



# Bible Believers' Bulletin

Vol. 40 No. 8

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17)

August 2016

## The Voice of the Lord

By Brian Donovan

The Lord God has always revealed Himself to His creation and His creatures throughout the history of mankind. His hand is revealed in the physical creation, and the heavens themselves declare His glory (Psa. 19:1–6). Both day and night have a “**speech**,” a “**voice**,” and “**words**” (Psa 19:2–4) that reach every language of man. The circuit of the sun itself is a declaration of the hand of God.

Modern man rejects the revelation of God in the natural creation and tries to replace Him with the pipe dream of evolution. Without a single fact on which to base any of their false science, educated mankind continues in the dark, pretending that there is a chance that everything can come from nothing, that life can spring from non-life, and that over millions or billions of years, a rock can become an eyeball. In an effort to bolster their emotional instability, they point at all that is evidently wrong with the religions of the world and the men who started and follow them, while continuing to

ignore the voice of the Lord as given through the words of the Holy Bible in the KJV 1611.

The Lord chose the people of Israel as “**a special people**” above all others (Deut. 7:6). It was not because they were a mighty people in number (Deut. 7:7), nor because they were a more righteous people than the rest of the tribes of the earth (Deut. 9:5), but to commit to them His words (Rom. 3:1–2), that all of mankind might be able to know Him personally. The nation of Israel was called out to reveal the glory of God to the heathen through the words they (i.e., Israel) were given (Psa. 96:3; 1 Chron. 16:24). He spoke to the Jews either directly (Deut. 4:35–36) or through their prophets (Deut. 5:26–27).

These words were put into writing and then preserved (Psa. 12:6–7) so that if a man is interested in the truth, it is at his fingertips. But mankind in general is not interested in the truth (John 8:47, 18:37) and has rejected the voice of the Lord. It is not as if men are not given a chance, for they willfully reject the truth for a lie and then act as if no one can know whether there is a God or not. The problem is not that they cannot know, but that they will not know (John 5:40). The Lord has not hidden Himself nor made it hard for a sinner to find the truth, but “**light is**

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# Oceans of Blood

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

**“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah . . . Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come”** (Isa. 63:1–4).

**“For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood . . . . The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea . . . and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the LORD’S vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion”** (Isa. 34:2–8).

What you just read is an account of Jesus Christ coming at the Second Advent to stomp on 200 million UN troops (Rev. 9:16) until the blood runs five feet deep for 184 miles (Rev. 14:20). That’s not “highly figurative, apocalyptic” language. That’s literally going to take place in the next several years (Zech. 14; Rev. 19).

Now, I understand that the subject of *blood* is an unsavory one. To some people, the very thought of blood makes them sick. Nevertheless, blood is an important thing to you from the time you are born to the time you die. Leviticus 17:11 says, **“the life of the flesh is in the blood.”** The Lord told Noah, **“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed”** (Gen. 9:6).

It wasn’t until 1939 that the two clotting agents of the blood, Vitamin K and Prothrombin, were discovered to be at their peak on the eighth day after a child was born. That is why God commanded those Jews to circumcise their baby boys on the eighth day (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3).

The word *blood* occurs 447 times in 375 verses of your Bible. The first time is connected with *murder*—**“the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground”** (Gen. 4:10). The last time is where the Lord comes back and has **“a vesture dipped in blood”** (Rev. 19:13).

Blood is inseparable from true, Biblical Christianity. You may not like it, but the fact of the matter is, Christianity is a *bloody* religion, and that Bible is a *bloody* Book. That is one of the things that separates Biblical Christianity (I am not talking about some fake kind over in Rome that pretends to turn

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fermented hooch into blood; I am talking about the Christianity found in *that Book*) from every other religion on earth.

Rabbinical Judaism has no shed blood for sinners in it. Of course, back in the Old Testament, those Jews had an altar where they offered bloody sacrifices. Not any more. You won't find one synagogue in your town where the Rabbi offers up shed blood for sins, although that is what his Book commands him to do.

Islam is a bloodless religion when it comes to getting one's sins forgiven. Moslems don't kill Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, etc., to atone for sins. They kill because those groups won't accept Mohammed's religion; they kill because those groups won't recite the Shahada and confess that there is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet. But when it comes to getting sins forgiven, no blood is shed.

Hinduism and Buddhism have no blood shed for sin. A Catholic professes to have a blood sacrifice for sin, but it is only a jug of liquor. There is no life in a cup of wine from Christian Brothers Distillery. **"Without shedding of blood is no remission"** (Heb. 9:22).

