then the stones around you may be clearing their throats in preparation for praise.

If you have learned carefully and have not sabotaged your faith and have not suppressed the inner joy God has granted you, but have cultivated love, giving, and mercy, in the knowledge of God, then I congratulate you. These things are the spirit of worship, which is to have the desire of what He desires.

“... but whoever does and teaches them (the commandments), he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:19).

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

May the stones be left silent and may God’s people glorify Him freely without restriction under the grace of God in which they live.

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**Iron Sharpening Iron**  
**New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)**  
**As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.**

## **In regard to: One Flaw in Women**

**Article Sent by Rich Daniels**

**Comments by Nathaniel Burson (Big Sandy, Texas) and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

If you'll read what I said again, there is nothing that remotely denigrates women; I simply wanted you to be in touch with reality. You printed that woman have no flaws, except the not-really-flaw of excess humility. Since sins count as flaws in my book, that literally says they are without sin. And that's not true of any human being, and every one of your readers knows that. QED.

**Laura Lee writes:**

Let's deal with this part first. QED means = QED is an acronym for the Latin phrase *quod erat demonstrandum*, a fancy way to show off you just logically proved something.

Now that we have that out of the way, I did not say women have no flaws. Perhaps you should go back and read what I

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wrote to Ray and later to you. Both you and Ray have sent me items for print that denigrate women. What, because I print a poem honoring women, I am now not reality based?

You have a way of twisting words into pretzels to make yourself feel better about what you say. It doesn't work here. Basically, you are now angry because I can see right through you. Just look at yourself you are not only denigrating women, but you are also defending other people who denigrate women.

You have logically proven nothing to me except that you see not one thing wrong with your attitude towards women and you are not only going to defend your right to denigrate women, but you are also going to defend others who do the same.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

If you had printed something that said men have only a single flaw, say, excessive patience, I'd be just as critical. You don't believe me? Go ahead, print a poem extolling masculinity, and see. But wait a moment... that would never happen, would it? It certainly never has. Don't *men* deserve to know their value? Why don't you want to honor men for their unique contributions to the good in the world? Darwin doesn't seem to think they've made any.

**Laura Lee writes:**

I didn't say, nor does the poem say that women only have one flaw. As far as a poem about men goes, if someone had sent me a poem that honors men, I would have printed that also, but I did not get one. You could have sent a poem honoring men, but instead you felt the need to twist my words into pretzels as a means to trip me up so you can go see... gotcha. And then pat yourself on the back. It isn't going to work.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

Yet if you truly saw men and women as equal, you would want to honor all of God's children, male and female alike - and you would do so with open eyes, criticizing the flaws and praising the virtues. Because every evil thing you've accused men of doing, women have also been guilty of. Just as I've seen every one of the things in your poem done by men; so, have you. So why are their virtues unworthy of mention? **Because you don't want to see men praised for being men, because every bit of honor a man receives threatens you.**

**Laura Lee writes:**

When a man receives praise or honor, I am all for it. Less than 1% of people who write articles and submit them for print are women, that means the rest are men. I thank men all the time and I honor them by printing their articles, even articles I do not agree with. Honor and praise of men or women does not threaten me in any way but a woman disagreeing with you seems to threaten you an awful lot.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

You blame all men for the abuses of a few you've known, and you try to somehow punish them by punishing any man who acts the least bit masculine. That's why you don't merely want men to treat you as their equal, as I have always done; you want them to treat you as their superior. That's why you get triggered so quickly and lash out at the merest whiff of criticism of any woman, even when it's deserved.

