



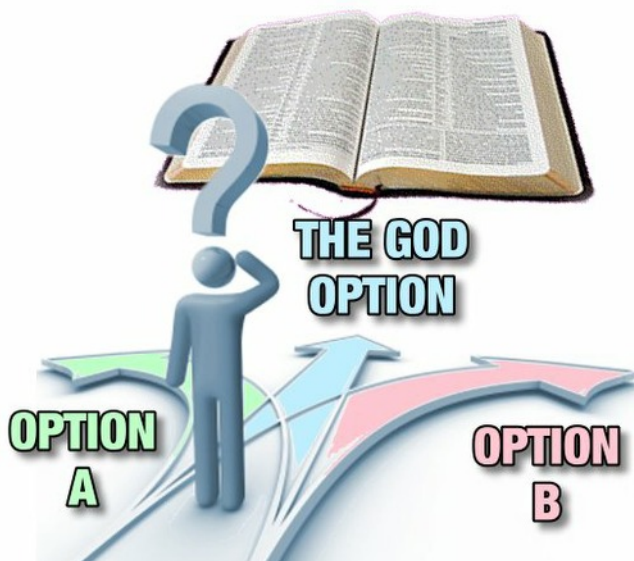
"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I will answer when I am reproved." Hab. 2:1

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Feature Article - The God Option

by Joye Binstead

There are a myriad of human experiences in which the thing desired does not seem remotely possible. We like to believe that there is a way out of all of our hardships, but God doesn't operate in the way we expect. Sometimes, physically, our situations are irreversible; our hearts, though, can always be changed.

The Sorrowful Eunuch -

I was reading in Isaiah 56, and stopped and pondered the eunuch sorrowing; grieving that he was 'a dry tree.' This is one of those situations where there is no changing. For many hundreds of years it was a common practice to make eunuchs of men. Only in the last couple of hundred has it died out. It was a practice with some prisoners of war, especially if they were to serve in court - it was thought to help them concentrate on their duties without distraction. In the more recent past, it was perpetrated on young boys who sang beautifully in the theatres and operas of European cities renowned for their musical arts. This way they would keep their angelic soprano voices.

The desire of a man is to pass on his name, not to have it die out with him. This was considered in Bible days to be a great failure, a shame and a sorrow. Imagine that this choice was taken out of your hands through no fault of your own.

So, many of these irreversible situations are brought out for our inspection in the Word.

The Barren Woman -

Quite a few times we see the Barren Woman, shown in Isaiah 54:1. Think of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and the slights and barbs that were spent on her because of her barrenness, or Rachel, who became devious in her pursuit of children, and went to great lengths, even to claiming her maidservants' children as her own when they were born across her knees.

The Forsaken Woman -

We are shown the Forsaken Woman, in Isaiah 54:6; a woman who is rejected by her husband. She is usually pictured by Israel and Judah, who had sinned grievously against God, and were put aside by Him until they had repented. The age in which we live gives ample opportunity to see forsaken women; not all of these are forsaken for wrong doing but are the ones to whom wrong has been done.

The Sons of the Stranger -

The Sons of the Stranger, in Isaiah 56:6, would be Gentile people who had joined themselves to the Jewish nation. They had left behind their old ways, like Ruth, but were disallowed from entering most parts of the temple precinct, and were permitted only to the Court of the Gentiles.

Forsaken Children are also brought up for review in Psalm 27:10.

All of these people had struggles, some of which were physical, some were emotional – some seemed to be unanswerable.

I realise that when we begin to reason about our troubles, we think Option A or Option B. God never does this. He doesn't check our list of what options we think there are and then fall into line with the one He likes best (though we are sure they are quite comprehensive.) But God says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8, 9.

Isn't it good to know that, while people who look at our situation may be thinking Option A or Option B, God has other plans, better plans? I love the way He speaks to the eunuch, and how He comforts the forsaken woman. The promises He gives the barren woman are so full! He brings the sons of the stranger close to His side, and takes the forsaken children into His care. None of these acts are Option A or B. They are purely God's options.

Like the omniscient Father He is, He looks down and sees the heart of the matter. The eunuch is troubled by his inability to carry on the family line. "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." Isaiah 56:4, 5.

To the barren woman, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD." Isaiah 54:1.

For the forsaken woman He takes on the responsibility of husband: "Fear not: for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded: for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame

of thy youth, and shalt not remember thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thy husband: the LORD of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee: but with great mercies will I gather thee." Isaiah 54:4-7.

He speaks so gently to the children whose parents have forsaken them, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up." Psalm 27:10. The sons of the stranger are brought close, and their sacrifices welcomed on His altar, "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant: Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people." Isaiah 56:6,7.

God will take our situation and use it as a skillful tool, shaping us and molding us – conforming us into the image of His Son. We are not very good at humbling ourselves, so God takes us in hand. He brings us lower than we would dare to let ourselves go, He empties us of our foolish pride, and when we have nothing left with which to save ourselves – then He can be glorified.

There is a lot of pain and turmoil involved in this process; anyone who has experienced one of these trials knows it is like having a boil. There is the long and painful buildup, followed by the anguish and humbling nature of the lancing. It all looks such a mess. There is a hole left behind that cannot be hidden but the purging has occurred, and now the new growth can begin.

In our trials or in another's we must not make the mistake that Elimelech did, of expecting to be the answer to the great void in a dear one's heart. He said to his barren wife, "Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" A human being can never be the piece that fills the hole God has given us. Only God can take that place, and only when we allow Him.

It is a far better place to be, if God wills it, to be a eunuch, a woman without children, a forsaken woman or child, a stranger in a strange land – and to be in the flow of His blessing – than to try and fill my life with people and relationships and all the comforts of life that do not endure. Would I thank God politely for His kind offers to be everything to me, and then fill my life with second best? God's promises are plentiful, and they never fail; but things and people will never be enough to heal an aching heart. God's promises bring peace in turmoil; His promises are a solace in weariness.

I believe God comes so close at times like these; remember the hymn...Burdens are lifted at Calvary, Jesus is very near? If God has you on the operating table, the Great Physician is very near. In fact, His powerful and wise hands are right inside your situation. I think of Anna in the Temple, married only 7 years and widowed for 84! Yet she found contentment and fulfillment in her service for God; Luke 2:36 tells that she was a prophetess, and departed not from the temple but served God with fastings and prayers night and day! God was very near, even giving her the blessing of seeing the Christ child before her death.

God grant us the patience and faith to be who and where He wants us to be; that we do not become frustrated (with all our earthly desires prevalent) in the place He has put us but that we find our peace and contentment in Him alone; that we accept what is acceptable to Him - then we may be sure of the blessing of the Lord.

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Deacon True Sez -

"If politicians gave us just one-tenth of what they promised, nobody would be very interested in going to Heaven."

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Blessed Biographies -

Christmas Evans - One-Eyed Preacher

by Basil Miller

"Why not ask the one-eyed lad from the North to speak? I hear he preaches quite wonderfully." The speaker was one of several ministers who were standing in a circle near a great crowd of people. The occasion was a meeting of Welshmen from many communities who had gathered to hear the Gospel. It was time to open the convention, and none of the ministers was willing to be the first speaker.

The one-eyed lad was at that moment moving about on the outskirts of the crowd. This tall, bony, haggard young fellow, uncouth and poorly dressed, certainly lacked the appearance of a preacher.

"Surely, they wouldn't ask that absurdity to preach," one of the ministers muttered. Others, however, were quick to say, "Give the lad a chance." Christmas Evans was forthwith summoned and, without the formality of an introduction, told to preach.

As he mounted the hastily improvised outdoor platform he saw a multitude, but few appeared to have focused their attention on the speaker's platform. This was a social gathering as well as a Gospel convention, and many friends and neighbors saw each other only when they assembled for such association meetings. Many were wandering about, talking to old friends, or eating refreshments at one of the numerous stalls. It was a scene to discourage the heart of any young preacher.