There are five quarts of blood in the average person, the doctors say, and every 23 seconds, five quarts of blood are pumped through your heart. Blood is considered to be a *liquid tissue* of the body. It has *4,000 different components*; the most important ones being red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets, and plasma.

You can lose 33% of your blood and still live. In the Army, we were trained to kill a man by stabbing him between the scapula and the clavicle with something as simple as a pencil or pen. When that carotid artery is punctured, the blood will spurt up in the air, and the person will bleed to death in twelve seconds.

The old saying is: "You can't get blood out of a turnip." Do you know from where that comes? It comes from a *King James Bible*: **"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD"** (Gen. 4:3), and God didn't accept it (Gen. 4:5). God was looking for *blood*, and you can't get blood out of a turnip that comes from the ground.

How about this one: "Blood runs thicker than water." Where do people get that? From Exodus 7:17–21, where Moses turned the waters in Egypt to blood. Of course, in that expression, "blood" is a reference to *blood relatives*: your close kin. But in the case of Moses there in Exodus 7, it was *literal*.

Among the "Limeys" (the British), one of the worst cuss words you can use is *bloody*. That's a curse *by God's blood* (Acts 20:28). The medieval expressions were *Odds bodkins* and *Odds blud*; those are Old English for *God's body* and *God's blood*.

You can donate blood, and your body will replenish it from your bone marrow. The current world record holder for the most blood donations is John Sheppard of Ft. Myers, Florida, who gave his 315th pint in August of

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2011. He beat out the previous record holder, Phillip Baird of Australia, who has given 231 pints as of 2009. In my notes, I have the record of a fellow named Joe Karkovsky, who donated 31 gallons of blood in three years back in 1940–42.

*Men* are bloody. Just nick yourself in the right spot while shaving, and you'll find out: you'll bleed like a stuck hog. How are you going to get to Heaven, then, without blood? Water can't get you there (John 3:5–6); you'll have to come by *the blood* (Rev. 1:5–6).

*History* is bloody. The history of man is the history of continual bloodshed. Ever since Cain knocked Abel's brains out, men have been killing one another right and left. According to the *Encyclopedia of Military History* (1986), there have been 4,345 battles from 3500 B.C. to the present, with estimates as high as a billion people, in the 6,000-year history of earth, having died in combat. There was so much bloodshed going on in the Twentieth Century that Ballantine Books called it *The Violent Century*. Men killed more men between 1900 and 2000 than they did in the 500 years that preceded them.

The end of man's history on this earth has nothing to do with peace, prosperity, or progress. It has nothing to do with news media propaganda like unity or outer space. The end of this age is marked by a battle with *200 million casualties* (Rev. 9, 14, 19). I make no apology to a bloody, sinful world for my texts in Isaiah 63 and 34. Why should I apologize to a bunch of bloody killers for the Lord settling accounts in the only way they would understand, after rejecting free salvation through the bloody sacrifice of His Son?

We refer to the American flag as the "Red, White, and Blue." That's a strange combination. Why not "Blue, White, and Red" or "White, Red, and Blue" or "Blue, Red, and White" or "White, Blue, and Red," etc.? Why is it always "Red, White, and Blue" in that exact order? Well, blue is the color of *Heaven*; white is the color of something *clean*. If you are ever going to be clean enough to get to Heaven, you have to come through the "red" first—*the blood* (1 John 1:7). "What can wash away my sin? NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS!" "Red, White, and Blue"—the Bible controls the speech of unsaved men.

You say, "It makes me sick to think about blood." You hadn't better go to Heaven then. Up there, the saints sing about it.

**"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God BY THY BLOOD out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"** (Rev. 5:9).

The citizens of Glory don't sing about their good works, their church membership, their baptism, or their religion. When they sing about salvation, the words *Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Pentecostal, or Charismatic* aren't even mentioned. They sing about the blood that

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washed them from their sins (Rev. 1:5).

Next, the *Bible* is bloody. The Bible records thirteen civil wars, 78 deliverances, 34 defeats, and two million casualties. That doesn't count the 200 million that are coming up at the end of the Tribulation; those are the ones that have already taken place in Biblical history. That Book says, "**The LORD is a man of war**" (Exod. 15:3); He's "**mighty in battle**" (Psa. 24:8). There are more passages in that Bible on *armed conflict* than there are on salvation.

