

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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Were There Any Sabbath Keepers on the Mayflower?

The Pilgrims were seeking religious freedom in the New World. Did any of them observe the seventh-day Sabbath?

By Gregory Dullum

Late this month, we who are Americans will celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving. We'll probably stuff ourselves (after we stuff the turkey) on traditional holiday fare, and enjoy a day off work with family or friends. After the last spoonful of pumpkin pie and whipped cream has passed our lips on its way to our stomachs, we may settle into a comfy sofa and fall asleep watching an afternoon football game.

Learning About Pilgrims

We undoubtedly studied the origins of this holiday when we were in school. We may remember coloring pictures of Pilgrims wearing black and white outfits, funny hats and bonnets, and shoes with buckles.

The Pilgrims came to this country aboard the *Mayflower*. Storms blew them off course and they settled far north of their intended destination of Virginia. They landed 395 years ago in what is now Massachusetts, stepping



Photo by Greg Dullum

Sunlight and shadows are seen on Plymouth Rock as it's on display.

ashore near a boulder we now call "Plymouth Rock."

After a difficult first year in the New World, the Pilgrims invited their Native American friends to a thanksgiving feast. Our modern-day Thanksgiving holiday is modeled upon that thanksgiving feast.

What we were NOT taught in school was if any of these Pilgrims kept the Sabbath. We may have been taught they were Puritans (who kept Sunday). But the Pilgrims were not Puritans and some may have KEPT THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH!

Evidence of Sabbath-Keeping

"...Among the Pilgrim fathers, who risked their lives on the *Mayflower*, and landed at Plymouth 1620, were Sabbath-keepers, observing the seventh day of the week, who baptized by immersion, and called themselves the 'Church of God' " (A *History of the True Religion* by A.N. Dugger and C.O. Dodd, 1972, p. 248).

Hugh Sprague, editor of the *St. Joseph, Mo. Daily Gazette* in 1934, wrote an editorial stating:

"Strange as it may seem, in the early history of America there was an attempt at suppression of Christmas spirit. The stern Puritans at Plymouth, imbued with the religious fervor of the Old Testament, abhorred the celebration of the orthodox holidays. Their worship was on the Sabbath (Saturday), rather than Sunday, and Christmas in particular they considered a pagan celebration. ... Governor Bradford, Elder Brewster, Miles Standish and other leaders were firm against the yuletide spirit as we know it today."

Sprague said he knew of no book mentioning the Pilgrims as being Sabbath-keepers but added, "The Pilgrims are my



Photo by Greg Dullum

The *Mayflower II* is a replica of the *Mayflower*. A gift from England to America, it sailed the Atlantic in 1957 and remains seaworthy.

direct ancestors, and we know very well their religious practice, and belief." He said all his grandparents and great-grandparents knew that the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower* days were strict Sabbath-keepers on the seventh day of the week instead of Sunday (Dugger and Dodd, pp. 265-266).

Evidence of Sunday-Keeping

Other sources disagree with Dugger and Dodd. Doug Ward, in his article, "The Pilgrim Sabbath," writes:

"However, despite the claims of Hugh Sprague, there is strong evidence the Pilgrims actually observed a Sunday Sabbath. One good source of information on this question is the *Journal of the English Plantation at Plimoth*, which was published in London in 1622. This book is our earliest record of the voyage of the *Mayflower* and the establishment of the Plymouth Colony. It gives a first-hand, day-to-day account of the experiences of the Pilgrims.

"Two of the entries of this journal indicate that it was the custom of the Pilgrims to rest and meet for worship on Sunday. In early December 1620, the *Mayflower* was off the coast of what is

PILGRIMS & THE SABBATH

Continued on Page 6

Pilgrims & the Sabbath

Continued from Page 1

now Massachusetts as the Pilgrims looked for a good location for a settlement. According to the journal,

“‘10. of December, on the Sabbath day wee rested, and on Monday we sounded the harbour, and found it a very good Harbour for our shipping ...’

