

# The Wright Brothers

---

by David McWilliams

Orville and Wilbur Wright, better known as the Wright Brothers, were the first to successfully achieve powered flight. They did so at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina in 1903 and ushered in the age of flight as we know it today. The Wright brothers journey on the way to solving the problem of flight was much like a spiritual quest. They devoted themselves to discovering the truth about flight as those who are devoted to discovering the truth about God and religion.

The Wright brothers were far from the first to attempt to fly, but all before them had failed. As the brothers began their own experiments, they studied the existing literature and science on flight and discovered that most of it was wrong. The charts, tables, and supposed facts that had been formulated over the decades were, with few exceptions, wrong. Such is the lot of any spiritual truth seeker. The charts, tables, and doctrines about religion that have been formulated by men over the years, for the most part, are all wrong.

In Matthew 15:7-9, Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees of His day that the religion they had formulated was not the truth. *"Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"* Just as the conventional wisdom on flying did the Wright brothers no good, the religious doctrines formulated by men are of no use to the soul.

So what were the Wright brothers to do? Since the information available to them was inaccurate, they had to search out the principles of flight for themselves. They turned to the best resource on flight left behind by the Creator. They turned to the birds of the air. The Wright brothers spent hours studying how birds flew, how they used the wind and their wings to achieve flight, and how they balanced their bodies against the currents. The Wright brothers knew a lot about balance. They built and sold bicycles for a living.

For one seeking religious truth, the source to turn to is the same. One must turn to what the Creator has left for us, the Scriptures. In John 5:39, Jesus told the Jews that the Scriptures testified of Him. Truth seekers must adopt the attitude of the Bereans in Acts 17:11. *"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."* If one wishes to learn the truth on any subject, one must go to the source. For the Wright brothers, it was the birds of the air. For those seeking spiritual truth, it is the Scriptures. As Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17:17, *"Your word is truth."*

Finally, most of the work done by the Wright brothers went unnoticed at first. They weren't necessarily trying to keep their experiments secret, but few people took note of their initial flights. Even when reports of their achievements began circulating, most refused to believe they had actually flown. The Wright brothers, after all, were not famous scientists. They had no government backing. They were regarded as just a couple of bicycle mechanics from Dayton, Ohio. Even when the world finally acknowledged their accomplishments, the brothers maintained the good character and humility they had displayed from the beginning.

The life of a Christian is much the same. One does not follow Christ in order to gain fame or popularity. In fact, those who pursue religion with selfish motives often never come to the knowledge of the truth.

*"For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, 'He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.'" (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)*

312602