



# "What The Bible Does Not Say"

(by Craig Thomas, adapted from an article by Larry Hafley)

Instead of going by what the Bible teaches, many seek heaven by following what the Bible does not say. They neglect or ignore the clear and plain appointments of God, but scrupulously attend to rites and rituals unknown to the Bible. What a shame!

**1) Worship.** Men ridicule us for breaking bread upon every first day of the week, just as the Bible says (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:16). Yet they are very careful not to miss their church's perverted form of what is called "holy communion." They meticulously keep their traditions unknown to the word of God, whether Easter, Christmas, or some other "holyyday"; but they will not observe the simple worship the Lord revealed in the New Testament. They heap great scorn upon us for not using mechanical instruments of music in worship even though the "oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11) specify we are to "teach[ing] and admonish[ing] one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16).

**2) Name.** We are disparaged for pointing out that many wear names not found in Scripture. We are criticized for wearing the name of Him who purchased us "with His own blood" (Acts 20:28); for Him who promised to build His church (Matt. 16:18); for calling ourselves "the churches of Christ" even though that is exactly what God's inspired apostle called God's people in the first century (Rom. 16:16). Men serve man-made denominations and designate themselves with man-made names with utmost devotion though the Bible teaches there is only "one body," the church of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). Even though the "oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11) are absolutely silent concerning the names and organizations they serve, they persist in empty devotion.

**3) Teaching.** They attend to their baby's baptism but take great offense if we point out that such is wholly unrelated to anything taught in the Bible. First, baptism is immersion, not sprinkling (Rom. 6:4). Second, baptism is for penitent believers, for "men and women," not for oblivious infants (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12). Despite these undeniable facts, they persist in their dedication to a ceremony not found in the Bible. They pray to dead men and women. They kneel and devote themselves before material objects, according to rites and rituals invented by men, but look with disdain and disgust upon those who contend for humble prayers offered as true priests of God to the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, to the "one mediator between God and men", Christ Jesus (Heb. 3:1; 4:14-16; 1 Tim. 2:5). How utterly sad.

This is all done in a lame and vain attempt to serve God; expecting to go to heaven by doing what the Bible does not say. Truly,

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8-9).

The effect of continuing in the faith might be viewed as a firm foundation on which we build our life to withstand the storms of trouble (Matt. 7:24-27).