“Then for January 1621, the notes include the following:

“‘Saturday 20, we made up our Shed for our common goods.

“‘Sunday the 21. we kept our meeting on Land.

“‘Monday the 22. was a faire day, we wrought on our houses, and in the afternoon carried up our hongsheds of meale to our common storehouse.’

“All the sources on the Pilgrims that I have examined agree that the Plymouth Colony kept a Sunday Sabbath. It is true, though, that Edmund Dunham, the grandson of Plymouth settler John Dunham, later became a prominent Saturday Sabbatarian” (<http://graceandknowledge-faithweb.com/pilgrims.html>, pp. 1-2).

Ward adds, “the first known Saturday Sabbatarians in America were Stephen and Ann Mumford, who arrived in Rhode Island in 1665” (p. 2).

Stephen and Ann Mumford are the first Sabbath-keepers in the New World *whose names we know* and whom we know for *certain* kept the Sabbath.

But consider this: when the Mumfords came to Rhode Island, there was no Sabbath-keeping church. They kept the Sabbath alone at home on Saturday, and met on Sunday with a Baptist church. The number of Sabbath-keepers grew to 11 before the Baptist ministers started preaching against the Sabbath, claiming the 11 had “gone back to Moses.” Persecution increased against the Sabbath-keepers until they were forced to leave and start the first Sabbatarian church in 1671. For six years, the Mumfords, whom we know were Sabbath-keepers, lived and worshiped peaceably with Sunday-keeping Baptists.

If someone were to write a history about the communities in which we live, would it mention us by name and state that we are Sabbath keepers? Not unless we are very prominent citizens! We basically keep our religion to ourselves and try to live peaceably with our neighbors. Early Sabbath-keepers could have done the same thing and have escaped through the cracks of history.

There could have been other Sabbath-keepers who came to America quietly in the 45 years between the *Mayflower* and the Mumfords. There could have

been some among the Pilgrims who kept the Sabbath but went to church with the others on Sunday. If the Mumfords did so, others could have done it too!

And in spite of Doug Ward’s assertion, it’s NOT *perfectly clear* that ALL the Pilgrims worshiped on Sunday! Perhaps some of them did indeed keep the seventh-day Sabbath, as Sprague said!

Pilgrims Were Not Puritans

“There were three Protestant groups in England starting in the 1600’s—The Conformist (which followed the Church of England), the Puritans (which were opposed to many of the teachings of the Church of England but kept Sunday) and the Separatist (which was started by Robert Browne; many of which kept the Old Testament laws)” (“Pilgrims kept the 7th Day Sabbath” by Linda Watson, <http://12tribehistory.com/pilgrims-kept-the-7th-day-sabbath>, p. 2).

Were the Pilgrims *Sunday-keeping* Puritans or were they the more RADICAL Separatists?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines “Pilgrim” as “One of the English Separatists who founded the colony of Plymouth in New England in 1620” (p. 1373). The Pilgrims were SEPARATISTS, who *separated* from the Church of England because they rejected some of its doctrines. Could it be possible some rejected Sunday worship?

Not All on *Mayflower* Were Alike

A hundred passengers and a crew of about 30 crowded on board the *Mayflower* on Sept. 16, 1620, for her 65-day voyage to America. One passenger died and two were born, so 101 landed at Plymouth. There were 41 male passengers and heads of families, and 15 male servants whose names we know (“*Mayflower*,” *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1964, vol. xviii, pp. 465-466).

We may think everyone on the *Mayflower* belonged to the *same church* or held the *same religious beliefs*. This is NOT TRUE. Only 37 of the passengers were religious Separatists called “Saints.” The others were skilled laborers needed to build a successful colony in a wilderness. These nonbelievers were called “Strangers” (“*Voyage of the Mayflower*,” www.users.uswest.net/~willmurray/Hamilton/Brewster/voyage_of_the_mayflower.htm; *Rush Revere and the Brave Pilgrims* by Rush Limbaugh, 2013, p. 64).