This age will end in people *drinking blood*. In the Tribulation, those worshipers of the Antichrist kill Jews at the altar in the Temple (Rev. 6:9) and offer their blood as drink offerings (Psa. 16:4). So God returns the favor and turns their waters to blood so they can drink it all the time (Rev. 16:3-6). That is why the drinking of blood was forbidden before the Law (Gen. 9:4), under the Law (Lev. 17:10-14), and under grace (Acts 15:29). If you find a religion that believes in drinking literal blood (offered in an "unbloody manner," of course), that is a religion that violates the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

If you take the blood out of our religion, it is as lifeless as any other religion. When Moses got through writing the book of the Law, he sprinkled it and the people with blood (Heb. 9:19). Any "gospel" that fails to require shed

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## Bad Attitude Baptist Blowout

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# Oceans of Blood

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blood is not “good news” at all; it’s *bad news*. Cain found that out way back around 3900 B.C. or so.

When Jesus Christ died, He shed every drop of blood in His body and left it down here on earth. When He returned to Heaven, He didn’t have a drop of blood in Him. Why did He do that? *To pay for your sins*.

**“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”** (1 Pet. 1:18–19).

**“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”** (Col. 1:14).

What did the high priest sprinkle every year on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant? The blood. What did the children of Israel put on the door posts and lintel of their houses there in Egypt so death would pass over them? The blood. What did Jesus sweat there in the Garden of Gethsemane as He agonized over becoming sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21)? **“Great drops of blood”** (Luke 22:44). What stained Eden’s beautiful garden when God made coats of skin to clothe the nakedness of Adam and Eve? Blood: an animal had to be killed to get the skin for those coats. What makes the robes in Heaven so fair? *Blood!*

**“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest: And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB”** (Rev. 7:14).

R. B. Thieme had a doctorate from Dallas Theological Seminary, and he was educated far above his intelligence. He, and later on John MacArthur, picked up the following baloney: Christ’s “literal blood had no significance whatsoever”; “Christ’s blood is a *representative analogy* which describes His spiritual death” (quotes taken from his book *The Blood of Christ*). Yeah, and Thieme’s brain was an *incommunicable parody* too.

Contrary to what the Bible *actually said* in Ephesians 2:13 (to which Thieme referred), he said, “The red liquid that ran through the veins and arteries of Jesus’ mortal body is not related to our salvation.” Parroting Thieme, John MacArthur said, “It is not the actual liquid that cleanses us from our sins, but the work of redemption Christ accomplished in pouring it out.”

That actual, red liquid was necessary for *my* propitiation and cleansing: **“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith IN HIS BLOOD”** (Rom. 3:25). You can’t separate Christ’s blood from His “work of redemption.” That’s what corrupt pieces of apostate garbage like the ASV, NASV, RSV, NRSV, NIV, and ESV do in Colossians 1:14. They get rid of **“through his blood”** so that Christ’s “work of redemption” has nothing to do with it.

Thieme went on to say: “There is no Biblical basis for attributing any unusual properties to Christ’s bodily fluids.” That means that Christ’s blood

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# Oceans of Blood

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was just like your blood. IN A PIG'S EYE! If Christ's blood was just like your blood, how come He didn't stay in the grave? **"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"** (1 Cor. 15:50) because your blood is corrupt; it comes from your father Adam (1 Cor. 15:47–49). Jesus Christ didn't get His blood from Adam; He got it from His Father: *God* (Acts 20:28). Here is the "Biblical basis for attributing . . . unusual properties to Christ's bodily fluids": **"feed the church of GOD, which HE [GOD!] hath purchased with HIS [GOD'S!] OWN BLOOD"** (Acts 20:28).

If **"the life of the flesh is in the blood"** (and it is—Lev. 17:11), what kind of life did Christ have in Him? Why, *eternal life*, of course (1 John 1:1–2, 5:11, 20). Then His blood *can't* be like your blood.

**"For as IN ADAM all DIE, even so IN CHRIST shall all be made ALIVE"** (1 Cor. 15:22).

The reason Christ didn't stay dead was because His blood was different from yours. The reason you won't stay dead some day is because faith in that shed blood brings justification that's connected to Christ's resurrection (Rom. 3:24–25 cf. 4:24–25).

Now the *purpose* of Christ shedding His blood was:

1) *To satisfy the demands of the Law*. That was true of the law of conscience even before the Mosaic Law was given. When Abel wanted to show God he loved Him, he figured he ought to love God enough to die for Him. But being fearful of death, as we all are, he offered up a lamb of his flock in his stead. The Law demanded a sacrifice, and although the blood of bulls and goats could never *take away sin* (Heb. 10:4), still God accepted that as a basis for *remitting sin* in the Old Testament (Heb. 9:22).

