\bigstar **Failing To Define Terms Contextually** $\frac{1}{2}$ ☆ ☆

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☆ ☆Before there were dictionaries, commentaries, concordances, the Internet, electronic Bible tools, & seminaries, we had ☆ \star the Bible. It was through God's holy & divine word men studied because the Bible is the only book that can teach us the \star \star doctrine of Christ, give us the evidence we need to prove our faith, make corrections in our lives, & show us the way of \star \star righteousness, so we may be the complete creation God would have us to be (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). Now don't get me \star \star wrong, there is nothing wrong with the tools, books, & schools listed above. However, when these things become our \star \star standard of authority, then we have failed miserably in fulfilling the command of **2 Timothy 2:15**, which instructs us to \star \star "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the \star word of truth." Notice who it is we are to be showing ourselves approved to: GOD! Oftentimes, Christians will accuse 🖈 denominationalists & others in religion of being brainwashed by some preacher or a religious creed book. However, when 🖈 🖈 a Christian base their religion on the theology of a preacher, a book other than a Bible, or an ideal because it seems to be 🖈 \star the right thing to do or it justifies what they want to do, then it is this Christian who has been mis-educated & brainwashed (1 Corinthians 4:6 & Proverbs 14:12). Notice also in 2 Timothy 2:15, what it is we are to rightly \star divide: THE WORD OF TRUTH. Too many Christians are dividing churches because of their inability to study the \star 🖈 scriptures. Too many Christians & preachers in the pulpit no longer attempt to explain a text through exegesis, but rather 🖈 \star by what they feel. Jesus never said we had to feel anything, but He did say we had to know something & the Lord tells \star \star us we need to know the truth (**John 8:32**). In too many churches, our assemblies have succumb to this line of thinking \star ★& many preachers can no longer reference text like I have done in this article, but must literally re-teach Bible stories, ★ ☆ spend countless Sundays teaching individuals how to read their Bibles because we know if we don't, then any subject we ☆ ★ teach on will be confusing to, misunderstood by, & totally rejected by Christians. One of the issues, which have strongly ★ \star contributed to this area of mis-education of the Christian, has been the failing of defining terms contextually. ☆ \bigstar ☆

★We must understand any given word in the Bible can have multiple definitions, according to dictionaries & the languages ★ ★ of Hebrew & Greek. Therefore, to understand what a particular word means, the reader must know what the definitions ★ \star (plural) of the word are & what definition contextually fits. Where the Christian has been mis-educated is when they are \star \star taught to define a word before they read it in the context. This area of mis-education leads to the following: ☆ ☆

- $\stackrel{\frown}{}$ 1. Whenever I see this word in the Bible, it only means "this," regardless of the context in which it is being used.
- 2. If it means "this" always, then I don't care whether it contradicts other Scriptures. ☆ \bigstar
 - 3. It forces me to come up with a new hermeneutic, which shows how one can ignore the context of the Scriptures 🖈 & yet have it still harmonize with the rest of the Bible. ☆

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☆ ☆ 🕁 Brethren, in looking at the 3 points above, it is crystal clear this person is not looking for the truth of the Scriptures, but 🕁 ☆ rather they are trying to justify a practice they want to hold on to & this is the only way they can do it. ☆

 \bigstar ☆ *Not only are Christians mis-educated when they fail to define terms contextually, but it is displayed further when they fail 🛧 to let the Bible interpret the Bible. When we are inquiring about a definition of a particular word, it is okay to go to a 🛧 Addictionary or a commentary, but these things are not a source of authority because your dictionary & commentary could ★ be wrong. If you look in the dictionary for the word "baptize" or "baptism," you will find this definition, "The act of 🕁 * baptizing; the application of water to a person, as a sacrament or religious ceremony, by which he is initiated into the xisible church of Christ. This is performed by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring" (Webster's Revised Unabridged A Dictionary, © 1996, 1998 MICRA, Inc). Do we see a problem with Webster's definition of the word "baptism?" Let us \star count some of the errors: ☆