The young man began to present a Gospel message in tones of authority. Gradually the babbling ceased, and members of the audience turned toward the unknown and unintroduced preacher. Soon even the refreshment booths were deserted as curious listeners came to hear the young man.

With the attention of all focused on him, Christmas began to speak with increased power. The people were spellbound by his eloquence. Even the preachers were impressed.

"Gogoniant! Gogoniant!" The cry burst forth everywhere as the hearts of eager listeners melted under the intense fervor of his burning message. "Glory! Glory!" they shouted in Welsh. Never had they heard such moving proclamations of God's love.

When the excitement was at its height, the preacher seated himself. Tears streamed down many faces, and hearts were stirred as they had not been for years. The "absurdity" was a man used of God; the one-eyed preacher was destined to become one of Wales' most popular heralds of Christ.

Christmas Evans was named in honor of the day on which he was born: Christmas, 1766. The family lived in Esgairwen, in the parish of Llandysul, Cardiganshire, Wales. His father, a poor shoemaker, died while the boy was still young, and his widowed mother was unable to care for her son. When her brother offered to take young Christmas to his farm at Llanfihangel-ar-Arth, the mother rejoiced, for there her son would receive proper care.

The uncle, however, had a different purpose in mind. Now he had a boy to work for him, and the lad would not have to receive wages, but merely shelter, food and clothing. Christmas was to learn a hard lesson early in life. So cruel was his selfish and drunken uncle that Christmas said in later years, "It would be difficult to find a more unconscionable man than James Lewis in the whole course of a wicked world."

For six years the boy remained in this unpleasant environment. It was not an easy life on the farm, and many times Christmas narrowly escaped death. Once he was stabbed; another time, nearly drowned; one day he fell from a tall tree with a knife in his hand; on another occasion a horse ran away with him and ran at full speed through a narrow passage. From all these dangers the Lord delivered the boy, for he was a chosen vessel unto Him.

At the age of seventeen he could not read a word, and during the whole of that time he was surrounded by the worst examples of conduct. His companions were young ruffians whose one aim was to find opportunities for mischief.

Meanwhile a revival broke out in the Presbyterian church at Llwynrhydowain, and under the preaching of David Davies, Christmas, with several other boys, was converted. None of the other converts belonged to the rough crowd with which Christmas spent most of his free time. Desiring Christian fellowship, the boy decided to leave his sin-loving companions and strive to live a Christian life.

His new companions were, like him, ignorant farm boys. So eager were they, however, to learn to read, that they spent the money they could spare from their meager earnings to buy Bibles and candles by whose light they could study the Word. For many months the faithful few met at night in a barn and studied the Word of God, until finally they were able to read a bit of it in their own Welsh tongue.

Although Christmas had left his former companions, they did everything in their power to disturb the new convert. Failing, they decided to give him a thorough beating, and attacking him one dark night with sticks and clubs, six of them beat him into unconsciousness. When he finally regained consciousness, he discovered that he had lost the sight in one eye.

The loss of an eye would have made many young lads rebel against God. However, the experience renewed Christmas' determination to flee the wicked things that had allured him. By borrowing books and applying himself diligently to study, he soon learned a little English. His pastor, sensing the eagerness of the growing youth, encouraged his studies, and in six months the two had studied the Latin grammar.

Burning in the heart of Christmas was the fervent desire to preach the Gospel. But who will listen to a man with only one eye? he asked himself. He became greatly discouraged, but eventually the dream of the youth was to be fulfilled.

He copied his first sermon from Beveridge's Thesaurus Theologicus and memorized it. The occasion for the sermon was a cottage meeting, and young Evans delivered the message in a convincing manner. Among the listeners was an educated man named Davies, who discovered the sermon in the same book. Had it not

been for the fact that Christmas had presented the message with uncommon power, his reputation would have been nipped in the bud.

Christmas joined the Baptist church at Aberduar and came under the influence of the Rev. Timothy Thomas, a man of faith and zeal, who baptized the young man. The youth began to preach in neighboring village churches and slowly his popularity increased in his neighborhood and spread to surrounding sections. In 1790 the Baptist Association at Brecknockshire appointed him as the missionary to an obscure hamlet, Lleyln.

Although at first there were few people in the church at Lleyln, within a short time after the arrival of the one-eyed preacher it was filled to overflowing. The strain was too great for him, however, so he decided to take a rest trip and preach along the way. As a result of this tour he became widely known in the North country.

It was at this time that Christmas was asked to preach to the audience mentioned at the beginning of this biographical sketch. Christmas was soon to become one of Wales' most popular pulpiteers.

On his twenty-sixth birthday, Christmas Day, 1792, he married Catherine Jones. Riding double on his faithful horse, Lemon, they started for Anglesea, where, at Llangefui, they were to establish their home. The way was long, the winds were cold, the roads were rough and covered with snow, but the cheerful young people jogged toward the home that was waiting for them.

The manse was a dilapidated one-room cottage, so low that the preacher, more than six feet tall could not stand erect. However, in this little home, bright with Christian joy, Christmas and his wife were to spend the next twenty years, where their salary was to be seventeen pounds (approximately \$100) a year.

Christmas was still hungry for knowledge. One by one he conquered difficult subjects. Within a few years he had mastered Hebrew and Greek, and the humble cottage became the birthplace of soul-stirring sermons that spread his fame.

"On his way from Dolgelly to Machynlleth, while climbing up Cadair Idris, he stepped aside and spent three long hours in wrestling with God for an outpouring of the Spirit; in his supplications he embraced all the churches in Anglesea and all the ministers he knew; a mighty revival of religion followed," says an early biographer.

"In two years," says the Rev. Paxton Hood, "his ten preaching places increased to twenty, and over six hundred converts were added to the churches." Many of these new congregations appointed pastors, recommended by Christmas, who considered him their unofficial bishop or moderator. He presided at their meetings, and often interrupted a speaker with such words as "William, my boy, you have spoken before; have done with it," or "Richard, you have forgotten the question before the meeting; hold your tongue." In spite of this directness all loved him.

Forty times, from one end of Wales to the other, Christmas, with the faithful Lemon, traveled on preaching tours.

"At one place he learned that a great deal of sheepstealing had been going on for some time; and of this circumstance he took advantage, by supposing that in so great a crowd some of the sheep-stealers would be present. These he earnestly admonished to give nothing to the collection. The collection that day was large, for every one gave, even though some had to borrow to do so."

Christmas had good reason for desiring large collections, as he had assumed the task of raising money to finance new chapels throughout Wales, which were products of his evangelism. Everywhere he went, "the

one-eyed man of Anglesea" collected money for more chapels, and as more converts were added to the already crowded churches, it was necessary to build even more chapels.

In 1823, Catherine, for many years his faithful wife, went to be with the Lord. This was a severe blow to Christmas. She had often accompanied him on his journeys, and her sound advice had been of great assistance. Always she had inspired her husband.

The Anglesea churches began to be restive and self-willed, and Christmas decided to leave. Accepting an invitation extended by the Baptist church of Tronyvelian, Caerphilly, he prayed earnestly "to be kept from under proud feet of members and deacons, worldly greatness and riches, and also from the strife of tongues." In this pastorate he was blessed with peace and prosperity, and his sermons were preached to large and admiring audiences.

Although he had an opportunity to marry a wealthy widow, the humble preacher declined and married instead an old servant from Anglesea. This good woman brought him joy during his remaining days on earth.

In the spring of 1838, when he was seventy-two and had entered the fifty-third year of his ministry, the two set off in their gig on a preaching tour through Tredegar, Cardiff, Cowbridge, Bridgend and Neath. They reached Swansea on Saturday, July 14. The purpose of the tour was to raise money for the debt on the Caernarvon Chapel. At no time during his career was Evans more popular.

