

**“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”** (Acts 8:12)

**THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD**



The gospel was the good news about the future Kingdom of God that was coming on the earth. To the Jews in the first century who heard Philip and the other Apostles teach the “*things concerning the kingdom of God*”, they understood that this Kingdom was all about their own nation, Israel. Israel was the original Kingdom of God on the earth in the days of Solomon and David. The hope that Jesus and his Apostles taught was based on the kingdom of Israel being restored with Messiah (Christ) as the king.

This was the same hope, even after the resurrection of Christ. “*When they (the disciples and Christ) therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*” (Acts 1:6-7) The gospel of the Kingdom is about the ancient Kingdom of Israel, restored on the earth. It is this same hope that the Hebrew prophets spoke of, - about a time when Jerusalem would be the throne of the Lord. ( See Jeremiah 3:17)

**It was the good news about this future time that Micah spoke of:**  
*“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. 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. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”* (Micah 4:1-3)

**There are many wonderful words of good news about the Kingdom of God that is coming on the earth. This is the true gospel message that we must believe and be baptized into, if we hope to be saved.**



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**LOCAL CONTACT:**

Send all Correspondence to:  
 “*Things Concerning*”  
 27 Delphian Rd  
 Springfield, VT 05156  
 e-mail: [jimillay@vermontel.net](mailto:jimillay@vermontel.net)

# Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

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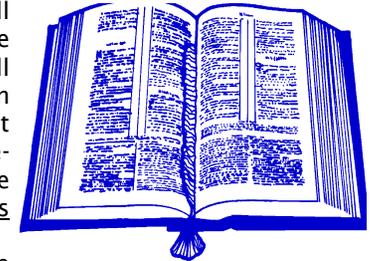
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**“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...”**

**(Mark 16:15-16)**

**DOES IT MATTER WHAT WE BELIEVE?**

In the Christian world, there are all kinds of ideas about salvation and there are a tremendous variety of beliefs, all claiming to represent the true Christian faith. Some profess that it really does not matter what we believe as long as we believe in Jesus Christ. They feel that we are all going to be saved in the end. Is this what the Bible teaches?



From the verses partially quoted in the top box, we learn that the “gospel” is an important message. If we believe the gospel and are baptized we can be saved. Does that mean we can be saved without the true gospel message? The Bible answer is NO! The Apostle Paul taught the Romans, “*So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*” Romans 1:15-17)

The “gospel of Christ” is the good news about the coming Kingdom of God on earth, and the name of Jesus Christ our savior. (See Acts 8:12) This good news has some very specific details associated with it and they must be preserved and presented in the same way they were in the first century, if this gospel message is going to save people.

Paul told the Galatians, “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*” (Galatians 1:6-9) This is a very powerful exhortation, we must preserve the true gospel and this is what we must believe to be saved.

**“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”**  
(Matthew 6:10)

#### THE KINGDOM ON EARTH

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he instructed them to always include a prayer for the Kingdom. The “Lord’s prayer” is very well known among all Christians and yet the majority of them never really consider the significance of the words that many repeat without understanding.



**Why** would Jesus ask us to pray for the Kingdom to come-- if it were already available in Heaven?

**Why** would he combine this prayer with the words, “Thy will be done in earth”, if our hope is to be in the Heavens?

#### THE BIBLE MESSAGE IS CONSISTENT THROUGHOUT.

**Moses was told**, “...*all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.*” (Numbers 14:21)

**The Psalmist** spoke these words 3000 years ago. “*But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*” (Psalm 37:11) **Jesus** reinforced this same teaching during his Sermon on the Mount: “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*” (Matthew 5:5)

**Daniel** defined this as “*the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, (that) shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High,*” (Daniel 7:27)

**The Psalmist** also proclaimed, “*The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*” (Psalms 115:16) **Jesus** also added support to this testimony when he taught, “*And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*” (John 3:13)

It has never been the intention that man would go to heaven when he dies, - or that the Kingdom would be beyond the skies. The gospel message has been greatly distorted by many of the churches and their preachers. We learned earlier how that men would be accursed if they perverted the gospel of the Kingdom. (Galatians 1:6-9) The important thing is that we do not listen to a distorted gospel. We must learn the true gospel of Christ as taught in the Bible, -and if we hope to be saved, we must believe this true gospel and be baptized with this as our hope.

**IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHAT WE BELIEVE** so let us be sure that we “*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

**“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:**

**And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”** (Rev 22:18-19)

#### THE WORD OF GOD MUST NOT BE TAMPERED WITH

In addition to the powerful curse pronounced against those who would pervert the gospel of Christ in Galatians 1, there are a number of other warnings throughout the Bible about distorting, changing, adding to or taking away from the pure Word of God.

One such warning is outlined in the box at the top of the page. These are among the final words of Jesus, spoken to the Apostle John and recorded in the very last chapter of the Bible. This is a very serious warning and there are clearly defined consequences for those who disobey.

The Prophet Isaiah warned the Israelites about false teachers in his day. His advice is something that can be very useful for us as we try to screen out the perversions of the gospel message that are current in the churches today.

*“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”* (Isaiah 8:20)

**The truth of the Bible is always available to us;** today we have a number of Bible study helps. There are concordances, dictionaries, commentaries, lexicons, and a variety of translations. Many of these Bible resources are available on computer programs that facilitate our research potential tremendously. There is no reason for us to be fooled by cunning men, who are mainly interested in our money, not our salvation.

Jesus told those who handled the Word deceitfully, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*” (John 5:39-40)

Let us take advantage of every opportunity to read and study the pure Word of God so that we will know what the saving gospel truly is.

**We must do more than know the true gospel, we must believe it with our whole heart and be baptized into the name of Jesus Christ, having a sincere hope of eternal life in God’s coming Kingdom on the earth.**