**Laura Lee writes:**

Your own words give you away, you are not and have not ever treated me as equal to you because it is not even what you believe. You believe that all women are inferior to men so there is no way you would treat me or any other woman as equal to you. Please read your own words.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

But never once have I talked down to you for being a woman. I've talked down to you for being wrong, and blinded, and stubborn, as I'm doing right now - but never for being a woman. Because unlike you, I don't hate the opposite sex. I hate pride, arrogance, and hypocrisy regardless of where I find it - and I find a great deal of it here. **Because you don't actually want equality with men; you want to denigrate men.**

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**Laura Lee writes:**

God is the one that gave me equality with all men and women. Denigrating anyone is different than just not agreeing with them. I put out a newsletter once a week and sometimes I disagree with people and sometimes people disagree with me and that is okay. It has nothing to do with denigrating anyone. Denigrating someone means you don't value them. Denigrate=to treat or represent as lacking in value or importance. When you have a belief that women are inferior to you, you are by definition denigrating them.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

Well, I have bad news - God is male. And your hatred of men has blinded you to many of the fundamental truths of the Bible, to the point where you think that God, our Head, Father, and Creator, mutually obeys us (which is literally the most absurd and irrational idea I've ever heard). Likewise, Jesus is a man. Not an effeminate, emasculated man like you would like us all to be, but a man's man. And Jesus, our Lord and Master and someday Husband, will not mutually obey you.

**Laura Lee writes:**

So, when you can't support what you believe you just make stuff up? I do not hate men; I am married to a man. I have never taught that God and Christ will obey me. All this does for you is show what a liar you are and that you will say anything about another person even if it is untrue just because you are angry because you cannot control me into agreeing with you that women are inferior to men.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

Now certainly, you have the free moral agency to choose to obey Him or not; as you said some time ago, this fact is Bible 101. What you did not apparently realize is that His *bride* does not have that choice, for THIS VERY CHOICE determines whether or not you will *be part of His bride in the first place*. Those who completely and absolutely submit to Him as their Head will be His bride. **All those bitter feminist man-haters, male and female alike, who call Him their Lord, then demand that He treat them as equals**, will be cast away with the rest of the goats into the lake of fire.

**Laura Lee writes:**

Yet more twisting of my words. When I mentioned this is basic bible 101. I was talking about the fact that everyone has free moral agency. Since you know your bible so well as you claim to, you should know that everyone has free moral agency. Free moral agency is our right to choose whether we will follow God or not. Do you honestly believe I don't know what it is?

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

I know you have all sorts of nasty things to say about me and men in general now; so, go ahead. Have the last word. Bash me and all men everywhere in your paper; libel me some more, show all your readers how much your toxic feminism despises men willing to stand up for the Truth, but **I'm tired of taking your abuse, Laura**. Unsubscribe me.

**Laura Lee writes:**

Just for the record Nathaniel you started this whole thing twice. The first time was when you sent an email to me for print in regard to the article “5 Reasons Genesis 3:16 is Not a Model for Christian Marriage” found in Issue #23. As I recall you weren't masculine enough to defend your own unbiblical doctrine, you sent your wife who understands she is inferior to you. When that didn't work out you finally showed up again defending the same unbiblical doctrine you tried to pawn off on everyone the first time. The second time you started this was when you decided to defend Ray Daly's problem with women which is the same as yours and I actually know Ray Daly personally and know exactly how he treats women. I've seen it with my own eyes.

No one from here has abused you in any way. All that happened here is you sent email that you wanted to be printed and we did not agree with what you wrote and now you are angry and that is your fault and your problem.

You thought it was okay when you were dishing it out to others but when you met with resistance to your own faulty belief you lashed out and then ran away.

**Nathaniel Burson writes:**

P.S. If you do print this, do me the courtesy of quoting it intact this time, not breaking it up into little pieces.

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**Laura Lee writes:**

I would never think to tell God what to do with His own creation as you lied and said that is what I want to do when it is just a lie made up by you. You also do not have a right to tell the editor of any publication how to print something unless you become the editor.

I sincerely wish you the best and I honestly hope you have learned from this experience. If you don't want it printed do not send it here.

**For the rest of the story:**

**5 Reasons Genesis 3:16 is Not a Model for Christian Marriage**

<https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org/2021-0023/linked/5-reasons-genesis-3-16-is-not-a-model-for-christian-marriage.pdf>

**One Flaw in Women**

[https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org/2022-0048/linked/one\\_flaw\\_in\\_women.pdf](https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org/2022-0048/linked/one_flaw_in_women.pdf)

**In regard to: One Flaw in Women**  
**Article Sent by Rich Daniels**  
**Comments by Darwin Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

My Second Response to Nathaniel

The poem, “One flaw in women”, by writer unknown, sent to this newsletter, was just that, a poem. The title itself is about one flaw. It doesn't say, “The Only Flaw”. It's a poem, meant for nothing else but that one flaw is what women, don't recognize in themselves. That poem is not “rocket science”. It's about women's self-worth, not about having sin or no sin.

