

December Questions / Answers

**The following questions are taken from emails and are printed below exactly as I received them. Names and contact information have been removed. The answers are in note form (sorry for any of my grammar errors) to be studied through. You'll have to examine each Scripture below to see the points. Please be mindful that there are often circumstances and details to every question that could potentially change the answer (there are generally no blanket answers to Bible questions).*

1. "Are civic engagement and citizenship ministries something the WORD speaks of? Our small Church wants to engage in these things because of a man that has brought them up. I have never heard of this. What fundraisers can the Church have?"

- I had to look online to see what I could find about "civic engagement ministries". From what I found, it appears you are speaking of so-called "churches" working within the local city or area they are in to promote political involvement, civil rights activism, voting registration, community projects, etc. From what I could find about "citizenship ministries" it appears you could be talking about either civil rights activism or legalization issues regarding immigrants becoming citizens of a country. I will provide thoughts based upon those definitions.
- There is nothing remotely close to these things recorded in the Scriptures. That should answer your question. Jesus has not authorized His body, the church (**Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23**) to have these "ministries". When you study through the Scriptures, you learn that everything we do must be authorized by the Lord. You learn that anytime man deviates from Him as their standard of authority, sin is the result (**Leviticus 10:1-2, Numbers 9:1-8, Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32, II Samuel 7:1-7, Proverbs 14:12, Proverbs 21:2, Jeremiah 7:30-31, Matthew 15:1-14, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 4:4, I Corinthians 4:1-6, Galatians 1:6-12, Ephesians 5:6-10, Colossians 3:17, II John 1:9, and Revelation 22:18-19**).
- The fact is, Christians should have as little involvement in the things of this world as is possible for us to do our work as saints and provide for our families (**II Timothy 2:1-4**). These ideas are about intermingling the spiritual kingdom of Christ with the physical world saints are not supposed to be of (**Matthew 6:19-21, John 17:14-16, Philippians 3:20, and Colossians 3:1-4**).
- If someone were to argue that these "ministries" are an "expedient" to reach lost souls, consider this: <http://www.wordsoftruth.net/wotvol17/wotbulletin11062016.html>
- Each local congregation that belongs to Christ is authorized to take up a collection of funds from the saints on the first day of the week (**I Corinthians 16:1-2**). That's it! No bake sales, real estate transactions, interest bearing accounts, book sales, resales, etc.
- If you want to be a positive influence on society, teach the lost the Gospel (**Romans 1:16**). Having said that, you must NEVER think you are going to change the world to make it a "better place". Careful studies of the Scriptures show that such will never happen (**Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 18:8, Galatians 1:4, II Timothy 3:12-4:5, I John 5:19, etc.**).
- Before I conclude, let me add this. So many divisions start with members of a congregation bringing up an idea (**Acts 15:1-32 and Colossians 2:4-10**). If it does not START with book, chapter, and verse in a rightly divided manner (**II Timothy 2:15-18**), it is an unscriptural idea. Even when Scriptures are used, there must be caution with new ideas (**II Peter 3:15-18**).

2. "Wondering what your thoughts were about new people coming to the Church of Christ that were immersed or baptized in the Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, or other demonination?"

- The wording of this question strikes me as odd. Why are you concerned about people "coming to the Church of Christ" rather than coming to the Lord and being added to the church (**Acts 2:47**)? If a person has obeyed the Gospel properly, they are members of the church, the churches of Christ, body of Christ, church of God, church of the firstborn, etc. Consider that there are many terms that describe God's people, even more-so than "church of Christ" throughout the New Testament. Consider this: (http://www.wordsoftruth.net/Sermon_SomeBiblicalTerminologyDescribingWhoWeAre2018.pdf).
- According to the Scriptures, what a person is taught prior to their conversion is what he or she obeys (**Romans 6:17**). Denominational bodies do not teach the truth relative to what the church is, who are Christians, etc. Things that are necessary to learn before becoming a disciple of Christ. They teach doctrines of men which cause the believer of those doctrines to perish (**Colossians 2:18-23**). Jesus said that the truth is what makes one free (**John 8:31-32**). Therefore, a person coming from a denominational background could never have been taught the truth to be properly converted. Think of the principle of how a corrupt tree cannot produce good fruit (**Luke 6:43**).
- If a denominational body taught the truth concerning the kingdom of Christ and His authority (**Acts 8:12**), they'd be exposing themselves as false as the Scriptures teach there is only one church (**Matthew 16:13-18**, **Ephesians 1:22-23**, and **Ephesians 4:1-6**) and wearing names besides that belonging to Christ is wrong (**Acts 4:10-12** and **I Corinthians 1:10-13**).
- One must understand the word of the kingdom prior to being converted into Christ (**Matthew 13:19**).
- The problem of "denominational baptism" amongst so-called "churches of Christ" exists because of an over emphasis on baptism as though baptism is the most important part of becoming a disciple of Christ. That is false. One must do many things, differing from person to person at times, before baptism can even begin to be considered (i.e. **Luke 8:1-15**, **Luke 9:57-62**, **Luke 14:25-33**, **Acts 3:19**, **Acts 8:25-39**, **Acts 18:8**, **I Corinthians 15:1-29**, etc.). The emphasis is often on **Acts 2:38**, which is in a greater context (**Acts 1:1-2:47**) which will NEVER again happen as it did at that time. Think on that. The problem is much deeper than denominationalism or the subject matter of baptism. It seem few today even know where to begin teaching to help someone repent and be converted (**Acts 3:19**).