On July 15, after preaching two sermons, he went to the house where he was to spend the night, and as he reached the stairs he was heard to remark, "That was my last sermon." The remark was prophetic, for from that hour he declined.

On Friday a group gathered around his bed to hear his dying words, "Good-bye. Drive on!" The faithful servant went home to be with the Lord. Throughout Wales there was great mourning. The memory of the one-eyed preacher was to flourish in the hearts of Welshmen. *From "Ten Handicapped People Who Became Famous" by Basil Miller. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, ©1951.*

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Villains of Church History - Part 1

No man is "neutral" when it comes to spiritual things. Every man has his biases. Right from conception, a sinful nature is at work in every man, bending us toward scepticism and moulding us to be rebels against God. Only by the gracious workings of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God are our eyes opened and our hearts moved to believe in Christ and we are born again. But we can never say we approach the things of God in a "neutral" frame of mind. No one is ever truly objective about God or His Word. We are either biased against God or toward God.

Students in Bible colleges are often taught this error of "neutralism", that textual critics use a



"neutral" approach to the Word of God. It simply is not true. Every one of them has his preconceptions, just as we do. They have the same old sinful nature we have. The thoughts of their hearts are shaped by their sinful nature, by their parents and teachers just as our hearts are. Textual critics admit that they set out to study the Scriptures using the "scientific method" of the Renaissance. It's just that they mistakenly believe that a critical approach to God's Holy Word is "neutral," when it is actually unbelief. Have they never read James 1:5-8? "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." It is ever so clear that men are to approach God in faith, not with a critical, analytical, sceptical spirit. Just so, we should open our Bibles with full confidence that we will find everything we need there, including understanding which text is reliably preserved by God.

It should be taught to every student of the Scripture that modern textual critics, almost without exception, are nothing but educated lost men. And what does God say about unconverted religious intellectuals? He says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. 2:14 This verse must be the untouched text in those classes where textual criticism is taught.

Consider these simple truths from verse 14:

1. The natural man (psuchikos) is the man who does not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within, and he is unconverted.
2. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. He is not guided by the Spirit into truth. He is not taught by the Spirit into sound doctrine. He is not led by the Spirit as the sons of God are led. He is left to wander in the murky darkness of man's wisdom.
3. He considers the things of the Spirit to be foolishness (moria) or moronic. As a result, he views those who have the Spirit of God and who learn from Him and are led by Him to be fools, unworthy of respect.
4. He cannot know or understand the things of the Spirit of God. They do not register or remain in his thoughts. They are foreign to him. They simply do not compute because to him they are illogical, unreasonable, and altogether too simplistic.
5. Why cannot he discern the things of the Spirit? Because they are explained ONLY to the new born spirit of man by the Holy Spirit.

What a contrast there is between the "natural" man the "spiritual" man. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Corinthians 2:15-16

1. The spiritual man (pneumatikos) is the man who has the Holy Spirit dwelling within.
2. The spiritual man judges or perceives all things. All God's works, all His words, all His will, and all His ways are open to him because of the Spirit's work in him. Does he know it all at once? Does he become totally discerning at his new birth? Of course not. But that limitless tutoring work is begun in him and never ends. The elitist, unconverted intellectual who critiques the text of Holy Scripture never realises how narrow is the scope of his learning. He never knows (unless he comes as a broken sinner to Christ!) how wonderfully broad is the universe of truth that is open to the simple believer in Christ!
3. The spiritual man is a mystery to the natural man. How is it possible for an unschooled man like Christmas Evans or Billy Bray or Dwight Moody to have such unfathomable depths of wisdom? Ah yes, we know! It is by the Spirit of God, who does his tutoring work in simple men to make them wise.
4. And what does the Spirit of God teach the child of God? He teaches him the mind of Christ, the limitless Wisdom, the gracious character of Jesus Christ!

So who are the villains of church history? They are many and varied. But here are a few of the earliest of the modernistic textual critics, revered and esteemed among men in high places in our day.

RICHARD SIMON (1638-1712), according to Bruce Metzger, laid “the scientific foundations of New Testament criticism” (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 155). Simon was a French Roman Catholic who “disregarded the traditional and dogmatic presuppositions of his age” and “examined critically the text of the Bible as a piece of literature.” This means that Simon did not regard the Bible as the supernaturally inspired, divinely preserved Word of God, but as a mere book. From a biblical standpoint, this father of modern scientific textual criticism was an unbeliever and a heretic. Metzger shares Simon’s rationalism and unbelief (looking upon the Old Testament as a mixture of truth and myth, etc.), so it is not strange that he does not fear identifying this heretic as one of the fathers of modern textual criticism.

JOHN MILL (1645-1707) is also commonly listed as one of the first modern textual critics. Though, for the most part, he did not attempt to correct the Received Text with his textual findings, he published a critical apparatus that listed thousands of variant readings from a wide variety of sources. Protestant and Baptist church leaders believed that Mill’s textual work was undermining the authority of the Scripture. Daniel Whitby, pastor of St. Edmund’s, Salisbury, “argued that the authority of the holy Scriptures was in peril” (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 108).

We believe old Whitby was correct. The authority of the Bible has been vastly undermined by modern textual criticism. It is not the gathering of textual data itself that imperils the Holy Scriptures, but the misuse of that data by textual critics who do not work from the principle of faith in divine preservation.

DANIEL MACE used Mills’ textual apparatus to produce a new Greek text with his own English translation. Metzger observes that “Mace’s edition was either vehemently attacked or quietly ignored.” Dr. Leonard Twells, pastor of St. Mary’s in Marlborough, condemned Mace’s work under the categories of a “corrupt text, false version, and fallacious notes” (Metzger, p. 111).

RICHARD BENTLEY (1662-1742) is another man commonly listed as one of the influential fathers of modern textual criticism. Though he planned a new edition of the Greek New Testament, it was not actually produced. What he did produce was a “canon of criticism that, in one form or other, has been approved by all textual critics since” (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 112). His goal, by the way, was not to attempt to publish a New Testament as it was given by the apostles but merely to “restore a Greek and Latin text to the state in which they were in the fourth century” (Souter, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 98). One of Bentley’s principles of textual criticism was “the difficult is to be preferred to the easy reading.” This was based strictly upon a humanistic perspective of the biblical text, that “a scribe is more likely to make a difficult construction easier, than make more difficult what was already easy.” It does not take into account the fact that the Bible is the Word of God and has been subject, therefore, to processes different from that of other literature.

Modern textual criticism completely ignores, for example, the Satanic attacks upon Scripture. How did Bentley know his principle is the proper method for discerning the preserved Word of God? He didn’t. Like many accepted principles of modern textual criticism, it is a mere theory. Since the original Old Testament and New Testament manuscripts do not exist, it is impossible to test the certainty of the textual theories. The only way the pure Scripture can be discerned is by the principle of faith in God’s promise of preservation.

Bentley was not a Bible scholar but a “classical scholar” who approached the Bible in the same manner that he approached ancient non-inspired writings, such as those of Horace. Souter observes that “the impulse [Bentley] gave to [his textual] studies was such, that but for him there would have been no Lachmann and no Hort.” Metzger admits that Bentley depended to a large degree upon his own “instinctive feeling as to

what an author must have written" (Metzger, p. 182). This is called "conjectural emendation." It describes an educated guess, and it is heresy. No scholar today can know by his intuitions and feelings what the preserved Word of God is. The house of modern textual criticism sits upon the sand. Even Metzger admits that Bentley's bent for conjectural emendation led him to make many decisions that were "rash and indefensible." We would describe practically the whole of modern textual criticism in those terms. Conjectural emendation did not die out with Bentley; Metzger admits that the 24th edition of Nestle's Greek New Testament includes about 200 conjectures (p. 185).

