

Sunday School

- I. Does the Bible teach a Sunday School system such as one sees in modern day Christendom?
- II. First of all, we are commanded to *prove all things*, which includes Sunday school. **1TH 5:21**.
- A. prove: To make trial of, try, test.
- B. The Bible is the SOLE standard of truth whereby all things are to be proved.
PSA 119:1-3, 11, 104-105, 128; ACT 17:11; ROM 3:4.
1. Personal feelings and thoughts are not the standard for church practice.
ACT 26:9-10.
 - a. (**PRO 14:12**) There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
 - b. It may have seemed harmless for the prophet to have eaten bread and drunk water in Bethel, yet God commanded him to not do so. What seemed okay ended up being a way of death. **1KI 13:1-32.**
 - c. Rather than letting your heart guide you, you should guide your heart in the truth. **PRO 28:26; 23:19.**
 2. The goodness or pleasantness of a thing is not the standard. **GEN 3:6.**
 3. Numbers, how many or how few practice a thing, do not determine truth.
2CO 10:12; MAT 7:13-14; ROM 3:4.
 4. Results are not the standard. **NUM 20:7-12.**
 - a. Moses got results when he smote the rock.
 - b. Nevertheless, God told him to speak to the rock and judged him for doing otherwise, results notwithstanding.
- C. Worshipping God according to commandments of men is vain worship. **MAT 15:9.**
- III. The *argument from silence* is a rule of Bible interpretation and states that what the Bible does not teach, it does not teach.
- A. **HEB 7:13-14** utilizes the argument from silence.
1. Moses said nothing about the tribe of Judah being in the priesthood.
 2. This fact was used by Paul to prove that no man from that tribe gave attendance at the altar.
- B. The argument from silence is implicit in **1CH 15:2**.
1. In **NUM 4:15** God gave commandment to the Levites to carry the furniture of the sanctuary.
 2. Since God said NOTHING about anyone else carrying the furniture, this proves that no one else could.
- C. The Bible is a complete closed system.
1. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end.
 2. It was produced by an Infinite Mind Which knows all possibilities and contingencies.
 3. Therefore, if something is not in the Scripture, it is not Scriptural.
- IV. God's commandments are to be kept exactly as they are delivered without addition or subtraction. **DEU 12:32.**
- A. Aaron's sons were killed because they added to God's word in offering a fire God did not command. **LEV 10:1-2.**
- B. Saul was judged because he subtracted from God's word in doing less than God commanded. **1SAM 15:3, 9, 20-23.**
- C. Specification in a commandment admits no alteration.

LEV 24:5-9 c/w MAT 12:3-4; NUM 20:7-12.

- D. Jesus Christ commands the church to “observe all things whatsoever” He has commanded. **MAT 28:20; 1CO 11:1-2.**

1. If the church omits a commandment, it is not observing ALL THINGS He commanded.
2. If the church adds a commandment, it is not observing WHATSOEVER He commanded.

V. Consider the Scriptural order for teaching in the church.

- A. The PASTOR is commanded to feed ALL the flock.

ACT 20:17, 28; 1PE 5:1-2; EPH 4:11-12.

1. The ministry of feeding is committed to the elders.
2. The word “pastor” denotes *feeder, giver of pasture; a herdsman or shepherd.*
3. The elder, who oversees and feeds the flock, is the feeder or pastor.
4. It is the pastor's responsibility to feed ALL the flock, not part of the flock.
 - a. flock: A band, body, or company (of persons). A number of animals of one kind, feeding or travelling in company. Now chiefly applied to an assemblage of birds (esp. geese) or of sheep or goats.
 - b. All the assembly is to be taught by the pastor.
 - c. It is wrong to segregate children from the congregation into “children's church.”
 - d. Christ commanded Peter, an elder, to feed young and old. **JOH 21:15-17.**
 - e. John, an elder (**2JO 1:1**), gave the SAME instruction to little children, young men, and old men. **1JO 2:12-14.**
 - f. Jesus had little children in His audiences. **MAT 18:1-5.**
 - g. **DEU 31:9-13** and **JOE 2:15-17** are Old Testament examples of congregational instruction and service that included old and young.
Therefore, the practice is practical!

