**Does Scripture change with the culture**?

**Hebrews 13:8** says "Jesus Christ is the same, today, yesterday, and forever". (NIV)

Jesus never changes. Being that He is God, He has inspired the scriptures. **II Timothy 3:16** says the scriptures are "God breathed" meaning every word of the Bible belongs to Him.

Today we have many translations and paraphrases of the scriptures. Although these are supposed to bring clarity as to the meaning, they don't always carry the original intent of the passage. In the case of a paraphrase, you can sometimes make the interpretation somewhat different than originally intended. Perhaps that's why we see so many pastors and teachers of the Bible today having completely different interpretations of the scriptures than those of the past.

ie: Let's take the scripture in **John 14:6** from the NIV version, which Jesus says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one comes to the Father except through Me." Here Jesus makes a very clear and unmistakable doctrine that there is only one way to heaven, (where the Father is), and that's by Jesus Himself. Yet today, many are saying that's incorrect. Those saying that are not only 'unbelievers' but many are those who claim themselves to be Christians, in fact many are well known pastor/teachers.

According to Rev. Austin Miles on January 23, 2011, one of the more well known pastors that are promoting the Emerging Church movement is **Dr. Tony Campolo. Campolo says he is not convinced that Jesus lives only in Christians.** In his distorted view, an Islamic “brother” who has fed the hungry and clothed the naked **clearly has a personal relationship with Christ, only he doesn’t know it. How’s that again?**

It would be hard to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and not know it. Especially when that relationship calls not only for a life changing decision, but one of repentance of sins. It is accepting the words of Jesus Himself, it's accepting Him to be our Savior, thereby He forgives our sins, and we become a follower of Jesus Christ. From that point, we begin to learn and apply the Word of God into our lives as much as possible.

Although Campolo believes an Islamic person has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ based on doing good works, that is not what the scriptures say at all. In fact the scriptures themselves repudiate that very thought in **Romans 3:10** which says, there is no one righteousness, not even one" and further in **verse 12**, it says "there is no on who does good, not even one" and further in **verse 23** it says, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

In our culture today, a person who is morally upright, who helps the poor, who is basically a good person is thought of in many circles to be good enough to go to heaven. In our logic derived from a system of good versus evil, whereby good is rewarded and evil is punished, we make that conclusion. However, this only shows us we are using the wrong denominator. We are using man's thinking, not God's. This is the reason God has given us His Word, so that we might see things from His perspective, that to enter the presence of God requires holiness, not good works, and that our holiness comes not from ourselves but by the Lord Jesus Christ, when we ask Him to forgive us of our sins, and we invite Him to be our Savior. This requires knowledge of our actions and thereby negates Campolo's teaching of a good person having a personal relationship with Christ but doesn't know it.

**Let' take Divorce.**

The statistics are quoted that 50% of all first time marriages end in divorce, regardless of whether you are using society's or Christianity's statistics. They are the same.

**Malachi 2:13-17** says "Another thing you do: You flood the Lord's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not [the Lord] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. "I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

In this passage we see God hates divorce . The Lord reprimands the man who has come with his offering to the Lord because he is breaking his covenant of marriage with his wife. He states that the wife is his partner and He has made them one in spirit and flesh. (They are a unit in God's sight.)

**Matthew 19:3-12** says " Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees about divorce . They hoped to get Him in a place where He couldn't give an acceptable answer.

 The situation at the time was like this. The Jews allowed divorce for the purpose of immorality. In other words, if a man found that his wife was immoral, whether if be true or not, he could write her a 'Bill of Divorcement ' and send her on her way.

**Matthew 5:31-32** gives the account, it says, "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

-(in other words, Jesus didn't accept their definition of divorce. This practice was used by the Jewish men to change wives when they no longer had a desire for them.)

So Jesus continues in Matthew 19, "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry." Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. -(or made themselves eunuchs). The one who can accept this should accept it." (NIV)

So Jesus negates the practice of the Jews with their Bill of Divorcement and says that there is no reason for divorce except for 'marital unfaithfulness' on the part of a one of the persons.

Marital unfaithfulness meant 'sexual unfaithfulness'. However, many have tried to give a diferent interpretation to that clause. Like, being cruel to a person is 'marital unfaithfulness', or physical or mental abuse is 'marital unfaithfulness.' Or not providing financially, or physically or socially, or emotionally is 'marital unfaithfulness.' While all these other issues are certainly wrong, they in no case provide a purpose for divorce, according to Jesus.-( however, there are some who are defining 'marital unfaithfulness' exactly as stated above and are condoning two people to divorce. By doing so, they themselves are causing two people to go against the Word of God, and quite possibly commit adultery.)

**However, we do find a few other things for a couple to do if the above occur and they find they can't live together.**

**I Corinthians 7: 10-16.** "To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord):-(meaning the Lord had not previously commented on this. However, Paul is writing under inspiration of the Holy Spirit and therefore it is God's Word, not Paul's). It goes on to say, "If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? (NIV)

-(these verses point out what is to be done if two married believers can't live together in harmony, they are to separate and remain married, until such time that there can possibly be a reconciliation. If no reconciliation, then they are to remain married but living separately.)

The two examples noted above, (Salvation through Jesus only and the subject of Divorce), are being reinvented today by those want to make scripture fit their lifestyles rather than having their lifestyles conform to the Word of God.)

Other issues being changed today is 'taking God's Name in vain', -(see teaching article),-using bad language, telling off color jokes, are just a few. They go along with the 'emerging church' of today. -(see teaching article)