If all 37 “saints” had been Sunday-keeping Puritans, Sabbath-keepers could have been among the others—the “strangers”! However, we must remember that the “saints” were NOT Sunday-keeping PURITANS. They were SEPA-

RATISTS. Do not confuse the word “Pilgrim” with “Puritan.” They mean *two different things!*

Linda Watson claims these Separatists were indeed Sabbatarians in her article, “Pilgrims kept the 7th Day Sabbath”:

“This article traces the Pilgrims from England to Holland. The Pilgrims were persecuted by Queen Elizabeth under the Uniformity Act which required Sunday church attendance. They fled to Holland where they were allowed to worship freely. They joined the Mennonite Church which was a 7th Day Sabbath-keeping church” (p. 1).

There was not total unity among the 37 Separatists. According to Watson, the Pilgrims did NOT come from ONE church congregation! They came out of THREE English churches: the Southwark Church, Gainsborough Congregation and Scrooby Congregation. Sabbath-keepers could have sneaked in through at least one of these churches! Let’s examine their backgrounds.

Southwark Church

The Southwark Church was founded by John Greenwood. “In 1586 he was the recognized leader of the London Separatists, of whom a considerable number had been imprisoned at various times. In 1586 he and a group of people were sent to jail for refusing to obey the religious laws of Elizabeth I, thus beginning a tradition of religious dissent within Southwark, located NE of London” (Watkins, p. 3).

In 1592 Greenwood and others were released from prison and began meeting for services in Roger Rippon’s house. Francis Johnson was their pastor and Greenwood their teacher.

The reprieve was short-lived. Greenwood and another man were executed April 6,

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1593. A third was executed May 29. Rippon was arrested and died in prison of disease. Eight church members were released from prison in April 1593. Others were released in the fall of 1597. Watkins states, “these made their way to their former congregation members in Holland.

“On his release, Francis Johnson finally settled in Holland where many of the Southwark dissenters had fled to. The remaining members of the group continued to meet in secret before being brought into the open by Henry Jacob in 1616. Jacob had been influenced by the writing of Johnson and in 1620 some members of the Southwark Church were given permission to sail to America. It was this group who went on the *Mayflower*. They were a 7th Day Sabbath-keeping congregation” (Watkins, p. 3).

Gainsborough Congregation

The second church to have members on the *Mayflower* was the Gainsborough Congregation. “Between 1605-07 Richard Clifton had attempted to establish an Independent or Separatist congregation in the Gainsborough England area. He joined ranks with Thomas Helwys. During 1607, John Smyth was visiting Thomas Helwys, the Elder of the Scrooby Separatist congregation located 12 miles from Gainsborough. Smyth, a former clergyman from Lincoln, had been living in the area. Smyth was soon elected as the new pastor of the Gainsborough-on-Trent Congregation with Thomas Helwys as its Elder.

“A decision was soon made to move both congregations to Holland for safety. The Gainsborough Congregation under Smyth and Helwys would depart first, and the Scrooby congregation would follow shortly later” (Watkins, pp. 3-4).

Scrooby Congregation

In 1602, John Robinson became a curate at St. Andrew’s Church in Norwich. He refused to conform to the Anglican anti-Puritan decrees of 1604 and was suspend-

ed. He joined the Separatist congregation in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire, in 1606 or 1607.

“With the Scrooby congregation, Robinson travelled to Amsterdam in 1608, but in 1609 he went with 100 of his followers to Leiden to escape the dissension prevalent among other Nonconformist groups. As pastor at Leiden, he inspired the growth of his congregation to 300 members. One of them, William Bradford, who later became governor of Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts, likened Robinson’s congregation to the early Christian churches because of its ‘true piety, humble zeal and fervent love towards God and his ways’ ” (Watkins, p. 4).