To get those sins completely removed, you needed something better than the blood of bulls and goats. You needed the blood of a sinless man to be shed in your place. When Jesus shed His blood for you on the cross, it was to keep you from having to pay a debt you owed God; He paid the debt

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## JUNE'S SERMONS

*Brian Donovan*

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# Oceans of Blood

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for you (Rom. 6:23). When you refuse to trust the blood of Christ for your salvation, you nullify the payment He made on your behalf.

Back in the Reformation, when the Duke of Alba was killing Protestant Christians in Holland, one family killed a goat in their house and let the blood run outside under the door. When the Catholic "goon squad" saw that blood, they passed on because they figured *the work of slaughter was done already*. (I trust you get the message of that illustration: "**when I SEE THE BLOOD, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you**" (Exod. 12:13).

2) *To keep you out of Hell*. One time over in Scotland, a stoker at a glass factory was shoveling coal into the furnace when he heard a preacher talking to his buddy. They were discussing Hell. His friend asked the preacher, "What's Hell like?" "It's like the furnace you're putting coal in," replied the preacher in his thick Scottish brogue. The next Sunday the stoker who overheard that conversation showed up at church and told that preacher, "I've come to find salvation so I won't find out what Hell is like when I die."

Smart man. You say, "Ah, Ruckman, I don't believe in Hell." But what if it's true? Are you going to wait to go there before you change your mind and figure out you don't like it? Christ shed His blood to keep you out of the fire! Why do you think He cried out on the cross, "**I thirst**" (John 19:28)? Why, that's the cry of a man in Hell (see Luke 16:24). Christ shed His blood for you so you don't have to go through that.

Finally, I want to talk to you about the *power* of the blood. When a man trusts nothing but the blood of Christ to save him, something happens to him inside. I know every convert doesn't "pan out" the way he should, but if that person stops trusting his own righteousness and trusts Christ's blood alone for salvation, a new man with new affections is born inside him (2 Cor. 5:17). Of course, a Christian can fail to put on the new man in his daily life (Eph. 4:24) and refuse to yield the members of his body to the Lord (Rom. 6:19) and not set his affections "**on things above**" (Col. 3:2); I understand that. But that new creature is inside him, nevertheless, and he has interests and desires he didn't have before. That's due to the power of the blood.

He has spiritual discernment he didn't have before. The blood changes a person's outlook toward the future: he has hope beyond the grave. I may be pessimistic about this world, but brother, I am the most optimistic fellow you ever met when it comes to life after death. I believe I will end up *sinless* (Rom. 8:29). You can't get much more "positive thinking" than that.

"There is power in the blood." No sacrament can do for you what the blood of Jesus Christ can do for you. A sacrament might make you feel good about your own self-righteousness, and it might make you loyal to a church. But no sacrament can relieve you of the responsibility of facing God Almighty; only the New Birth through the blood of Christ can do that.

**"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made**

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# The Voice of the Lord

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**come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"** (John 3:19).

The question is not whether the Lord speaks today, but is anyone listening? The Lord's people should be tuned to listen to His voice just as an antenna picking up distinct radio waves and supplying them to where the radio is tuned. This requires shutting out all the competing voices, since there are **"so many kinds of voices in the world"** (1 Cor. 14:10). With all the barrage of noises, it is no wonder the saints cannot hear the Lord's voice. If He spoke today, would you, as a child of God, know it was His voice? How would you distinguish it from all the other voices?

When we turn to the scripture, we can get some direction and help in identifying the voice of the Lord. When we do, we find it is almost the exact opposite of how we would speak. That should not be a surprise, since we are told in Isaiah 55:8 that **"my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."** As we look at seven identifying marks of the voice of the Lord from the scripture, the reader is reminded that these are not to be judged by his feelings or his experiences.

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**nigh by THE BLOOD OF CHRIST"** (Eph. 2:13).

**"How much more shall THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"** (Heb. 9:14).

The first mark of the voice of the Lord is that it is almost always quiet. Although the voice of the Lord can be loud and even thunderous at times (Job 40:9), that is typically when He is rebuking those who have been refusing His daily voice. In the day-to-day dealings with His children, the voice of the Lord is usually **"a still small voice"** in the midst of a lot of racket (1 Kings 19:11–12). The Lord speaks gently and quietly, and expects His saints to find a place in their hearts to be still themselves so as to hear His voice (Psa. 46:10). The Lord uses the scriptures to speak to the inner man, and this communication is accomplished in the spirit of man, where the Holy Spirit bears **"witness with our spirit"** (Rom. 8:16).