The poem ends with, “however, if there is one flaw in women, it is that they forget their worth”.

Now, if flaw and sin are synonyms, then the women's sin would be that of not recognizing their self-worth. Now does that make any sense. Sin is the transgression of the law. What commandment would that come under, specifically?

I commit many flaws. When I build or repair or remodel my house inside or outside, I end up with less than perfect workmanship and most anyone looking at my work could spot the flaws without much effort. Now what commandment (sin) do I break when I “commit” all those flaws?

It's all so much nonsense and rubbish. Check any dictionary and find where flaw and sin are synonyms. The most you can find as a definition of flaw is an imperfection, mostly having to do with imperfections in “stuff” or ideas or even in giving a speech, which most anyone giving a speech will have their share of flawed speech whether it be, style, pronunciation of a word, boring people to sleep with their presentation, etc. In other words, his speech was all “flawed”! I ask, just what commandment (sin) did he break? Sin is the transgression of God's law, not your law.

**Flaw**

(flɔː)

*n*

1. an imperfection, defect, or blemish
2. a crack, breach, or rift
3. (Law) *law* an invalidating fault or defect in a document or proceeding

*vb*

to make or become blemished, defective, or imperfect.

The poem does not say the only flaw women have is... It just says, “one flaw”, there could be more and probably are more. The one flaw the poem is focused on is in the content of the poem and nothing more should ever have been

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garnered from the poem other than what was meant and that to give validation to women that all too often they don't receive. There are plenty of scriptures in the New Testament about giving honor and do praise in our relationships with one another.

My comments in previous rebuttal to you about men doing such a horrific job in leading the nations to ruins for six thousand years now, was meant to help you come off your righteous “high horse” and see the reality of man's leadership and that found to be “wanting”. In your angered response to my wife, you said this about me, “Darwin doesn't seem to think they've made any”, referring to what I said in my previous response to you about men.

Evidently you became so hot in your response to my wife you never read my response to you very well.

**Fact Check:** Look at my response to you and what I actually said. I will quote it for you. “So, there are wise women as there are a few wise men”.

I never said there weren't any men that have done good, only a few in the scheme of things, six thousand years now. Come now, admit it, men have ruled the earth while putting women under their thumb and squashed them and their self-worth and you know it or perhaps you don't for you are in their camp. This fact rests in the history of many nations where they rule their women with a “rod of iron” and treat them like less than dirt. Scripture says husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves his church. When has Jesus ever demanded you obey and when you don't, smash you with force, do it or else? Your fruits and your words betray you.

What did Jesus say about the condition of man's rule at the end of days before He returns? I will quote it for you, “**And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened**”. **Matthew 24:22 (KJV)** It's men who are in rulership when Christ returns not women for the most part. The last time I checked, I would say I qualify as a man, and I have come to acknowledge that our species haven't fared to well in righteous leadership. It would behoove you and others reading this, to come to admit it as well and humble yourself, then you may have a more Biblical view of others. As the scripture says, “*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves*”. **Philippians 2:3 (KJV)** Nathaniel, by your words, I rather doubt you consider your wife better than yourself!

You seem to dig yourself deeper and deeper in the quagmire you have created here all for want of making sure women are put in their place. It was just a poem and you got all bent out of shape over it, contributing it to having said something which the poem never said. Had you read the poem and noticed the title not even saying what you claim it said. I suspect the reason you got all hot and bothered over it, is by the way you view women inferior to you and you couldn't stand for it when someone called you on it.

You chose to go where you did with this issue. So, now own it. You knew this was a public forum and submitted your “iron debacle”. I call you out, as Paul did in public to Peter on another issue that Peter needed a public correction. Let's See if you can handle it as well as Peter did!