“The Pilgrims spent 11 years in Leiden, during which time they came into contact with Dutch Mennonites, French Calvinists, and other dissenters. . . .

“Soon after they arrived in Holland they came under the influence of the Anabaptist teachings through the Mennonites [Anabaptists taught that adults—not children—should be baptized]. Smyth’s church in Amsterdam, founded on the principle of adult baptism in 1609, is considered the first truly Baptist church. Two years later the congregation split with part of them remaining in Holland, where they eventually united with the Mennonites, a 7th day Sabbath-keeping church. The other part, led by Thomas Helwys, returned to England, where they settled at Spitalfield, just outside London.

“The Mennonite Church descended from the Waldenses. They were 7th day Sabbath keepers” (*A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists*, by Don A. Sanford, 1992, pp. 39-40, 86, as quoted by Watkins, pp. 5-6).

One of the members of the Scrooby Church who stayed behind and did not come to America on the *Mayflower* had a grandson who founded a seventh-day Baptist church, as we mentioned earlier.

“Among the Scrooby congregation which fled to Holland but who did not come to America until a decade later was John Dunham, whose grandson, Reverend Edmund Dunham, founded the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Piscataway, New Jersey, nearly a century later in 1705” (Sanford, pp. 39-40, 86, as quoted by Watkins, p. 8).

Other Sources

Here are a couple of sources that hint that Sabbath-keepers of the true Church of God may have come to America on the *Mayflower*:

“The ‘New World’ had been opened up to emigrants from Europe for colonization, and the persecuted saints, known by various names in history, fled to America for a

haven of safety. The Pilgrims, the Puritans, the Quakers, had scattered among them the true Church of God, and carried with them to the shores of the New World the faith once delivered unto the saints, and preserved by their foreparents by the price of blood in the wilderness of Europe. . . .

“It was to America, the land of religious freedom, that the people known to the world as Waldenses, Puritans, Anabaptists, Lollards, etc., were fleeing from persecution, and who were in general known by the scriptural name, ‘the Church of God’ ” (Dugger and Dodd, pp. 209, 210).

The Pilgrims believed in “prophesying”—that is, having various lay members and ministers “interpret and expound upon Scripture, to discuss and explain to others the Word of God” (*Religious Enthusiasm in the New World* by David S. Lovejoy, 1985, p. 50).

“Prophesying had been Plymouth’s custom since 1620 and earlier in Holland, but it was often doubly necessary owing to frequent lack of ministers. Gifted laymen such as William Brewster and other members of the congregation continued the Separatists’ tradition whether there was a minister or not. Elder Brewster was particularly successful, often teaching twice each Sabbath, ‘both powerfully and profitably,’ and, according to Bradford, ‘many were brought to God by his ministry’ ” (Lovejoy, p. 55).

This reference to teaching on the SABBATH seems to indicate *the Pilgrims were Sabbath-keepers*. We must keep in mind, however, that Protestant writers frequently (although erroneously) refer to Sunday as the “Sabbath.”

John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, and John Wilson, a minister from Boston, traveled to Plymouth for a friendly visit in October 1632, and worshiped with the Pilgrims. Winthrop’s journal indicates they worshiped on “the Lord’s day” (Lovejoy, p. 54). The Bible tells us the true “Lord’s Day” is the seventh-day Sabbath (Mat. 12:8). But again, Protestants erroneously call Sunday the Lord’s Day.

We have seen evidence that indicates some of the Pilgrims may have worshiped on Sunday and kept it as the Sabbath. We have seen other evidence that indicates some of the Pilgrims may have been seventh-day Sabbath keepers. Because everyone on the *Mayflower* did not come from the same church and did not all believe the same thing, it’s possible that some of them may have kept Sunday while others kept the true seventh day Sabbath—perhaps privately!