JOHANN BENDEL (1687-1752) is another important link in the history of modern textual criticism. He adopted the principle of classifying manuscripts and "recognized that the witnesses to the text must not be counted but weighed" (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 112). In this manner, the textual critics have been able to ignore the overwhelming majority witness represented in the Received Text and to replace it with the minority witness of manuscripts such as the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus. Though Bengel was orthodox in his Protestant faith and did not deny the infallibility of Scripture, the deity of Christ, etc., his textual work and principles were widely recognized as heretical by German churches and "he was treated as though he were an enemy of the holy Scriptures" (Metzger, p. 113). Modern version defenders look upon the Christians of old who fought against the early textual critics as ignorant people who were blindly holding onto tradition. We don't accept this position. Bible-believers of that day understood that the principles of modern textual criticism deny biblical preservation. If the Bible has been preserved, it was preserved in the Received Text; and if it has been preserved, what are the textual critics doing? They are introducing corruption and heresy. I believe Bengel was wrong and those who treated him as an enemy of Holy Scripture were right.

JOHANN JAKOB WETTSTEIN (1693-1754) was a textual scholar who collated manuscripts and published a Greek New Testament. When he first published a specimen of his textual criticism in 1718, he was charged with Arian and Socinian heresy (pertaining to the denial of the Trinity and the deity of Christ) and he was eventually expelled from the pastorate in Basle. After that, Wettstein taught philosophy and Hebrew at the Arminian college in Amsterdam, assuming the vacated seat of the modernistic Jean Leclerc (Johannes Clericus), who "maintained that reason is an infallible guide in judging of all that man needs to know for salvation" (Schaff-Herzog). Leclerc suggested that Luke produced two editions of the book of Acts (Metzger, p. 163). Wettstein believed that all of the early Greek manuscripts have been contaminated by the Latin versions (Metzger, p. 114).

It was obvious to most Bible believers of that day that the critical Greek text supported heretical doctrines, weakened the doctrine of Christ's deity, and represented doctrinal corruptions introduced by heretics in the third and fourth centuries. Though rejected by Bible believers, Wettstein's textual criticism was heartily approved by heretic. His critical notes were reprinted by the Christ-denying Modernist Johann Semler in 1765. (excerpted from *Textual Criticism is Drawn From the Wells of Infidelity* - <http://www.wayoflife.org/files/e1db55f49d87a84760ac4208bb1fd06b-452.html>)

Some of the readers of Heads Up will recognise these early textual critics because you heard them praised by your professors in Bible college.

Did they tell you that these men were modernists? Or that they were German Rationalists?

A few months ago I spoke to my sister and inquired about a dear friend who lives in an area that had just been ravaged by fierce bushfires. She told me that our friend's house was destroyed and they lost almost everything. The heat was so great that it literally melted metal objects in their house and workshop. Jerry told my sister that the fire was so hot and the trees so dry that it actually burned the trees right down into the ground so that the entire root system was consumed by the fires. He used a measuring tape to measure how deep the fire had burned and it was at least six feet underground!

It is about time that Bible believers applied the fire of God's Word to the dry, barren weeds of infidelity that riddle our Bible colleges and burn them out once and for all, all the way down to the roots. Modern textual criticism grew out of the seeds of unbelief sown by German Rationalists, and almost no one will admit it. We need to expose the modernism and the deep infidelity of the so called textual scholars (and their modern day promoters!) who poison our preacher boys year by year!

We can and must speak up. We can strike a match to burn this error out, all the way down to the roots!

In the next issue of Heads Up we will include the names of more recent textual critics.

Buddy Smith

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James Harper – “This is worshipping another God...”

A Courageous High School Senior -

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/02/15/colorado-student-reportedly-quits-choir-over-islamic-song/?test=latestnews>

Colorado Student Quits High School Choir Over Islamic Song Praising 'Allah'

February 15, 2012 (Edited by DCB)

Separation of church and state? How about separation of mosque and state?

It has been a custom of public schools in the USA to leave Christ out of Christmas because of separation of church and state but students are allowed to sing a song in praise to Allah! Is there a contradiction here! At least one "...Colorado high school student quit the school choir after an Islamic song containing the lyric 'there is no other truth except Allah' made it into the repertoire." The student "James Harper, a senior at Grand Junction High School in Grand Junction, put his objection to singing 'Zikr,' ...in an email to Mesa County School District 51 officials. When the school stood by choir director Marcia Wieland's selection, Harper quit."

This bold student told a local television station (<http://www.krextv.com/news/around-the-region/Islamic-Prayer-Song-Being-Sung-By-Grand-Junction-High-School-Choir-139329693.html>) "This is worshipping another God, and even worshipping another prophet ... I think there would be a lot of outrage if we made a Muslim choir say Jesus Christ is the only truth."

The spokesman for the school district told the reporter "This is about bringing diversity to the students and showing them other things that are out there". He went on to defend the teacher by saying she "...was open with the parents and students do not have to participate in this voluntary club choir."

This teacher was savvy enough to be "aware that there would be questions regarding the song -- asked her students to watch a YouTube video of the song prior to performing it."

Only ONE out of the choir has quit so far! This is sad indeed. We need more professing Christian men and women that will be courageous enough to stand for their belief that the God of Scripture is not the god of Islam and the Koran.

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A Fearful Sight for Persecutors -

In the year 1582, Psalm 124 was sung on a remarkable occasion in Edinburgh. An imprisoned minister, John Durie, had been set free, and was met and welcomed on entering the town by two hundred of his friends. The number increased till he found himself in the midst of a company of two thousand, who began to sing as they moved up the long High Street,

"If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

They sang in four parts with deep solemnity, all joining in the well known tune and psalm. They were much moved themselves, and so were all who heard; and one of the chief persecutors is said to have been more alarmed at this sight and song than at anything he had seen in Scotland.

Andrew A. Bonar, in "Christ and His Church in the Book of Psalms," 1859.

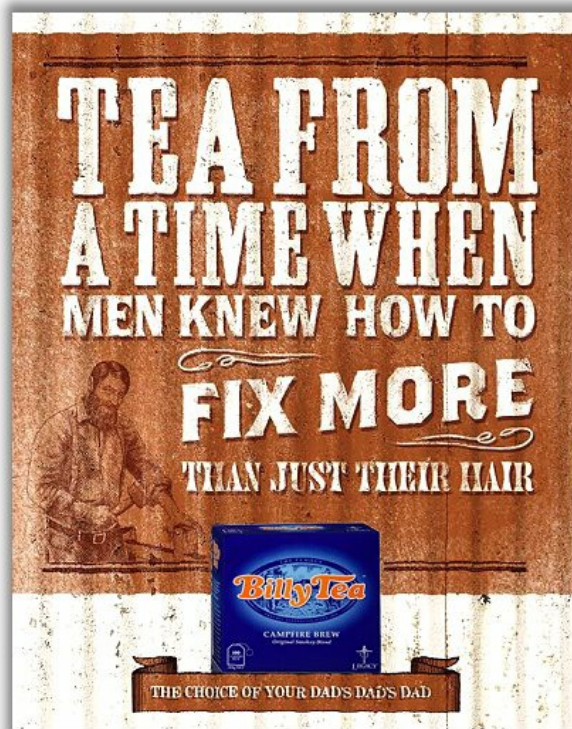
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Notable Quotes and Quotable Notes -

- "No obstacle is greater than the promises of God" - *Anon*
- "There are two things you can do with your life; you can give it away or you can throw it away; but you cannot keep it." - *Anon*
- "I would rather wear out than rust out. No nestling, no nestling on this side eternity." - *George Whitfield*
- "As often as we are mown down by you, the more we grow in numbers. The blood of Christians is the seed." - *Tertullian*
- "The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance; which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime, and the punishment of his guilt." - *John Philpot Curran*

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Another Ad We'd Like to See Displayed -



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Blinded Minds -

(Wheaton College has been a New Evangelical showpiece for sixty years. Harold Ockenga, one of the founders of New Evangelicalism, set as his goal the repudiation of the doctrine of separation from liberalism. Over the past half century this goal has grown so large that Wheaton College is now happy to converse with Roman Catholic Cardinals. - Ed.)