**In regard to: Jesus Our Passover**  
**Article by Dwight Fleming**  
**Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

This isn't the worst Passover paper I have ever read but it is right up there with the worst of the worst. For one thing you jump around so much that people will get tired just reading it. Are you keeping your Saturday Sabbath from Friday evening until Saturday evening? If so, that is the pattern for the annual Holy Days also. They are all covered under the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment.

Between the two evenings is from noon to sunset each and every day. Christ was killed around 3 PM on the 14<sup>th</sup>, thus right on time between the two evenings. Once Christ was crucified there was no longer a need to eat a Passover lamb on Passover for Christ was our Passover lamb. What Christ did the night before he was crucified was to introduce the

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emblems of Passover which would still be kept on the evening of the 14/15 with a meal. Passover is a memorial of Christ's death, so you keep it after He has died and not before.

On Passover in Egypt, they killed the lamb and ate it. They took the blood of the lamb and daubed it on the door post to protect them from the death angel. So, the emblems that Christ introduced were the unleavened bread to represent His body (the lamb) and the wine to represent His blood. You cannot find any place in scripture where Christ ever changed the day of Passover which is still the first day of Unleavened Bread.

When did you want Christ to introduce the new emblems for Passover? After He was dead? Whether you want to call the meal Christ kept the day before Passover the Lord's Supper or Passover, there was a valid reason for it since Christ would be dead on Passover.

One of the problems we see with people who do not want to keep the calendar that was preserved by the Jewish people complete with all the Holy Day Dates and when to keep them is that these people have an animosity toward the Jews. That animosity clearly comes out in your article when you complain that the Jews killed Christ. The Jews were not the only ones that killed Christ. You killed him too and all your ancestors by being sinners.

Do you realize that Christ was a Jew, and He kept the same calendar the Jews kept in the Temple? Do you also understand that Christ had to die to save us? Would it have been better for you if the tribe of Reuben or Dan or one of the other tribes had killed Him? The point is that someone had to kill Christ, or you would die and never live again. If people understood this concept there would be less animosity toward the Jewish people and way less chaos over calendar issues in the church.

Before you make up your own calendars or change the real dates on the Hebrew Calendar as preserved by the Jewish people think about what you are doing. God's command is for you to keep His Holy Days not the ones you are making up. God would not tell you to keep His Holy Days and then not leave you a calendar. If you are not keeping God's Holy Days, then you are committing lawlessness and if you are teaching your fake Holy Days to other people, you are teaching others to commit lawlessness and you will be held responsible for that someday.

P. S. – They didn't leave Egypt until the last day of Unleavened Bread.

## **In regard to: The Doctrine of the Stones**

**Article by Jim Patterson**

**Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

This is a grace doctrine with a new twist. Don't fall for it.

Moses does not have a law. God gave Moses the law to teach to us. It is God's Law. The law given in the Old Testament is the same law you are to keep under the New Covenant. The difference is that in the Old Testament under the Old Covenant they were unable to keep the law of God because they did not have God's Holy Spirit. In the New Testament under the New Covenant those who are called and chosen have God's Holy Spirit to help them keep the law of God. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. Not any truth, but the truth and law of God.

In this article he is teaching lawlessness in everything. Personally, I don't care what language you want to use as your major language in worship to God. I respect your language, respect mine also which is English.

He is telling you that because you are a royal priesthood you can do almost whatever you want to from making your own calendar to keeping whatever Holy Days you want to keep and on whatever days you want to keep them. This is lawlessness that will keep you from the first resurrection.

Christ did not die for your sins so you could make up your own laws. You are not in charge. Christ is the one who is in charge, and He left you a Bible and a Calendar. It is up to you to study your Bible.

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I have no idea what happened to many of you after the split where you honestly believe you have the authority to do almost whatever you want in regard to the law of God, the keeping of His Holy Days and any number of other doctrines that are out there. Look at your own country. We have Satan led people out there making up all kinds of laws including that it is legal and morally alright to kill babies and old people because they are no longer useful. The country is in chaos and if it isn't at your doorstep, it will be soon.