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, let’s consider the possibility that some Sabbath-keepers may have enjoyed that first Thanksgiving meal in 1621!

Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Who was Solomon’s father?
2. Who wrote the first five books of the Bible?
3. In what city was Jesus born?
4. What are the names of the two (remaining) archangels?
5. Which archangel came to see Mary before Jesus’ birth?

(Answers on page 5)

What Is Truth?

*The ninth commandment instructs us to tell the truth and not to lie.
We often perceive things differently, so how can we know the truth?*

By Gregory Dullum
Part 14

In our discussion of the ninth commandment last month, we touched *briefly* on a topic I would like to examine more closely here.

Dr. Laura Schlessinger and Rabbi Stewart Vogel wrote: “Social life would be impossible if everyone, with or without being asked, were to tell the truth to everyone else AS HE SEES IT. And that is another point, *the way we see things is personal perception*, and not necessarily OBJECTIVE REALITY” (*The Ten Commandments* by Dr. Laura Schlessinger and Rabbi Stewart Vogel, 1998, pp. 287-288, emphasis added).

How can we know that the “truth” we believe is objective REALITY, or simply OUR *personal perception*?

For example, most preachers in mainstream “Christian” churches teach that Sunday is the Sabbath. They *think* they are preaching the *truth*, but they’re NOT. They have been *deceived* to believe a LIE. People who are deceived don’t know they are deceived. They repeat errors to others, *believing* they are speaking truth.

What Is Truth?

We come from different cultures and have different backgrounds, different levels of education and training, and different levels of intelligence. These are like different colored lenses through which we perceive the truth. Because our backgrounds vary so much, it is hard for any group of individuals to agree on what is absolute truth.

Roman Governor Pontius Pilate probably understood this principle when he asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38).

That is a profound question! What is REAL truth, as opposed to simply OUR PERCEPTION of truth?

The Bible Is Truth

The Bible helps us in our quest for real truth.

Jesus Christ prayed to the Father about his true followers with these words: “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

The true followers of Jesus would be set apart for a holy purpose (sanctified) from the people of the world by THE TRUTH. True believers would *know the truth!* Where would they get it? From the

Bible—God’s *written word*. Jesus explained, “YOUR WORD IS TRUTH!”

How can we *know* the Bible is TRUE? The Apostle Peter tells us, “knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:20-21). The writers of the Bible didn’t just *make up* their words. Their words came from God through the power of his holy spirit.

Is this true *only* of the prophets, or is it true of ALL THE WRITERS of the Bible—including those who wrote the New Testament books?

The Apostle Paul tells us, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). ALL scripture includes both the Old and New Testaments!

If we want to know the truth, we must use ALL scripture—all of the Bible—as the touchstone or litmus paper against which we compare our ideas and beliefs.

Mainstream “Christian” churches may use some of the Bible to “prove” their false beliefs. They can do this because they don’t use the whole Bible. They base their beliefs on a misunderstanding of one or a few scriptures and ignore others that contradict their beliefs.

For example, those believing we should worship on Sunday may use Acts 20:7 as a basis for their perceived “truth”: “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”

Sunday worshippers ignore *all the other scriptures* in the Book of Acts that CLEARLY state that the early church observed the seventh-day Sabbath (Acts 13:14, 42, 44, 16:13, 17:2, 18:4). If we use all of the scriptures in the Bible, we can clearly see that seventh-day Sabbath observance was commanded by God since creation and this command has never been abrogated.

This being true, we must conclude that the meeting which took place on the first day of the week in Acts 20:7 was NOT a Sunday morning worship service, but was a regular evening meal (“breaking bread”) and a time for teaching that went past sunset into the early hours of the second day of the week. This understanding fits in with all the scriptures, so we can assume it to be the truth.

We must compare what we perceive to be “truth” to the ENTIRE BIBLE. If our perception of truth matches what the Bible says, then we can trust it to be really true.

