

"Tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"-1King 22:16

Barney Fife makes me think. . . .

Don Knotts played Barney Fife, deputy on *The Andy Griffith Show*. I was greatly saddened, hearing the news that a man who made me laugh as a child and an adult, had died.

Some of my fondest memories with family and friends are watching Barney, laughing while he does something funny. Don Knotts did such a great job playing his character, it seems like Barney was a real person that Barney died when Don Knotts died.

Best of all, watching *The Andy Griffith Show* was good, clean humor. Unfortunately, this was not always true with other shows Don Knott's played on; sometimes we had to turn them off because of inappropriate attire or humor. **Life is Short** Events like these remind me of my mortality. Pictures of Don Knotts, old and feeble, looking much different from the young man who played Barney Fife, remind me that life is short, even if we live a long time (in human terms).

James says, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills. . . .'" ([Jas. 4:13-15](#)).

Only One Thing is Important

Thinking about the brevity of life, I'm reminded that only one thing is important. Don Knotts was famous, and possessed social status that few people attain. He probably had a lot of money, luxurious possessions, and enjoyed the finer things of life. But now, none of that matters. All that

matter is his relationship with God. Jesus says, "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul" ([Matt. 16:25-26](#))?

And Solomon tells us, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil" ([Eccl. 12:13-14](#)).

Eternity is Right Around the Corner

We could stand before the Lord in judgment any moment. We could die unexpectedly, or Jesus could come again, taking vengeance on people who are not obeying the gospel, and taking the saved home to heaven ([2 Th. 1:6-10](#); [1 Th. 4:13-18](#)). Before we know it, we'll stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to be recompensed for our deeds, according to what we have done, whether good or bad ([2 Cor. 5:10](#)). Since our names are written in the book of life, we won't be thrown into the lake of fire, but enter into our heavenly abode, to live with our Lord for eternity ([Rev. 20:11ff](#)).

Before long, we'll be in eternity. We'll look back at this life, truly understanding the folly of life without God.

Make sure when you look back, you're happy you made the right choice.-Allan McNabb

The Bible Alone is the Standard

The apostle Paul said, "*...How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been*

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revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets." (Eph. 3:2-5).

Furthermore, he said, *"If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."* (1 Cor. 14:37).

There is no passage anywhere in the Scriptures which states that unwritten traditions, teachings of the Pope, or legislations of the church are the laws of the Lord. Thus, the Scriptures claim for themselves that they alone are the standard of authority in religion.

John the apostle said, *"These are written that you may believe..."* (John 20:31), *"And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."* (1 John 1:4), *"...These things I write to you, so that you may not sin."* (1 John 2:1), *"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life..."* (1 John 5:13).

Again, not one time did John, or any inspired writer, declare that the ex-cathedra pronouncements of the Pope, legislations of the church, etc., are given that you may believe, might not sin, or may know that we have eternal life. Again, the Scriptures claim for themselves that they alone are the standard of authority.

The holy Scriptures furnish us unto every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 says, **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."**

Any practice, therefore, which is not in the Scriptures, cannot be a good work in God's sight. Please name one good work which is necessary for salvation which is not in the Scriptures. Thus, the Scriptures alone are the authority; they thoroughly equip us for every good work.

All teachers are to be tested by the Scriptures. 1 Cor. 4:6 says, *"Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other."*

Acts 17:11 says, *"These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."* Even when Paul emphasized that his writings were the laws of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37), it was in opposition to what men might claim as laws. The Scriptures, therefore, are the only authority. Any practice not found in them is of human origin and is therefore false.

The Scriptures are the standard by which we will be judged in the last day. Rev. 20:12 says, *"...And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."* (See also Rom. 2:16; James 2:12; John 12:48). We will not be judged by unwritten traditions, teachings of the Pope, legislations of the church, writings of the so-called church fathers, etc., thus, again, showing that the Scriptures are the only standard.

Here is a list which shows what the holy writings furnish: (1) Life in the name of Jesus (John 20:30-31); (2)- Commands of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37); (3) Knowledge of the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:2-5). (4) The proper conduct (1 Tim. 3:14-15); (5) Every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17); (6) Protection against sin (1 John 2:1); (7) An assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:13); (8) Standard by which teachers are tested (Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 4:6); (9) Joy that is complete (1 John 1:1-4); (10) A reminder of the precepts (2 Pet. 3:1-2); (11) Standard of judgment (Rev. 20:12). This is all that is declared in God's revelation regarding His authority or law. The holy Scriptures do not mention or allow other authorities. They alone are the complete and final standard which furnishes all of man's spiritual needs. They alone are the standard by which all teachers are to be tested, and by which we will be judged in the last day. David J. Riggs

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