Wheaton College to Host Roman Catholic Cardinal George

John Armstrong, an adjunct professor of evangelism at Wheaton College Graduate School, along with Roman Catholic Cardinal George of Chicago, will meet at Wheaton College for A Conversation on Unity in Christ's Mission, March 26 2012.

Their dialogue will explore the common ground shared by Catholics and evangelical Protestants for the purpose of missional-ecumenism.

Armstrong, who is a professing evangelical, states on his blog that he has greatly profited from the writing and spiritual insights of Fr. Richard Rohr, the well-known Catholic mystic teacher and writer from New Mexico.

It is hard to believe how evangelicals can seek unity with the very religion that tortured, brutalised and murdered hundreds of thousands of their brethren who refused to bow their knee to Rome.

Armstrong and all those under his influence should look to Charles Spurgeon rather than a Catholic priest.

Spurgeon said this about the Roman Catholic Church, "There is a deep and indelible sentence of damnation written upon the apostate church...the curse is registered in heaven, its infamy is engraven in the rock forever, followers of Jesus should oppose it with all their might."

EVANGELICAL LEADERS SIGN STATEMENT PROCLAIMING GOD OF ISLAM AND GOD OF BIBLE "ONE GOD"

(Friday Church News Notes, February 10, 2012, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

It is increasingly evident that large numbers of "evangelicals" are not only doctrinally corrupt but also that they worship a false god.

In 2007, Rick Warren and other prominent evangelical leaders signed "A Christian Response to 'A Common Word Between Us and You.'" This document says that Muslims and Christians worship the same God and claims that "the future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians."

The statement says, "... we must engage in interfaith dialogue as those who seek each other's good, for the one God unceasingly seeks our good" (<http://www.yale.edu/faith/acw/acw.htm>).

The Muslims know that Allah is not the same as the God of the Bible, as Allah has no Son.

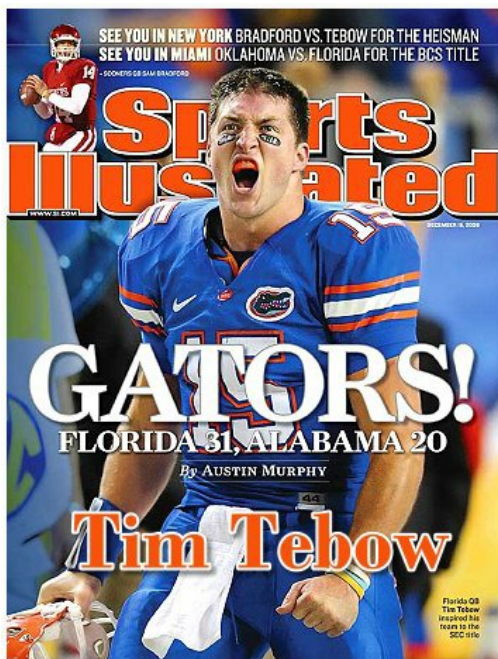
The blasphemous document was signed by the two major church growth gurus in America, Rick Warren and Bill Hybels. In this they joined hands with hundreds of other signatories, including Roman Catholics (e.g., "Father" Joseph Daoust, President of the Jesuit School of Theology Berkeley), prominent theological modernists and emergents (e.g. Harvey Cox and Elizabeth Fiorenza of Harvard Divinity School, Tony Jones of Emergent Village, and Brian McLaren), and self-esteem guru Robert Schuller.

Other "evangelicals" who signed this unscriptural document were Leith Anderson (President of the National Association of Evangelicals), Robert Cooley (President Emeritus, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary), Mike Edens (Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary), Timothy George (Beeson Divinity School at Samford University), Lynn Green (International Chairman of Youth With A Mission), Peter Kuzmic (Gordon-Conwell), David Neff (Editor in Chief Christianity Today), Roy Oksnevad (Institute of Strategic Evangelism at Wheaton College), Richard Mouw (President of Fuller Theological Seminary), Doug Pennoyer (Dean of the School of Intercultural Studies, Biola University), John Stott (Rector Emeritus of All Souls Church London), Michael Treneer (International President of The Navigators), Berten Waggoner (National Director of the Vineyard Churches), David Yonggi Cho (senior pastor Yoido Full Gospel Church Seoul), and Bruce Clemenger (President of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada).

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Isaiah 59:8

"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace."



What About Tim Tebow? -

(The following editorial excerpt is about Tim Tebow, the current football sensation in the USA, and was written by Rick Reilly, a journalist with ESPN.)

"I've come to believe in Tim Tebow, for what he does off a football field, which is (to) represent the best parts of us, the parts I want to be and so rarely am.

Who among us is this selfless?

Every week, Tebow picks out someone who is suffering, or who is dying, or who is injured. He flies these people and their families to the Broncos game, rents them a car, puts them up in a nice hotel, buys them dinner (usually at a Dave & Buster's), gets them and their families pregame passes, visits with them just before kickoff (!), gets them 30-yard-line tickets down low, visits with them after the game (sometimes for an hour), has

them walk him to his car, and sends them off with a basket of gifts. Home or road, win or lose, hero or goat. It's not just NFL defenses that get Tebowed.

For the game at Buffalo, it was Charlottesville, Va., blue-chip high school QB Jacob Rainey, who lost his leg after a freak tackle in a scrimmage. Tebow threw three interceptions in that Buffalo game and the Broncos were crushed 40-14. "He walked in and took a big sigh and said, 'Well, that didn't go as planned,'" Rainey remembers. "Where I'm from, people wonder how sincere and genuine he is. But I think he's the most genuine person I've ever met." There's not an ounce of artifice or phoniness or Hollywood in this kid Tebow, and I've looked everywhere for it.

So that's it. I've given up giving up on him. I'm a 100 percent believer. Not in his arm. Not in his skills. I believe in his heart, his there-will-definitely-be-a-pony-under-the-tree optimism, the way his love pours into people, right up to their eyeballs, until they believe they can master the hopeless comeback, too. Remember the QB who lost his leg, Jacob Rainey? He got his prosthetic leg a few weeks ago, and he wants to play high school football next season. Yes, tackle football. He'd be the first to do that on an above-the-knee amputation.

Hmmm. Wonder where he got that crazy idea? "Tim told me to keep fighting, no matter what," Rainey says. "I am."

(To read the entire article by Rick Reilly go to http://espn.go.com/espn/story/_/id/7455943/believing-tim-tebow)

Now, how did you read that? With your eyes open, or with your humanistic presuppositions controlling your thoughts? Did you notice who it is that Rick Reilly believes in now? (go back and read the first line of the editorial.) Did you notice that Rick calls our attention to Tim's social gospel? not his saving gospel? There's a difference, you know.

Oh, you didn't know that?

As much as Tim Tebow appears to be a sincere and generous Christian, several facts should be recognised:

1. That there are enormous pitfalls and temptations galore in the wide wide world of sports.
2. That every entertainment oriented activity, including sports, is based on a false premise.
3. That sports heroes earn their living by pleasing the multitudes with their strength and skill.
4. That though some sportsmen earn large salaries, very few ever put their wealth to any good use.

I feel that I must voice my concern that another young life is being wasted. No, I take that back. A young Christian's life is being wasted. Hmmmmm, somehow, that still doesn't say what needs to be said. A young Christian is wasting his life. There, I've said it.

But why?

Tim Tebow is wasting his life. How? Though he appears to know Christ, I believe, by his life message he is unwittingly preaching a false gospel. He is unknowingly spreading the message of the first humanistic philosopher. Every philosophy in the world says that it is "The Wisdom System" that will deliver the "greatest good" for the largest number of people. Humanism is just one of the strands of philosophy today that controls men's thoughts, but it tells us lies.