In opposition to the voice of the Lord are the voices of this world that appeal directly to the flesh and to the emotions. That is why the lost, natural man cannot worship God (John 4:24). Without the new birth, he has a dead spirit (Eph. 2:1) that has no desire for the things of God, **"because they are spiritually discerned"** (1 Cor. 2:14). The voices of this world are typically loud, boisterous, and confusing (Acts 19:28–34). The voices of the nations are like **"the noise"** of a **"rushing of mighty waters"** (Isa. 17:12–13). The difference between the voice of the Lord and the voice of the world is given plainly in James 3:15–19. The voice that comes **"from above is first pure, then peaceable,"** while the other kind of voice comes from beneath, and is **"sensual"** and **"devilish."**

A second mark of the voice of the Lord is that it does not rely on human reason and will very often be against

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# The Voice of the Lord

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 human reason. The voice of the Lord will not appeal to your logic and your reasoning. Whenever the Lord wants to **“reason”** with man, it is to cleanse him of his sins and correct his human reasoning (Isa. 1:18).

When Samuel the prophet is told to go anoint the king of Israel to replace Saul, he is sent to the house of Jesse. As the sons of Jesse start to come before Samuel, he naturally thinks that the oldest, named Eliab, must be the one (1 Sam. 16:6); but the voice of the Lord comes and tells Samuel, **“man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart”** (1 Sam. 16:7). After seven sons of Jesse parade across Samuel’s gaze, he is told that the right one is still not there; it turns out that he is only a stripling who is out tending sheep (1

Sam. 16:11). It is so clear to common sense that the young boy could not be the one; he is not even summoned as a possible choice when Samuel comes to anoint one of them. Anointing young David as king is contrary to human reason, but the voice of the Lord says otherwise.

In opposition to this voice is that of human figuring and logic. When the Jews get set up in the promised land and begin looking around, they resent not having a king like all the other nations (1 Sam. 8:1–5). Common sense says it is a good thing to have a king with a government and a standing army in case someone attacks. How could a people feel safe without some structure of government and some leadership to make decisions for the good of all the nation? After all, with no

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# The Voice of the Lord

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king and no government, all they can trust is . . . God. That voice is the voice of human reason and is not following the voice of the Lord.

The Lord will speak directly to call a man from his own country to go preach the gospel to a people of a foreign tongue and a foreign culture. Is that reasonable? Is that common sense? Could not a native Christian do a better job using less money? That is all common sense and reasonable, but dead wrong, as it is against the voice of the Lord. His voice calls men, not money. His voice calls for laborers (Matt. 9:37–38), not committees. His voice calls for obedience, not reason.

A third mark of the voice of the Lord is that it is patient and not in a hurry. While Hannah prays and cries to the Lord for a number of years to be able to have a baby boy, the Lord is just waiting for the right time (1 Sam. 1:4–6). She must go through antagonism and loneliness, but when the Lord answers, she not only gets the boy, but a full house (1 Sam. 2:21). When Israel goes into darkness for 400 years without a voice and without a prophet, the Lord is patiently waiting for “**the fulness of the time**” (Gal. 4:4). The voice of the Lord has a patience to it that can be downright aggravating to our own plans.

The voice in opposition to the Lord's voice says, “Hurry up; it is now or never.” This voice will sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate, and the Christian can know this voice is not the Lord's. King Saul loses his kingdom by listening to this voice. When the prophet Samuel did not show up when Saul thought he should, Saul “forces” the issue and offers “a

burnt offering” (1 Sam. 13:12). Saul looks at the circumstances and tries to make things happen on his own timetable. The voice of the Lord is not in the “nows” of Saul's thinking. One of the ways the child of God can help distinguish the voice of the Lord from the other voices will be to wait and not rush into making something happen. The voice that is “**first pure, then peaceable,**” quiet, and calm, will be the right voice, while the voice that rushes and pressures to hurry to make a choice will be the wrong one.