God’s Spirit Reveals Truth

There is a second aspect to knowing what is true. Truth will be revealed to us by God’s holy spirit.

Jesus tells us, “However, when the Spirit of truth comes, he [it] will lead you into all the truth” (John 16:13, *Moffatt*).

Paul adds, “But it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:9-11). God reveals his spiritual truth to us through his spirit!

How do we receive God’s spirit? Through the laying on of hands at baptism (Acts 2:38). Using God’s holy spirit, we develop a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7). A sound mind can more easily recognize truth from error. Even more than that, we can develop the mind of Christ (Philip. 2:5). It is possible for us to know truth as Christ knows it!

GOD the Father is TRUTH (Ps. 31:5). JESUS CHRIST is TRUTH (Mat. 22:16, John 1:14, 14:6). The SPIRIT of God is TRUTH (John 14:17, 15:26; 1 John 5:6). The BIBLE, the inspired written Word of God, is TRUTH (John 17:17, 1 Thes. 2:13). God’s true church is the “pillar and ground of truth” (1 Tim. 3:15).

We have a duty to evaluate our own belief system and compare our perceived truths with OBJECTIVE REALITY as revealed by the Father, his Son, his Spirit, his Word and his true church.

Truth Must Be Obeyed

Once we *know* the truth, we must OBEY it (Rom. 2:8, Gal. 3:1, 5:7, 1 Pet. 1:22, 1 John 2:4, 2 John 14, 3 John 3-4). By *obeying the Bible*, we are FREED from *practicing sin*—and no longer incur sin’s penalty of death (Rom. 6:23). Jesus tells us, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”

(John 8:32).

However, if we DON'T embrace the truth—if we come to *understand* it but we don't *obey* it—God will take away the little truth we have, and we will believe more and more lies (Rom. 1:20-25, 2 Tim. 4:3-4, Mat. 25:28-29, Luke 19:22-26).

Once God has revealed his truth to us, we must not reject it. Rejecting the truth ultimately ends in condemnation (2 Thes. 2:12, Heb. 10:26, James 5:19-20). If we reject the truth, what is left to believe? Only lies. We may think these lies are truth, but they are not. Whoever loves and practices a lie will not be in the kingdom of God (Rev. 22:15). The "lake of fire which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" awaits all liars (Rev. 21:8).

Not All Can See the Truth

Not everyone can understand spiritual truth. Most of the world is deceived by Satan and are blind to the truth (Rev. 12:9, 2 Cor. 4:4). They can't see God's truth, even if we try to explain it to them.

Jesus has a small group of followers—a small church—a little flock (Luke 12:32). His church is not one of the major denominations of this world. It is to this small group that Jesus reveals spiritual truth. He told his disciples, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand" (Luke 8:10).

We have focused up to now on spiritual truth, for our spiritual lives depend upon us knowing it, obeying it and not rejecting it!

But what about the truth in other matters—things not spiritual? There is a lot of conflicting information out there! How can we know the truth about non-spiritual matters?

Here are some tips to help us determine the truth in worldly matters.

Does It Agree With the Bible?

Does it agree with the Bible? The Bible doesn't cover EVERY aspect of truth. However, if something *disagrees* with the Bible, it's *false*.

For example, the theory of evolution does not agree with the Biblical account of creation, so it can be rejected as false.

At one time, the Roman Catholic Church taught the earth was flat. If you didn't agree with this "truth," you were ostracized as a heretic. But this "truth" was anti-Biblical. The Bible describes the earth as a "circle" that "hangs on nothing" in outer space (Isa. 40:22, Job 26:7).

Truth in physical matters *will not contradict* spiritual truth!

Is There Supporting Evidence?

What does the evidence support? In a court of law, the "truth" of a matter is determined by the evidence presented. If one side does not present good evidence, believable evidence, or any evidence at all to support its claims, the other side will usually win the case. The truth will usually have good evidence to support it while error will not (Acts 24:13).