- ☆ ☆ 1. Nowhere in the Bible is baptism ever described or explicitly stated as a sacrament or religious ceremony. Baptism 🕁 ☆ is a condition placed by God of which we can be saved (**1 Peter 3:21**). Furthermore, if baptism is a religious $\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$ ☆ ceremony, then Philip should have waited to baptize the eunuch in Acts 8:26-39 so the rest of the Christians \bigstar could partake in this "ceremony." ☆
- 2. If baptism is the method by which man is initiated into the "visible" church of Christ, then this infers he was a ☆ member of the spiritual church of Christ prior to baptism. However, this contradicts Galatians 3:27, which ☆ teaches baptism is what puts us into Christ & Christ is the head of His church (Ephesians 5:23). ☆
- 3. Webster teaches baptism can be performed one of three ways: immersion, sprinkling, &/or pouring. If baptism is ☆ a "sprinkling," then we should be able to find at least ONE scripture, which explicitly states or gives an example of ☆ someone being sprinkled into Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, this scripture does not exist. If baptism is a ☆ "pouring," then we should be able to find at least ONE scripture, which explicitly states or gives an example of 🐥 ☆ someone being sprinkled into Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, this scripture does not exist. However, the ☆ Bible does teach baptism is done by way of immersion ONLY (Matthew 3:16, Acts 8:38-39, & Romans 6:4). ☆ ☆

 \star We, as Christians in the Lord's church, can see the problem of not defining words contextually & the doctrine it creates \star ★ contrary to the gospel of Christ with the word "baptism." However, why is it so many are blind to this in regards to words ★ ★like, "sexual immorality, forgiveness, marriage, divorce, & fellowship" just to name a few? Brethren, it is discouraging ★ \star when I do gospel meetings & preach a first principle sermon on something, or preach a basic sermon on Bible Authority, \star ★& I am met at the door by individuals who will either say, "Wow! I NEVER heard a sermon like that before. I am so glad 🖈 ☆I came tonight because I NEVER knew the Bible had any authority" or "I DISAGREE with your sermon because that word ☆ ☆ does not mean that OVER HERE in this scripture." Well, you are right, it might not mean this OVER IN THAT SCRIPTURE, ☆ ☆ \star but it does mean what JESUS said it meant IN THIS TEXT. \bigstar ☆ ★It is my prayer we encourage the Lord's people to built their scriptural foundation using the Bible & simply use ★ ☆ commentaries & books to built & strengthen this foundation & not create it, for it is the word of God that's quick & ☆ \star powerful & not the words of men (**Hebrews 4:12**). ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ What Must I Do To Be Saved? ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ Acts 16:30 ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ **HEAR THE GOSPEL** \bigstar ☆ ☆ ☆ (John 6:45, Romans 10:17, & Acts 15:7) ☆ ☆ **BELIEVE IN JESUS** ☆ \bigstar ☆ ☆ (John 3:16, Hebrews 11:6, & Acts 8:12) ☆ ☆ REPENT OF OUR SINS ☆ ☆ (Luke 13:3, 2 Peter 3:9, & Acts 3:19) ☆ ☆ ☆ \bigstar **CONFESS CHRIST TO BE THE SON OF GOD** ☆ $\stackrel{\frown}{\Delta}$ (Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:10, & Acts 8:37) ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ **BE BAPTIZED (IMMERSED) IN WATER** ☆ ☆ (Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:21, & Acts 22:16) \bigstar ☆ ☆ \bigstar ☆ ☆ When We Obey, God Will: ☆ ☆ \bigstar ☆ FORGIVE US OF OUR SINS ☆ ☆ ☆ \bigstar (Acts 2:38) ☆ ☆ MAKE US NEW IN CHRIST JESUS ☆ ☆ (2 Corinthians 5:17) ☆ \bigstar ☆ \bigstar ADD US TO THE CHURCH OF HIS CHOICE, ☆ ☆ THE CHURCH OF CHRIST \bigstar ☆ ☆ \bigstar (Matthew 16:18 & Acts 2:47) ☆ ☆ \bigstar ☆ Jesus Promises If We Remain Faithful To God's Word, Will, & Way, ☆ ☆ Then Heaven Will Be Our Home (Revelation 2:10). ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ Want To Learn More? Let's Talk About It. ☆ ☆ Antoine N. Holloway ☆ ☆ Phone: (301) 741-0012 ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ \bigstar Email: Aholloway2002@yahoo.com ☆ ☆ ☆ \bigstar $\frac{1}{2}$