A fourth mark of the voice of the Lord is that it will not be about you. When the Lord puts Job through his trial, the Lord listens for over 35 chapters as Job and his three friends argue and accuse and try to figure it all out. Job wants to hear the voice of the Lord, but mainly in hopes of being vindicated (Job 23:5–7). When the voice of the Lord finally does show up, it is not with an apology or concern for Job's losses. The Lord does not spend one minute trying to soothe Job in how he feels about his situation. Instead, God demands Job gird himself up “**like a man**” and answer His questions (Job 38:1–40:2). Imagine the Lord talking to Job like that after all he has been through! You would think the Lord knows nothing about sensitivity-training classes. Job is restored in health, wealth, and family (Job 42:10–17), but only after he gets in line with the voice of the Lord; not the other way around.

Now compare that with another voice. This voice claims to be a preacher. This voice claims to represent the voice of the Lord to his congregation. Hundreds of thousands

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# The Voice of the Lord

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of professing Christians listen to this voice and agree with it. This voice says, "You have a right to be blessed, free, happy, and whole; you can beat that sickness." How is this done? According to this voice, all you have to do is call a thing out and say, "I am . . ." and fill in the blank. This voice says you must merely say, "I am healthy," and health comes; "I am blessed," and blessings come. Do you think rice and beans are enough? That's not God's best"; He has "a fatted calf for you."

Here is a man making money off suckers who want to hear only good things about themselves. His whole book is about "YOU"; his whole philosophy is about "YOU." When a Christian is led by the scriptures, he cannot fall for this voice; as a matter of fact, the Christian listening to the voice of the Lord is disgusted when he hears this other voice. It brings self-glory and self-promotion. It has nothing to do with any of the characteristics of the voice of the Lord.

A fifth identifying mark of the voice of the Lord is that it leads the child of God to repentance in a way that brings him back to the Lord. David's repentance, after hearing the voice of the Lord through the prophet Nathan (2 Sam. 12:7–12), led him to get back into the Lord's fellowship, not away from it (2 Sam. 12:16). A voice that leads to defeat and running away from the Lord is the wrong voice. Bible repentance brings a sorrow **"not to be repented of"** (2 Cor. 7:9) with a carefulness and a clearing. The voice of the Lord tells His children that they have a cleansing of sin through **"the blood of Jesus Christ"** (1 John 1:7), and that voice drives the child of God

back to the love of his Lord, which casts out fear (1 John 4:18). Any voice that pushes away from that love is not the voice of the Lord.

The sixth mark of the voice of the Lord is that it leads toward a road that has opposition and discipline. After Ruth's husband dies and her sister-in-law Orpah returns to her family, Ruth wants to find the Lord. To do that, she must listen to a voice that tells her to leave behind her home, family, friends, and culture (Ruth 1:16). Following the voice of the Lord will always be one of discipline and cost. Paul once determined the voice of the Lord by the many adversaries that came with it (1 Cor. 16:9).

The voice in opposition to this voice will tell you to take the easy way out. This voice will help you justify holding on to everything: the job, the family, the friends, etc. When called to pay the price of learning the Book, it will tell you just to take the correspondence course or read the commentary. It will tell you to send money, instead of self, overseas. It will tell you that preaching on the street will put a blot on your respectable name in the community and that it will not be much help in building the local church, since it turns so many people off. It will point out many other ways to "serve the Lord" without personal cost. This voice conveniently forgets to tell you what happened to Orpah. It never mentions the **"Woe"** put on those who remain **"at ease in Zion"** (Amos 6:1).

The seventh identifier of the voice of the Lord is that it causes the long look. The voice of the Lord will remind the Christian that whatsoever choice he makes, he will **"give account"**

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# The Voice of the Lord

Continued from 12  
in the end (Rom. 14:12). This voice counsels him **“to buy . . . gold tried in the fire”** (Rev. 3:18), and considers **“the end of a thing”** rather **“than the beginning”** (Eccl. 7:8). David listened to this voice when he had a chance to kill Saul. Knowing that he himself was already anointed king of Israel and that he had the power to end his problem if he just took the matter into his own hands with the quick, short look, the Bible says, **“David behaved himself wisely”** (1 Sam. 18:5, 14, 30). In opposition to this voice will be the one Rebekah and Jacob heeded when they deceived Isaac (Gen. 27:6–14) to get the blessing that was going to be his anyway (Gen. 25:23).

When the Lord speaks, it will often be identified by a number of these together. It will be at the same time quiet and patient, against human reason, not about you, lead to victory in repentance, bring opposition, and cause a long look. The myriad of other voices will be loud and confusing, tell you to hurry, use common sense, lead to depression, defeat, and bitterness toward the Lord, take the easy way, and take the short look. What it all comes down to is that one voice will be found in the scriptures, while the other will talk around the scriptures. One voice will be quiet, still, and to the point, while the other will give excuses and justification in an attempt to get around the voice of the Lord.