It is important to hear—to examine—the evidence when we are deciding what is truth. Some think they *already know the truth* so they don't want to be bothered with the facts. Their mind is made up before they hear the evidence of a case. That is not the way to truth. "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him" (Prov. 18:13).

Examine Both Sides

Often there is conflicting evidence or testimony. To ascertain the truth, we must examine both sides (or all sides) of an issue. "The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines him" (Prov. 18:17).

Scientific analysis often misses this point. When I learned to write a thesis paper in college, I found the process unnatural. We were taught to write a statement of fact (the "thesis" or "controlling purpose statement") and then to gather evidence to support our thesis.

I thought it was backwards to make up a thesis out of thin air and then search for evidence to support it. My preferred method of research is to have an open-ended question, and then gather all information available to answer that question, weigh the evidence, and decide what is truth based upon *all the evidence*. Only after studying all aspects of a question could I form a truthful thesis.

Some Evidence Is Better

Consider the nature of the evidence. Some evidence and some sources are more reliable and credible than others. Some people are true experts in their field and know of what they speak or write. Others are not experts but spread their uneducated opinions or ideas.

This is an especially big problem on the Internet. Before the Internet, when

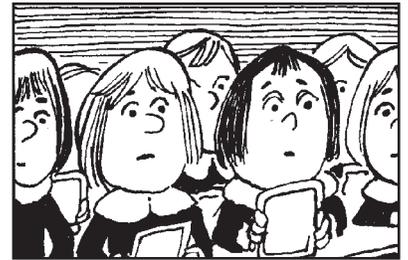
WHAT IS TRUTH?

Continued on Page 6

Know Your Bible Answers

1) David. 2) Moses. 3) Bethlehem. 4.) Michael and Gabriel. 5) Gabriel.

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The first public school system in what is now the United States was set up in Massachusetts in 1647.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

The Thing You Think You Cannot Do: Thirty Truths About Fear and Courage by Gordon Livingston, M.D., Da Capo Press, 2012, p. 133-134.

Definition of Love

"And so our sense of responsibility for or caring about others is a test of inclusiveness. The degree of risk we are willing to take on behalf of other human beings is a test of our attachment to them, which is why unit cohesiveness is so important in the military. If the mutual welfare of those in a unit becomes a dominant value, people will routinely take life-threatening risks on each other's behalf. 'Band of brothers' is an apt description of an infantry unit in combat. ... Personal survival and caring for each other's welfare are the primary reasons for fighting bravely. In fact, the willingness to risk one's life on behalf of another is the operational definition of love."

John 15:12-13, 1 John 3:16

Quotable Quotes

"No man chooses evil because it is evil; he only mistakes it for happiness, the good he seeks."

—Mary Wollstonecraft

Memory Scripture

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

—John 15:13

What Is Truth?

Continued from Page 5

knowledge was transmitted primarily by books, magazines and newspapers, there was usually an editing and peer approval process by which information was verified. Look at the front pages of a printed encyclopedia and you will find lists of people who helped write and edit the entries, to make sure they are accurate and true. This increases the trustworthiness of the encyclopedia.

On the Internet, anyone can create a Web page and disseminate his or her own ideas (which may or may not be true), without any editing or peer approval. *Just because something is on the Internet does not make it true!*

Studies and research can be skewed, so it's important to understand who conducted a study and who paid for it. For example, a margarine company may produce research that "proves" butter is bad and margarine is better for you. A dairy council may produce research that "proves" margarine is bad and butter is better. Knowing the *source* of the research helps us to *evaluate* the research and *spot biases* in our quest for truth.

Use Common Sense

Use common sense and logic. *The truth will make sense.* It will be LOGICAL. Some arguments will appeal to our emotions but won't make sense when carefully scrutinized.

