

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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### **Stubbornness**

"To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead, or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture." – Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis*

"Those who never retract their opinions love themselves more than they love truth." – Joseph Joubert

"They ran their heads very hard against wrong ideas, and persisted in trying to fit the circumstances to the ideas instead of trying to extract ideas from the circumstances." – Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

"And yet, will we ever come to an end of discussion and talk if we think we must always reply to replies? For replies come from those who either cannot understand what is said to them, or are so stubborn and contentious that they refuse to give in even if they do understand." – Augustine of Hippo

"I always believed in God and Christ, but I was in rebellion – trying to make my relationship with God fit into my life instead of making life fit in with Him. I was stubborn." – Scott Stapp

Not too many of us would care to admit that we are stubborn, but in honesty, all of us possess some degree of stubbornness. There is a degree of stubbornness that is acceptable, in that we are stubborn to let go of some clear facts. For example, one could say they are stubborn in that they will not renounce God.

But there is another kind of stubbornness that is not good, one in which a person refuses to change their minds even when they learn that they are wrong. For example, one can hold to the idea stubbornly that baptism is not essential to salvation. Yet Jesus Himself said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Hypothetically, consider a young person who grows up believing that  $2 + 2 = 5$ . And then when he is shown the truth that  $2 + 2 = 4$ , he refuses to accept it. We may see this is absurd, but we often encounter this when people discuss religious matters. They reason, "Grandpa and grandma believed this, dad and mom believed this, so I am going to defend it with my last breath, even though it is wrong.

Stubbornness can cause a person to be lost. We owe it to ourselves to study the Scriptures and be sure that we are being taught the truth (cf. Acts 17:11).