## The Gap Fact

By Perry Demopoulos

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This work is not a representation of the “creation (or theistic)—evolutionistic” position: that God created (Gen. 1:1) and after that, things began to evolve for millions of years. The young-earth “creation” movement makes an overanxious attempt to reject theistic evolution, unfortunately at the expense of sound Bible doctrine. With the simple methods of Biblical interpretation—repetition, comparison, and division of the words of the *King James* text—the Scriptures themselves prove without any help of outward references the plain truths of the doctrine of the gap fact in Genesis 1:2.

There is more Scriptural evidence for the gap fact—much more than modern “Christian science” (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20) would have you to believe (Luke 11:52). Scripturally, there is no worthy challenge to *THE GAP FACT*.

# COOPERATION— The Way to Hell

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

**“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the BOUNDS of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us”** (Acts 17:26–27).

This passage gives the Biblical purpose of *division* (segregation, separation, boundaries). Verse 26 says *God* set up *boundaries* between men for the purpose of them seeking the Lord. So when any man is involved in “breaking down walls” and “building bridges” between nations, races, tribes, etc., which *God* has *separated*, then that person is *preventing people from finding Christ*.

Now don't misunderstand me. There's nothing wrong with a missionary crossing a boundary to preach the Gospel; that is a *command* of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). But removing men and women from the boundaries in which *God* has placed them for social, economic, religious, or political reasons, sooner or later, results in a *loss of truth* that prevents them from finding Jesus Christ as Saviour.

The more boundaries are broken down between groups, the more they are mixed together, the less truth that is available. Let me illustrate. If the Pensacola Bible Institute were Tennessee Temple University or Bob Jones University, I would not be able

to tell my students a lot of things I say about the *King James Bible*. We would lose students because there would be kids from homes where the families use anywhere from two to four different Bible versions. Those kids, even if they did believe the *AV*, would be in constant conflict with their families over the Book. So I wouldn't be able to say what I say about the *KJV* because some *momma* or *daddy* who pays for the kid's tuition would get hurt feelings.

In addition, I would butt heads with anywhere from ten to fifty faculty members. There would be teachers and professors there, who graduated from big Fundamental and Conservative institutions, who would be hung up on the *ASV* or *NASV*; I wouldn't be able to critique those “sacred cows” lest I cause a “stir” among the faculty.

Here is another example. If I got up before the United Nations, I wouldn't dare preach anything I preach or teach here at the Bible Baptist Church or the Pensacola Bible Institute unless I wanted to cause an “international incident.” I couldn't talk about Jesus Christ being the only way to *God* (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) because there would be Moslems and Buddhists there. I couldn't talk about Heaven or Hell because there would be Socialists and atheists there.

You see, the more sinners of different backgrounds you get together, the less truth you can put out. As people get together by the increase of transportation and communication, truth has to go by the wayside.

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# Cooperation—The Way to Hell

Continued from 14

Do you know one of the reasons why America isn't having real revivals anymore? Because when George Whitefield, D. L. Moody, and Billy Sunday got up to preach, they didn't have to worry about the ACLU, the NEA, OSHA, Health and Human Services, the NAACP, etc. When Billy Graham finally came along, he had to "walk on egg shells" when he preached so as not to offend anyone in those groups.

The closer you bring people together, the more differences of opinion you have. The more differences of opinion there are, the greater chance of people getting offended. The greater the chances of offending folks, the more truth you have to keep cutting in order to keep everyone together.

Nothing in the world brings separation like the *truth*. If you lay down the truth hard and fast, you will *split* ecumenical councils; you will *split* churches; you will *split* ministerial associations; you will *split* denominations.

Isaiah 5:8 says, **"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth."**

These condominiums that herd people into modern cliff-dwellings, put out signs that say "No Solicitors Allowed." That's because the building isn't owned by those living in it, like individual houses. What's the result? No door-to-door visitation (Acts 20:20); no tract distribution. The owner of the building (whether it be an individual or a corporation) has successfully sealed off his tenants from getting the truth.

The degree to which you *get people together* is directly proportionate to the

amount of *truth that must be sacrificed* in order to keep them together. Of course, you can still try to get the truth out, but not without consequences, not without *getting it in the neck*. Now *God* hasn't changed. The *word of God* hasn't changed (no matter how hard men have tried). The *truth* hasn't changed. Jesus said that the world hates Him, so it's going to hate you (John 15:18). You might as well go ahead and take your chances and get the truth out *no matter what*.