God the Father and Jesus the Son are of one mind. That means all of God's true followers will be of the same mind as the Father and the Son. There should be no chaos in the Church. The thread that runs from cover to cover in the Bible is the fact that law breakers will not enter the Kingdom of God. What Law do you believe it is talking about? It sure is not speaking about made up doctrines and calendars.

If you are throwing out the Hebrew Calendar for one you made up or changed because you don't like Jewish People just remember Christ was born a Jew. So, if you reject his laws then you are rejecting Him. As a Royal Priesthood your job is not to make new laws and doctrines. It is to obey God and that means to obey His laws, all of them.

Anyone reading this can believe whatever they want to believe, but it is pretty clear that lawless people will not enter into the Kingdom of God. Lawlessness is the breaking of Gods Law and when you make stuff up you are practicing lawlessness.

In my opinion this is a terrible article because it teaches lawlessness.

## **Iron Sharpening Iron** **In regard to: The Doctrine of the Stones**

**Article by Jim Patterson**  
**Comments by Darwin Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

According to Jim Patterson's message when it comes to the Ten Commandments, we don't quarrel over them. I can agree with that. He goes on to say grace is applied to Christians when we teach things differently as to our unique understanding different from other Christians. He narrows it down to mainly two different issues that of sacred names and Holy Day calendar observance.

With that in mind, mainstream Christianity would be just fine keeping Sunday, for that is their understanding. So, grace would apply to them because they are trying to please God as they see fit or understand. If that were the case one could use most any theologies with almost any subject and grace would be applied from God.

His position on sacred names I can agree with, for there is no law that says, "you shall pronounce My Name in perfect Hebrew"!

However, the Sabbath with the Holy Days are truly a separate matter, for there is a command to keep them. The fourth commandment covers a specific day as to when and the Holy days come under that command as well.

There is no possible way to keep the Holy Days without a calendar. There can be no possible way for various Christian groups to make up different calendars and expect God's grace to apply because they are trying to "please God".

If one wants to please God, keep the Holy Days as He sanctioned by the calendar He has had for centuries and now millennia. Keeping man made up calendars, does not fall in the same category as sacred names.

God is not the author of confusion; therefore, He would not have left His Church without knowing when to keep His set dates. **1 Corinthians 14:33 (KJV)** "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints". Different groups keeping different Holy Days is nothing but confusion in the churches. Grace is not sufficient just because one is trying to please God especially when God has already given us a calendar to live by. Making up calendars is not

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the way to expect God’s grace to be applied. Grace is applied when one admits guilt for breaking God’s law, not for making up your own laws.

God does not accept everyone doing what is right in their own eyes. **Judges 17:6 (KJV)** In those days *there was* no king in Israel, *but every man did that which was* right in his own eyes.

The Hebrew calendar is God’s calendar. Grace will be applied when one repents of and stops doing what is right in his or her own eyes.

Furthermore, the writer claims God’s Royal Priest Hood now has the authority to make up God’s calendar. If that is so, who is or what group is that authority given too? There isn’t one group together with all the groups claiming they are God’s Royal Priest Hood, that are on the same page as to when we are to keep God’s Holy Days. So, is it your group that has the right calendar, and if it is, then all the other groups must be wrong, for ten different calendars can’t be right when each have different days to be Holy to God? Is God confused? Maybe it is someone or many in the churches? Logic has it, only one group can be right. A fifth grader can figure that one out. Isn’t that what the churches of God have been saying all along about mainstream Christianity? They can’t all be right, when all their doctrines are total opposites. Logic, anyone?

Yes, God does call His called-out ones, His Royal Priest Hood. They are going to be His priests-teachers in His kingdom, teaching the laws of established law given to Moses by God to give to His people, not the Royal Priest Hood’s made-up laws! We are not going to teach that everyone can do what is right in their own eyes! His law, His calendar for Holy days, not ten different days so the confusion can live on. Could you be one of the five unwise foolish virgins thinking you have “got it in the bag”? **Micah 4:2 (KJV)** And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

There will not be ten different calendars in His kingdom to operate by in keeping God’s Holy days. Period!

God is going to have only one calendar in His kingdom, why would He be content with his Royal Priest Hood having many different options now? That makes no sense!