Lies like these:

1. The nation which is most geared to the pursuit of pleasure is the greatest nation. (which is hedonism- the pursuit of pleasure being the greatest good)
2. That activity which is followed by the most people is the greatest activity. (which is populism- what the greatest number of people approve must be right)
3. That form of entertainment which generates the most wealth for the entertainer is the greatest entertainment. (which is materialism- one's wealth is the measure of his worth)
4. That use of wealth which best meets the felt needs of others is the greatest philanthropy. (Numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7 are built on the error of the social gospel. And the social gospel is a very subtle form of naturalism that teaches that the body and the mind are more important than the eternal spirit of man.)
5. That message which best promotes the meeting of the felt needs of others is the greatest gospel.
6. That religious movement which most loudly approves the social gospel is the greatest "christianity."
7. That "christianity's" representative which most inspires the recipients of its social gospel to become its new "evangelists" is the greatest "christian".

Very, very subtly, all over the world the thought life of Christians is being captivated by humanism and its numerous offspring. The social gospel is the most dangerous of all, in that it makes it perfectly acceptable for Christians everywhere, not just Tim Tebow, to inspire and excite lost men to believe in themselves, and never give up, and to do the impossible, and become the wealthy and indulgent darlings of a lost world. But this social gospel never challenges men to repent of their sins, or to trust in Christ and so they die and go to Hell for eternity. And we who know Christ, we who profess to believe in the Great Commission applaud and cheer them on their way to a Christless eternity.

There are two texts of Holy Scripture that we who know Christ must engraft into our souls and meditate upon.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Colossians 2:8

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Only that which glorifies God is the greatest good! - *Ed.*

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Poetry That Preaches -

OBEY GOD? WHO ME?

*Obey God? Who Me?
Why I'm a self-made man!
I can meet each need I have,
Yes, indeed I can!*

*Obey God? Who me?
Well, maybe I'll get saved,
It sounds as if it is wise to do,
The way is ready made.*

*Obey God? Who me?
Get baptizes do you say?
Why I was sprinkled long ago
And that's the perfect way.*

*Obey God? Who me?
The water's not too cold?
I'll just do this, since you insist,
I'll do just as I'm told.*

*Obey God? Who me?
Give up my personal rights?
Why, He might make me miserable,
I still have not the light!*

*Obey God? Who me?
I've yielded. Now what's next?
I've given up a lot you know,
You're sure that's in the text?*

*Obey God? Who me?
Be filled with God's own Spirit?
Controlled by Him; be led by Him?
That's too much! I quit!*

*Obey God? Who me?
Yes, fill Lord, own completely!
Surrender - that's the answer
For life that's lived so sweetly.*

*Obey God? Who me?
That's all I that I desire;
Cleansed and filled, controlled, fulfilled,
A burning, glowing fire!*

ATC

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My Father's Fingerprints -

YOUR BUSY LIVER

(Friday Church News Notes, February 17, 2012,
www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

The following is from Creation Moments, January 10, 2012, www.creationmoments.com:

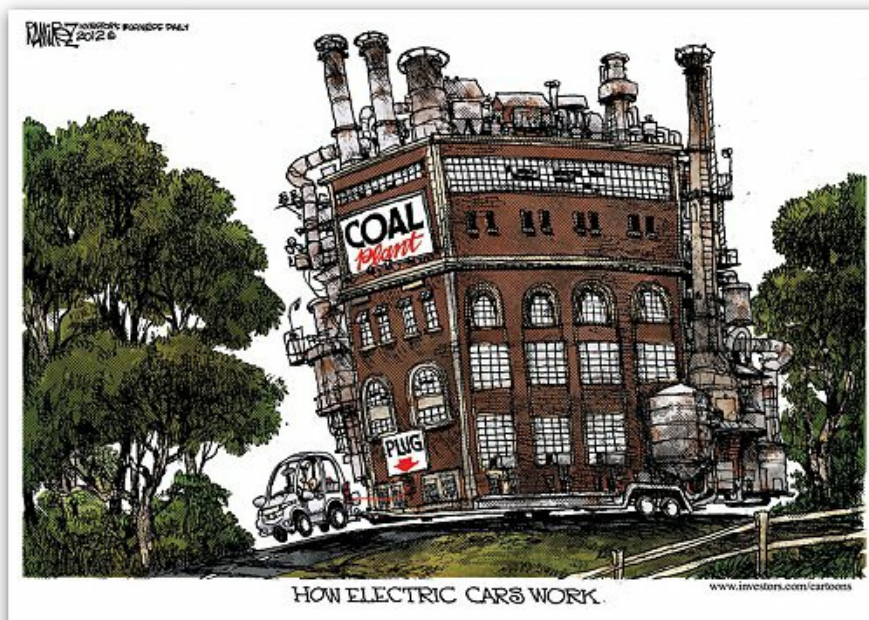
"An adult human liver is about the size of a small football. It weighs about three pounds, making it the body's largest internal organ. Tucked neatly beneath the ribs, your liver performs more than 500 different tasks. It is a vital link between your heart, lungs and digestive system. Inside the liver is a bewildering array of microscopic veins



in which each drop of blood is processed. Here, blood conditions are constantly monitored to make sure that its chemistry meets strict standards. If more of some substances are needed in the blood, they are supplied. Useless chemicals are broken down into useful chemicals. Your liver makes proteins and corrects blood clotting factors. Your liver also sees to it that hormone balances are maintained and that poisons are neutralized. If substances are needed to fight an infection, your liver makes them and adds them to the bloodstream. Your liver also stores vitamins and minerals and prepares itself to provide your body with quick energy when you need it. In addition, the liver makes bile, which is essential for digestion. Structures like the liver have caused many evolutionists to abandon the idea that life is a result of millions of years of accidents. The liver is just too well-designed and integrated into the body to have been produced by purposelessness and mindlessness. As Scripture says, truly God has formed our inward parts!"

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So You Want To Drive An Electric Car? -



Cost to operate a Chevy Volt

Eric Bolling (Fox Business Channel's Follow the Money) test drove the Chevy Volt at the invitation of General Motors.

For four days in a row, the fully charged battery lasted only 25 miles before the Volt switched to the reserve gasoline engine.

Eric calculated the car got 30 mpg including the 25 miles it ran on the battery. So, the range including the 9 gallon gas tank and the 16 kwh battery is approximately 270 miles. It will take you 4 1/2 hours to drive 270 miles at 60 mph. Then add 10 hours to charge the battery and you have a total trip time of 14.5 hours. In a typical road trip your average speed (including charging time) would be 20 mph.

According to General Motors, the Volt battery holds 16 kwh of electricity. It takes a full 10 hours to charge a drained battery.

The cost for the electricity to charge the Volt is never mentioned so I looked up what I pay for electricity.

I pay approximately (it varies with amount used and the seasons) \$1.16 per kwh.

16 kwh x \$1.16 per kwh = \$18.56 to charge the battery.

\$18.56 per charge divided by 25 miles = \$0.74 per mile to operate the Volt using the battery.

Compare this to a similar size car with a gasoline engine only that gets 32 mpg.

\$3.19 per gallon divided by 32 mpg = \$0.10 per mile.

The gasoline powered car cost about \$15,000 while the Volt costs \$46,000.

So Obama wants us to pay 3 times as much for a car that costs more than 7 times as much to run and takes 3 times as long to drive across country.

REALLY?

(And if you are all cashed up and can afford to buy the new Tesla electric sports car, have a look at what it will cost you to replace the battery if it totally discharges and dies. Only \$40,000 and not covered by the warranty!!! <http://jalopnik.com/5887265/tesla-motors-devastating-design-problem> - - Ed)

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Therapy For The Funny Bone -

After being married for thirty years....a wife asked her husband to describe her.

He looked at her slowly...then said, "You're A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K."

She asks..... "What does that mean?"

