

Distorted and Contrived Religious Terms #1,

By John Gary Williams [Part 1 of 4]

The world of “Christendom” is filled with churches entertaining false beliefs. Many of these beliefs can be identified by specific terms, some of which are found in the Scriptures and some which are unknown to the Scriptures.

Over the centuries a number of Biblical words have been given distorted meanings making them conform to man-made teachings. Likewise, many contrived words, unknown to the Scriptures, have been used which also convey false religious ideas.

TERMS FOUND IN THE BIBLE BUT GIVEN DISTORTED MEANINGS

PASTOR

This word is widely misapplied to preachers throughout the denominational world. On church signs it is common to see the preacher billed as “pastor.” However, this is not a Biblical use of the word. The word pastor actually refers to an elder(s) (shepherds) of a local church. It is from the Greek term *poimen* and is translated ‘pastor’ only one time (Eph. 4:11). Elsewhere in the New Testament it is translated “shepherd,” sometimes referring to Christ as the “good” or “chief” shepherd (Heb. 3:20; 1 Peter 5:4). It definitely does not refer to a preacher. Rather, in the New Testament, preachers are called: preachers (Rom. 10:14), ministers (Eph. 3:7) and/or evangelists (Acts 21:8).

REVEREND

This is another title commonly given to priests and preachers of various denominations. It is used to identify those who are perceived to have special religious attributes worthy of adoration and reverence. At times, a more extended form of this title can be seen. For example, Right Reverend or Most Reverend. However, such titles are obvious corrupted uses of the word. The word reverend is to be used only with reference to God Himself. The Psalmist made this point clear. “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name” (Psa. 111:9). No man is to be addressed in this way — such is blasphemy. And, anyone who accepts such a title should be ashamed.

PRIEST

Since the early days of Catholicism, leaders of local parishes (congregations) have been referred to as “priests.” However, this title was never a part of the teaching of the New Testament church. Rather, its use is merely a carryover from the priests of the Old Testament covenant. In the New Testament church no special people are so designated. Actually, the Scriptures teach that God considers all Christians as priests — being called a holy and royal priesthood. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ ... But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...” (1 Peter 2:5,9). Actually, all Christians are spoken of as “kings and priests.” “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever” (Rev. 1:6). The distorted use of this term is just another of the many false teachings found in Catholicism.

BISHOP

This is a title given to an elevated head of the Catholic Church who serves under the “Pope” exercising control over a diocese, or a large area of land. Such a misuse of the word “bishop” is beyond comprehension! This demonstrates how far removed Catholicism is from the original church of Jesus Christ. The Greek term for bishop is episkopos and means one who “oversees” and is so translated in Acts 20. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (episkopos), to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). This is simply one of the words which describes the elders who oversee a local congregation. It never refers to a high-ranking office such as seen in the Catholic church. That the word ‘bishop’ is not to be used in this way is made clear by the apostle Paul. In his letter to the Philippians he spoke of the “bishops” — plural, not singular. “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1).

CHURCH

People often use the word “church” when referring to a physical, religious structure, similar to the word “sanctuary.” People are heard speaking of a church building as their “church.” Yet, this view is completely erroneous. The word church is from the Greek ekklesia and simply means “the called out,” referring to the people who make up the church, the body of believers (Matt. 16:18). It is never used of an edifice. In New Testament terms, the church is made up of the saved, those who become a part of it when added to it by Jesus. The Scriptures are clear on this point. “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

KINGDOM

For many years people have heard preachers speak of a coming spiritual “kingdom” on earth over which Jesus will reign for 1,000 years. Such a future kingdom is pure fantasy — nowhere taught in the Scriptures. The only kingdom found in the New Testament is the church of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 16:18-19 Jesus spoke of establishing His church and immediately referred to it as “the kingdom.” The kingdom existed in apostolic days (Col. 1:13) and the apostle John said that he and others were in that kingdom (Rev. 1:9). There is no such future kingdom. This teaching is part of the premillennial doctrine which separates the church from the kingdom. It says that when the kingdom Jesus came to establish was rejected, in its place He temporarily substituted the church. However, the church is not temporary, for it was purchased with Jesus blood (Acts 20:28). (seektheoldpaths.com)

Braggs church of Christ Bulletin
March 7, 2021

Sick & Shut-in

Bennett, Norma
Brashear, Lana
Brashear, Logan
Bunch, Margaret
Cunningham, Jerry
Evans, Carla
Evans, Steve
Hall, Donna
Horn, Bobby
Isbell, Bill
Isbell, Thomas
Moore, Jean
Moore, Roger
Mouse, Tyler
Nunez, Bob
Prichard, Barbara
Prichard, Bobby
Sturgeon, Wayne
Sullins, Ray
West, Dawn

Evangelism

Cliff Lyons, Ilya Muzychenko and Markov Roman, Russia
Ricky Gootam, India
House to House/Heart to Heart
Website - Braggschurchofchrist.com
[Facebook.com@braggscc](https://www.facebook.com/braggscc)
In Search of The Lord's Way- Tulsa, OK, on
KQCW TV 19 - Sun 7:30 am

Attendance

February average - 35
Attendance last Sunday - 36

Scripture Reading – Prov. 2:7-9

News & Notes

Gospel Meeting with Allen Webster - July 25-27, 2021

Bill will be having surgery March 8, 2021 at the V.A. hospital in Muskogee.

Time change on Sunday, March 14, 2021 --- set your clocks
FORWARD Saturday night, March 13, 2021