- B. Paul's first epistle to Timothy was designed to teach how we are to behave IN the church of God. **1TI 3:15.**

1. Women are to learn in silence. **1TI 2:11; 1CO 14:34-35.**
2. Women are not allowed to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man. **1TI 2:12.**
3. Sunday schools are generally viewed as a ministry of the church, supported and regulated by the church.
4. Sunday school buildings attached to the house of worship reflect the idea that the Sunday school is a church ministry.
5. It is not uncommon that women teach adult Sunday school classes made up of men and women.
6. The above passages regarding women would preclude such things as women teaching Sunday school classes as a ministry of the church to edify the church.
7. Recalling that Paul is describing how we are to behave IN church, note that he mentions only bishops (overseers) as needing to be “apt to teach” (**1TI 3:2**). The bishop or pastor is to teach the church AS THE CHURCH.

VI. Church members, men and women, have a teaching responsibility. **HEB 5:12.**

- A. Church members should be able to *admonish, comfort, edify, and exhort one another.* **ROM 15:14; 1TH 4:18; 5:11; HEB 3:13.**

1. Note the expression “one another” in each of these passages.
2. This is a personal ministry of the saints one on one, and not a public ministry IN and OVER the church or assembly.

- B. Church members should be able to teach the unconverted (**1PE 3:15; ACT 18:24-26**). But this is not public instruction IN the church.
 - C. Aged women are to teach the younger women. **TIT 2:3-5**.
 - 1. This is not public instruction IN the church.
 - 2. Note that the content of the instruction is specified!
- VII. Scripture forbids one to assume the functions of an office not properly his or hers.
- A. God emphasized by a judgment that **ONLY** the Levites were to bear the ark of God. **1CH 13:7-11; 15:1-3**.
 - B. God smote Uzziah with leprosy for performing the function of a priest, which he had no right to do. **2CH 26:16-21**.
 - C. Severe judgment befell Korah and his followers who wanted to take on offices not rightly theirs. **NUM 16; JUD 1:11**.
 - D. No one has the right to perform the functions of an office in the church, including teaching, if Scripture does not permit it.
- VIII. The father of the modern Sunday school system was Robert Raikes.
- A. He began a school in Gloucester, England, in 1780, that was held on Sunday. Hence, it was a “Sunday school.”
 - B. This school was started to educate the poor children of the community who were working six days a week in the factories.
 - C. The school was called a “Ragged School.”
 - D. This school taught reading, writing, and the principles of religion.
 - E. With the widespread foreign missionary work of the 1800's and 1900's, these schools spread throughout the world.
 - F. This system was several centuries too late to be of apostolic origin!
 - G. It has evolved into a substitute for God's order for the spiritual training of children while relieving parents of their responsibility to train their children in the *subjected* way they should go (**PRO 22:6 c/w 1TI 3:4**). It is tradition negating commandment. **MAR 7:13**.
- IX. Consider the Biblical method for the religious education of children.
- A. Children are to be taught religion by their parents.
 - 1. **EPH 6:4** commands fathers to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
 - a. nurture: Breeding, upbringing, training, education.
 - b. admonition: The action of putting in mind of duties; authoritative counsel; warning, implied reproof.
 - c. admonish: To put (a person) in mind of duties; to counsel against wrong practices; to give authoritative or warning advice; to exhort, to warn.
 - 2. Fathers and mothers are to participate in training the child. **PRO 22:6; 1:8**.
 - 3. The book of Proverbs is a father teaching his children. **PRO 4:1-4**.
 - 4. The word of God is to be passed from fathers to their children who in turn teach them to their children. **PSA 78:5-7**.
 - 5. This method was effectively used in the case of Timothy. **2TI 1:5 c/w 3:15**.
 - B. Children should be taken to church to hear a qualified and competent man of God. **EPH 6:4; ACT 20:28**.
 - 1. In ministering to the church as a whole, Paul also had a word of exhortation for the children. **EPH 6:1-3; COL 3:20**.
 - 2. Just as parents make their children do things for their physical and mental well-being, they should make their children attend church for their spiritual well-being.