He said, "Adorable, Beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Fine, Gorgeous, Heavenly."

She smiled happily and said...."Oh, that's so lovely.....what about I, J, K?"

He said, "I'm Just Kidding!"

Church Statistics -

- If a church's average morning attendance is 100, how many will attend a Sunday evening service?
(Answer: about ten)
- If a church's average morning attendance is 2,500, how many will attend a Sunday evening service?
(Answer: A Sunday evening what?)
- Pastor Price has been at First Church for three years, and attendance has been growing at a rate of 11.3 percent annually, volunteerism is up, the budget is balanced, & the bathrooms painted.

What percentage salary increase can Pastor Price expect? (Answer: He will be fired for painting the bathrooms without calling a business meeting first.)

- When listening to a colleague preach, what percentage of pastors are convinced they could do a better job? (Answer: 63%. The rest weren't listening at all.)
- What percentage of a pastor's time is spent in each of the following areas?
 - A. Prayer (Answer 3%)
 - B. Study & preparation (Answer: 8%)
 - C. Member care & counseling (Answer: 5%)
 - D. Leadership & Administration (Answer: 2%)
 - E. Little things pastors were not trained for, don't understand, & are not in their job description (Answer: 81%)

The One Dollar Bill

A \$20 dollar bill and a \$1 dollar bill were moving down the conveyor belt at the downtown Federal Reserve Building. As they traveled along the \$1 dollar bill said to the \$20 dollar bill, "Hey Twenty, where have you been. I haven't seen you in a long time?" The \$20 dollar bill replied, "I have been having a ball!! I've been overseas, I've been to the finest restaurants, to casinos, to expensive boutiques, lots of malls in big cities. I even helped build a few. Just this week I've been to Europe, a professional NBA game, an all day retreat spa, and a top-notch hair salon.!! I have been everywhere and done it all!!!"

After a while, the \$20 dollar bill asked the \$1dollar bill, "What about you? Where have you been?" The \$1 dollar replied, "Well, I've been to the Baptist church, the Methodist church, the Presbyterian church, the Episcopalian church, the Assembly of God, the Catholic church, the Mormon church, the Disciples of Christ church, the Lutheran church..."

"WAIT A MINUTE! WAIT A M I N U T E !!", shouted the \$20 dollar bill to the \$1 dollar bill. "What's a church??"

Mark Twain warned: "Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint."

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Psalm 19:7-9 & 11

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether...Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."

What Happens When Hillsong Takes Over a Church -



(Lance Goodall is one of the more discerning young men among charismatics. He presently works with Phillip Powell in a local church called Christian Witness Ministries Fellowship. in Brisbane, Qld. From 1989 to 1992 Phillip Powell served as National General Secretary of Assemblies of God in Australia and Editor of the monthly Australian Evangel for most of that time. He describes himself as being a classic pentecostal. Lance's insights into the Hillsong movement should be a warning to independent fundamental Baptist churches that are adopting Hillsong music in their churches. It simply is not possible to accept their music without swiftly accepting their methodology and ultimately their theology. - Ed.)

Excerpted from the article by Lance Goodall -

“Why I left Hillsong Brisbane Campus

We were no longer just affiliated with strong ties to Hillsong, we became Hillsong!

- Once the decision was made, Garden City Christian Centre became an instant “franchise” of Hillsong. The Church is now market driven under the guise of being – “purpose driven”.
- Without a moment to breathe, the leadership from Sydney suddenly arrived, putting their stamp on this new way to “do church”.
- From day one everything had to change, and it did. For example, there was a fairly new coat of paint on the “church” walls from previous renovations, painted to a modern grey. Yet within days of the signs... the auditorium was repainted to the colour of the other Hillsong churches.
- As part of the takeover we had the celebrity gala feast; this one, and that one, from Hillsong Sydney visiting to give their counsel, and ideas. All the rich and famous were given a slot, and place of honour. For those who couldn't get enough of their Hillsong idols they could now have them visit here in Queensland. With every guest appearance, Brian Houston became more like an Amway Diamond, than a pastor.
- Hillsong is run as a Corporation not a church in its operation.
- The Church has taken its cue from Wall Street.

Seeking to be Sensitive:

- The Hillsong way actually follows to the letter what is known as the Seeker Sensitive or Church Growth Movement model. This model is to help bring “unchurched” sinners into the meetings, and to make them as comfortable as possible with the experience.

This is done by:

1. Dress(ing) down in clothing and style. Jeans are the new formal wear.
2. Low mood lighting similar to a bar or nightclub. In Brisbane campus, it is so dimly lit it appears like night time....
3. Secular music is played as background music prior to the start of the service. eg The Verve – Bitter Sweet Symphony
4. Worship – Worship is now limited to 20 minutes; and now accommodates the excitability of the young and the unchurched.
5. Music is now more about entertainment than the sole purpose of lifting up our God above all other gods; The lyrics (words) of the songs have progressively become “I, me, my” focused instead of Christ Jesus focused – e.g. In Your Freedom I will live;
6. Big screens are not there for the glory of God. It’s not pictures of creation, but the names and faces of those on stage that are lifted up;
7. Preaching is now a standard 20 minute sermonette; It is now a people based message to “help” the hearer with their felt-needs e.g. happiness, family , finances, relationships, job, career etc;
8. This type of pop spirituality effectively teaches that Every human being is divine or basically good;
9. God's Word is not really the final authority, but is still useful as a moral guide;
10. The goal of my life is centred on me; What I desire determines what happens in my life.

Massaging the Message:

1. Messages lack any mention of sin, repentance, prayer, obedience, death to self, holiness, sacrifice, suffering, hell, even God himself. Closer analysis reveals it is more based around pop psychology, than biblical truth.
2. The preaching frequently includes different Bible versions. This includes The Message, which is a perversion and not a true translation.

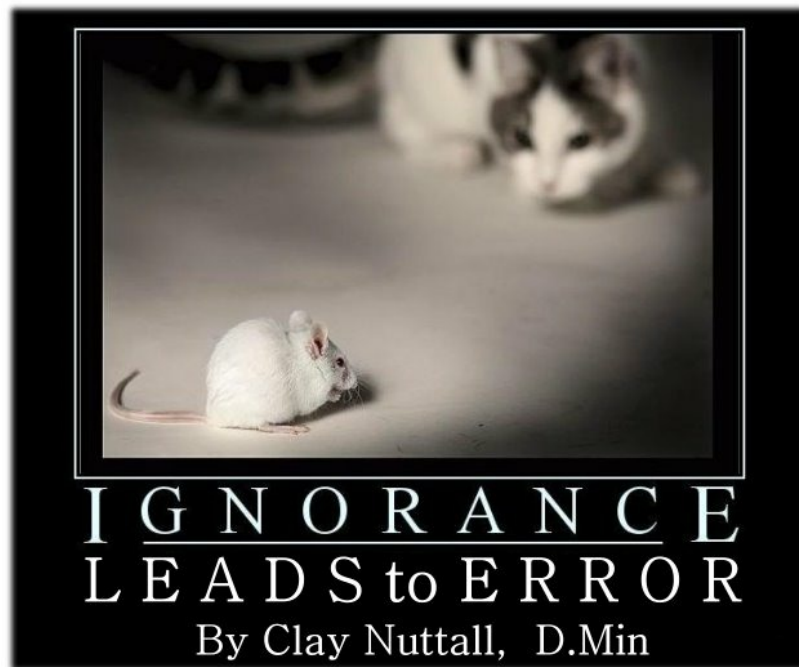
Houston Heterodoxy:

