

# THE LOWER LIGHTS

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**"Brightly beams our Father's mercy  
from the lighthouse evermore;  
But to us He gives the keeping  
of the lights along the shore."**

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## JESUS AND THE SCRIPTURES

How should we view the Scriptures? How should we interpret the Scriptures? According to a poll taken by LIFE magazine in December of 1998, 67% of Americans believe that the Scriptures are nothing more than the words of men. With the percentage so high, obviously many "Christians" share this view. Surely it is no wonder then that there is not a great deal of concern about interpretation of Scripture among "Christians" and the prevailing view is that one interpretation is as good as another. Why should interpretation matter, if the Scriptures are not from God, but men anyway?

However, all within "Christianity" claim to be following Jesus. Therefore, they should be prepared to imitate His view of the Scriptures and His manner of interpreting them. If not, they should give up any pretense of following Him at all.

Jesus believed that O.T. writers such as David did not speak for themselves, but spoke "in the Holy Spirit" (Mk 12:36). So which "Christian" will maintain that the Scriptures are purely a product of the pens of men?

Since Jesus believed the Scriptures were inspired, He believed they were true. He taught that Jonah being swallowed by a whale was an historical event (Mt 12:39-40). Which "Christian" will say that all accounts of miracles in the Bible are myths?

Jesus also accepted another logical consequence of the Scriptures being spoken from the mouth of God- that they therefore speak to men with the authority of God. When He was asked various spiritual questions, He referred men to the Scriptures for THE answer (e.g. Mt 19:3-6; Lk

10:25-28). Which "Christian" then will say that one's "Church", creed, priest, preacher, or family is the place to turn for spiritual direction?

As Jesus answered men from Scripture, He used the "book, chapter and verse", "proof-text" approach to establish God's will on a matter. He hung arguments on one word (Mk 12:35-37, "Lord"; Jn 10:33-36, "gods", and even on the tense of a verb, "I am", Mk 12:18-27). Which "Christian" will call such an approach to the Scriptures "technical", "nit-picky", or "legalistic"?

Finally, Jesus taught the harmony of the Scriptures. He showed the Devil that his interpretation of Ps 91:11,12 must be incorrect because it contradicted Dt 6:16 (Mt 4:5-7). By this, He pointed out that the "context" of Scripture was crucial to its interpretation and that the "context" of any Scripture includes all the rest of Scripture. Which "Christian" will uphold an interpretation of a passage which contradicts another passage?

So, though we live in a society where most do not believe the Scriptures are the Word of God may we view the Scriptures as Jesus did, as inspired and therefore true and the authoritative answer to every question. Though our neighbors may say that interpretation does not matter, may we, as Jesus, "hang on every word", understanding it in the context in which it was said and the context of all Scripture.

Let us either truly follow Jesus or stop pretending that we are, when in reality, we are not. May we truly be "Christians" or stop using and abusing His Name.

## LENT FISH SPECIALS

Restaurants all around metro Detroit are offering fish specials to attract those who, in observance of Lent, must abstain from "meat", but are allowed to eat fish. Many questions come to mind beginning with, "Who said fish is not meat?", Why aren't "Christians" allowed to eat meat?, and "What is Lent?"

Neither Lent nor the "holy" day of Easter which it precedes are found in Scripture. Therefore, they came from men and not Christ. The origin of Lent dates back to the A.D. 300's when a period of fasting and repentance for forty days before Easter was introduced. It was hoped that Lent would prepare the worshipper for Easter and have some lasting effect throughout the year. The restriction of food was designed to help the "Christian" subdue his sinful appetites.

Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, foretold that men would "advocate abstaining from foods" (1 Tim 4:3), such as required by the Catholic Church and some Protestant Churches at Lent. Paul was very plain in his condemnation of men who would impose such dietary requirements:

**They have fallen away (apostatized) from the faith** (1 Tim 4:1). The New Testament is meant by Jesus to be the one faith (Eph 4:4), once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Lent is not part of the faith. Those who added it and those who observe it are doing so outside the authority of "the faith" and thus have left it.

**They have paid attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons** (1 Tim 4:1). Simply put, Lent and its laws are from the Devil and not God.

**They are hypocritical liars with seared consciences** (1 Tim 4:2). For men to command something which God has not commanded is for them to lie, for they issue their laws in His Name, when He has not spoken! These men are hypocrites, for their actions are supposedly out of respect for God, when, in reality, they are the height of disrespect! And, they have the gall to speak "for God" without feeling guilty about it for their consciences are seared.

The Holy Spirit tells us the truth about eating meats. God has created all foods to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. Nothing is to be rejected. All food is set apart for man's use by God's Word and by man's prayer of thanksgiving (1 Tim 4:3-4).

"Do not taste" rules appear to have wisdom, but do nothing to suppress man's sinful appetites. They are commands of men and not God and Christians should not submit to them (Col 2:20-23).

It is not the foods that go into a man which defile him, but the words and actions which come out of his evil heart. Therefore, it is his thoughts, not his diet which must be changed if he is to repent (Mk 7:18-23). Eating fish specials during Lent will not draw a man closer to God and righteousness