Evolution is one example. Some people love the theory of evolution because it means there is no Creator God telling them what to do. However, careful examination of creation shows too much design and planning for it to have happened by accident. It actually takes more "blind faith" to believe everything happened by accident than to believe in an all-wise Creator.

Man-made global warming is another example. Mankind cannot change or control the WEATHER from day-to-day; to claim he can change the *entire* CLIMATE of *this planet* is ABSURD!

Knowing Truth Takes Effort

The truth can be known! Sometimes it takes effort and research on our part. It is important that we don't simply repeat everything we hear, for we may be repeating lies and deception. Doing so can cause us to violate the ninth commandment.

Instead, we must prove all things, reject bad information, and hold fast to what is true. Paul put it this way: "Test all things; hold fast what is good" (1 Thes. 5:21).



Migrant Crisis Pushes Germany in Leadership

"As the standoff intensified between the Hungarian police and hundreds of migrants desperate to board trains at a Budapest rail station, the migrants took up a chant on Wednesday [Sept. 2]: 'Germany!' Germany!"

"That is where so many of them want to go.

"In this summer's migrant crisis—as with the unfinished debt crisis in Greece and the confrontation with Russia over Ukraine—Germany once again finds itself at the center of a European drama, compelled or condemned to lead by its wealth and size and by the lack of leadership from Brussels and other states in the European Union" ("Migrant Crisis Gives Germany Familiar Role in Another European Drama" by Steven Erlanger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Sept. 2, 2015, p. 1).

Bible prophecy and an understanding of history tell us there will be a 10-nation revival of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe before Christ returns (Dan. 2:40-45). They also tell us Assyria (modern-day Germany) will have a leadership role in that union as God uses Germany to punish Americans (modern-day Israelites) for our sins (Isa. 10:5-7).

ABC Family Gets Top Marks by Homosexuals

"The television network that gets the most praise from an advocacy group that monitors content featuring gays, lesbians and transgender people has 'family' in its name and targets an audience of teenage girls and young women.

"GLAAD said in a report issued Thursday [Sept. 3] that 74 percent of the programming hours on ABC Family included at least one LGBT character—the highest percentage any network has recorded since this group began issuing content reports in 2007....

"Seamlessly including these characters in the stories sends a strong message of acceptance that is likely to help

young people dealing with their own identity issues, he [Matt Kane, GLAAD programming director] said" ("ABC Family gets top marks for gay, lesbian inclusiveness" by David Bauder, Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, Sept. 4, 2015, p. 13A).

Typical of Satan's devices, he uses a network named "ABC Family" to promote homosexuality that destroys the family. God calls homosexual behavior an abomination (Lev. 18:22). The more accepting the U.S. becomes of this sin, the sooner we face our destruction, for Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed on account of this same sin (Genesis 19, Jude 7).

Quake Shakes Chile

"A strong 8.3-magnitude earthquake struck off Chile's coast on Wednesday [Sept. 16], shaking buildings in cities around the country and forcing the authorities to evacuate residents along the 2,690-mile coast after tsunami warnings were issued. At least eight deaths were reported" ("In Chile, Earthquake Forces One Million to Evacuate" by Pascale Bonnefoy and Simon Romero, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Sept. 16, 2015, p. 1).

"Earthquakes in various places" is one sign we are nearing Christ's return (Mat. 24:3, 7).

Japan OKs Military Role

"In a middle-of-the-night vote that capped a tumultuous struggle with opposition parties in Parliament, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan secured final passage of legislation on Saturday [Sept. 19] authorizing overseas combat missions for his country's military, overturning a decades-old policy of reserving the use of force for self-defense" ("Japan's Parliament Approves Overseas Combat Role for Military" by Jonathan Soble, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Sept. 18, 2015, p. 1).

Just before Christ returns, "kings from the east" will attack the king of the North near Jerusalem with an army numbering 200 million (Dan. 11:40-44, Rev. 9:13-16, 16:12-16). Japan may be part of the kings from the east.