1. Brian Houston lacks or is happy to ignore all forms of discernment;
2. Brian Houston's preaching could be termed “Heterodox Humanism”
3. He happily accepts and promotes the following teachers most of whom have personally been at Hillsong Conferences.
4. You will also find these people's books as the only books available in the Hillsong Resource Centres (bookshop), along with Brian and Bobby's material of course.
 - **Joyce Meyer** – Prosperity Teacher/ Preacher. cf. Paul's instruction about women teachers - 1 Timothy 2:12.
 - **Joel Osteen** - Prosperity Preacher and denier of the true Gospel
 - **Jerry Saville** - Prosperity Preacher
 - **T D Jakes** – Prosperity Preacher and denier of the Trinity (advertised as guest speaker at the 2010 Hillsong Conference).
 - **Rick Warren** – member of the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR) trained under Robert H. Schuller (a la - The Hour of Power)
 - **Bill Hybels** - Pastor of Willow Creek Church – who has admitted getting it wrong with the Seeker Sensitive model. Hybels trained under Robert H. Schuller and is good friends with Rick Warren. According to Schuller -- Self Esteem is the new reformation!! He defines sin as a lack of “self-esteem”.
 - **Pearsons – Jeremy Pearsons** (wife Sarah) son-in-law of Kenneth and Gloria Copeland—visited Hillsong Powerhouse in Sydney in October 2009 for Encounter '09

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Eddy - Torial -

(Several years ago, Bro. Clay Nuttall and I began to correspond. I really appreciate his grasp of Hermeneutics [the science of interpreting Scripture] I use one of his articles frequently as a guest editorial in Heads Up. - Ed)



For years, there were several things that really puzzled me. I was reared in a church where they practiced “externalism”. I prefer not to use the term “legalism” since the majority of the time it is used in error with intent to slander. The true definition of legalism is found in Galatians. When I was a teenager, this emphasis on the outward man as a primary teaching drove me away from Christ. Later, as a young man in the ministry, I noticed that far too many of my peers were caught in this web. It was only when I understood the biblical view of holiness that I was able to see the flaws in this kind of teaching.

Throughout my fifty-two years of ministry, many of my peers have left this culture of externalism, but have moved far to the left with a flawed view of grace. The “anything goes” theology that they adopted meant that they were simply moving from one extreme of the flesh to another. We all know that depending upon the flesh is little different from feeding upon it. This extreme view of grace is merely an excuse to let the flesh have whatever it wants. Why was it that some of our friends on their journey away from externalism, did not stop at a biblical view of holiness?

The answer to this question has become very clear. It was ignorance of the scripture that held them captive in externalism, and it was ignorance of scripture that sped them into a system as awful - if not worse - than externalism. They simply went from law on the right to law on the left. I do not mean that my friends do not know about the Bible; of course they do. On the other hand, though, I am absolutely sure they do not know the Bible. There is a world of difference. Those in both extreme camps were ignorant of a theology that is biblical; they simply went from ignorance to error.

PARALYZED IN ERROR

With the passing years, I have come to understand why it is that my beloved brothers and sisters have remained linked to organizations, fellowships, missions, and schools that have turned their backs on

theology that is biblical: they simply don't know what is going on and so have blindly followed those leaders who themselves are blind to truth. Ignorance covers a lot of error. The problem is that now those same people are being led into groups on the left who have tolerated heresy for some time. My friends are being carried by winds of false doctrine, paralyzed by error, and they don't even know it!

Young men in particular, but gray heads as well, have become enamored with carnal minds and have not stopped to ask the scriptures for the truth. Today, scholars, intellectuals, form, and degrees have become the authority. That can mean only one thing - those who use them as an authority have probably turned from the text. Hence the mad rush to the left, giving credence to error.

In a recent interview with a "respected" scientist, he was heard to state that the view of a young earth is "ridiculous". This statement was made by a scholar who supports the Big Bang theory, the most ridiculous cruel joke of the age! In our world today, however, the desire of so many is to look intellectual and to compromise scripture. Consider, for instance, the day-age theory and all the other nonsense formulated by people who only know about the Bible.

AT THE HEART OF IT ALL

As is so often the case, there is a common thread in this journey from right to left. What I know now is that the hermeneutic that produced the flawed view of externalism is the same hermeneutic that produced the opposite extreme. That is the reason people are so numb about error and also why hardly anyone snaps to attention when error is taught in the pulpit and the classroom. It is also why mind-numbed "worshippers" today can sing lies, offending a holy God as they bob, weave, smile, applaud, and yell.

All of this is true because so many people only know about the Bible. They know about Bible stories and favorite proof texts, but have no idea what God is teaching in those texts. The end result is that the Bible ignorance that leads to error is rampant in our churches - both in the pew and in the pulpit. God wants us to know what He has given us in holy writ. He wants us to know the sovereign creator who loved us so much that He sent His son to the cross. We should not be satisfied with just knowing "about" this blessed book.

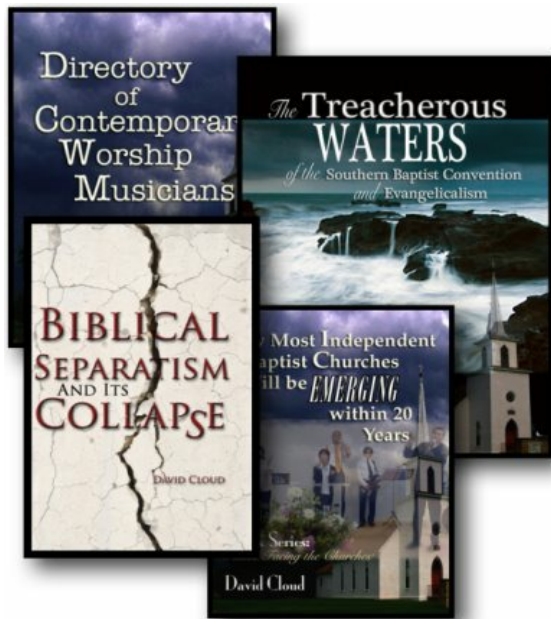
Have you ever asked why it seems that so few people in our circles today are really being born again? Would you dare to ask why there is so little of the moving of the Holy Spirit? Please don't tell me about all those huge churches full of unsaved people. The answer is in the Book, but you can get the answer only when you take it from the text instead of putting it into the text, like the scholars do.

BREAKING THE CHAIN OF ERROR

There is only one biblical hermeneutic, or system of interpretation. The minute that is left behind, all you have left is "private interpretation". If we center our teaching on knowing the scripture rather than just knowing about it, our lives, our churches, and the world around us will change and, as Luther said, "We might have more Christians". The intellectuals have invented a plethora of hermeneutical "systems", and they all end in the same place, with human reason. Every error of interpretation ever invented had to rise from a flawed hermeneutic; and that is why my beloved peers missed it and went right on by. Before I leave, remember...this ministry is about making people think.

From Shepherd's Staff

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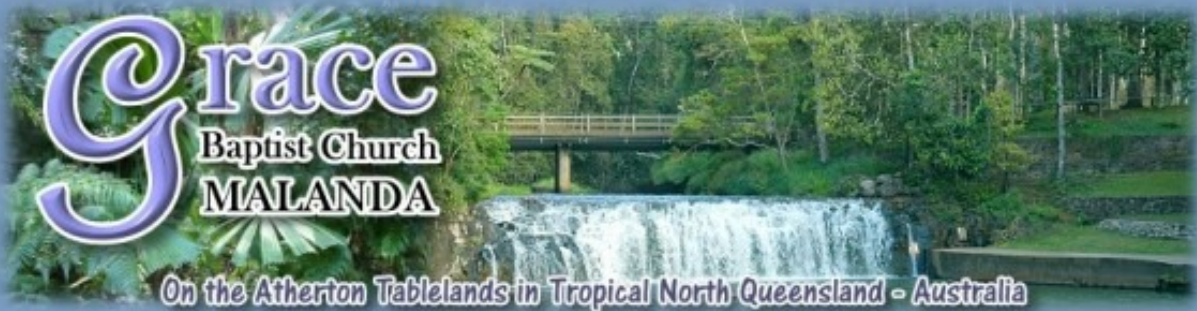


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