3. "I have an important question. If my first husband left me for no reason (because he felt like it) and he & I both remarried...is he my covenant spouse or my husband now??"

- In the scenario you presented, your first husband is the one you are bound to (**John 4:5-18** and **Romans 7:1-3**).
- The only Scriptural option in that scenario is for both to remain unmarried or to be reconciled (**I Corinthians 7:10-11**).
- You are both in adulterous marriages (**Matthew 19:3-9**).
- I am not sure what you are meaning when you say "covenant spouse". Therefore, I shall leave that alone unless you can Scripturally elaborate.

4. "What does it mean lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds?"

- It appears your question is coming from the wording in **Hebrews 12:3**. The context goes back to **Hebrews 11:1**. I am going to answer more than what you asked for the benefit of your study and still yet, there will be much more left unsaid. Consider this as a beginning of a continual study I'd be willing to have with you if you'd be willing.
- Immediately, starting with **Hebrews 12:1**, those being addressed in this letter were to consider all those individuals of faith (named and not) that came before them (**Hebrews 11:1-40**). That was the "*so great a cloud of witnesses*".
- In considering that great cloud of witnesses, they were told to lay aside everything that slows them down or hinders their obedience to Christ (**Matthew 10:34-39**, **Matthew 16:21-27**, **Luke 9:57-62**, **Romans 13:11-14**, **Galatians 5:16-26**, **II Corinthians 6:14-7:1**, **Ephesians 4:17-5:11**, **Colossians 3:1-17**, and **II Timothy 2:19**).
- Looking unto Jesus (**Philippians 3:20**, **Titus 2:11-14**, and **Jude 1:21**) / looking at Jesus as an example (**I Peter 2:21-25**).
- He is the source and finisher of proper faith (**Hebrews 5:8-9**; cf. **John 14:6**).
- He understands what obedient life is like in this world (**Hebrews 2:9-18**; **4:14-16**).
- As you look at Him as the example, consider (**Hebrews 3:1**) Him as a pattern of overcoming (**John 16:29-33** and **I Peter 4:1-5**).
- Now to the "*lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds*" statement.
 - *Saints are told not to grow weary in well doing (**Galatians 6:7-9**).
 - *Being strong enough to overcome adversity (**Proverbs 24:10**).
 - *Why does this come down to one's mind? Consider this: **Matthew 15:19**
 - *Therefore, consider Jesus and the examples that came before Him, is about strengthening one's mind to be strong enough to overcome adversity and to stand faithful in the end (cf. **II Corinthians 4:8-5:11** and **Philippians 4:6-9**).

5. "I am a stay at home mom. We have 3 children. Recently at a pediatric visit I was made to feel like I should have my children involved more in public activities. The pediatricians assistant told me that I should work and force my children to learn to cope with life without me by their sides all the time. I was telling this to the preacher here thinking he would be outraged and would offer me some support. Instead of support he told my that I should thrust my children into the world more so they are not caught by surprise when they are older. Is he right? Are my husband and I overprotective?"

- I am not outraged by the comments made at your pediatrician's office. You were talking to a person of the world and the fact that they told you something ignorant is of no surprise (**I Corinthians 3:19** and **I John 5:19**).
- One concern about what you wrote is that after you heard those comments you were "made to feel like I should have my children involved more in public activities". The Scriptures guide you as a mother to be an overseeing individual in your children's lives (**Proverbs 6:20**, **Proverbs 29:15**, **I Timothy 5:14** [in context of young widows marrying], and **II Timothy 1:5**; **3:14-17**). Don't mind people of the world or even in the body of Christ if what they say is not Scripturally discerned (**I Corinthians 4:6**).
- Regarding what this false preacher (consider some things you must do with the fact that he has taught you error on this: **Ephesians 5:6-11** and **II John 1:9-11**) told you... You MUST continue to keep your children from as much evil influences as you can. The idea that they will be stronger if they are in the world more is entirely false. That

is even false for adults in Christ (**Mark 14:38**, **Roman 12:1-3**, and **I Corinthians 15:33**).

- I cannot say (**Proverbs 18:13**) what you and your husband are or are not (other than the fact that you are worshipping where you are being taught false doctrine). It is always good if a family can afford to have mom at home taking care of things on the home front (**Titus 2:3-5**). That does not mean mom just has to be limited to cooking, cleaning, etc. either though (**Proverbs 31:10-31**).