There is no way to get everyone together in one, big "global family" without *compromising the truth*. God's answer to that has always been to *break up* every worldwide attempt to join the nations together. When Nimrod founded the first "UN" at Babel (with *him* as the "Secretary General"—Gen. 10:10) in an attempt to *defy God* (Gen. 11:4), the Lord scattered the people: He *segregated* them. He *divided them by boundaries*, according to Acts 17:26–27, so He could deal with each nation and group separately and *get them the truth*.

Now do you know where you are today? Since 1945, you have been in the beginning stages of Zephaniah 3:8. The Lord says in Zephaniah 3:8, **"for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."**

Since 1945, God has been gathering the nations of this world together for the purpose of *damning them*. Just as He *separated* them to *save* them, He *gathers* them to *damn* them. That being the case, the international dam-

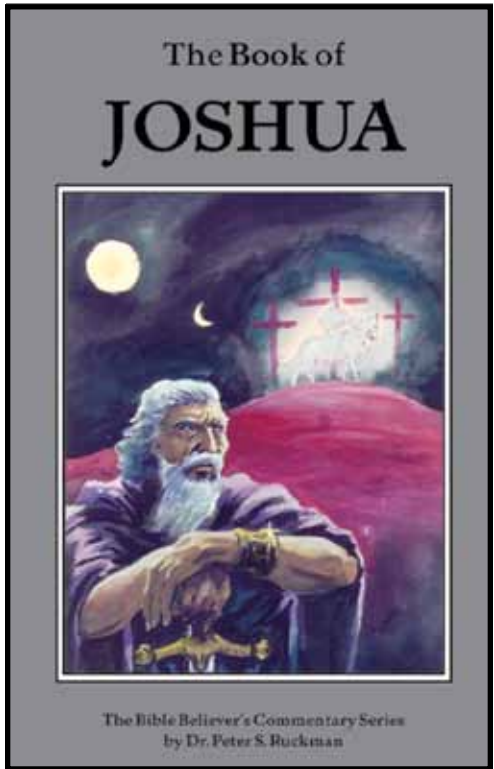
Continued on 19

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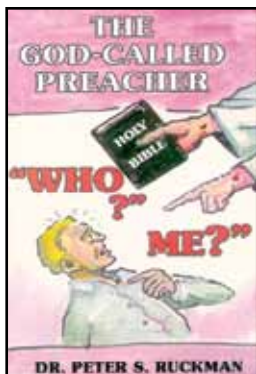
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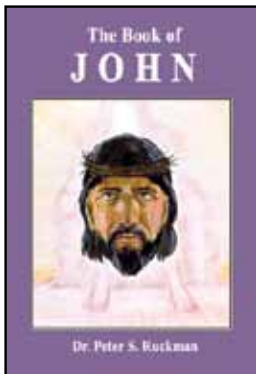
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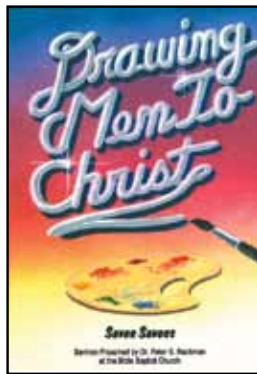
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# Cooperation—The Way to Hell

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nation of the 192 (+/-) nations in the UN depends on one thing: *rejection of the truth*.

Do you know why the Fundamental and Conservative churches have been getting smaller and smaller in the last twenty years, while the neo-Liberal, "emergent," seeker-sensitive, purpose-driven churches have gotten larger and larger ("mega-churches")? Because the Body of Christ in America is no longer *zealous for the truth*. They don't want to hear it. Lukewarm Laodicean churches have no use for the truth. They are zealous for attention, self-esteem, prosperity, and peace; *but the truth is OUT*.

Isaiah said, "**truth is fallen in the street**" (Isa. 59:14). The reason for that is everyone has "gotten together," so you don't dare say anything to offend anyone. A preacher doesn't dare say anything about the authority of the *King James Bible* because his congregation is using 233-plus versions that have come out since 1880, and he doesn't want to offend anyone using the *NIV, NASV, ESV, RSV, NKJV, CEV, Good News, Living Bible*, etc. He has to watch out what he says about abortion, women, the races, and homosexuality because he has the IRS, the ACLU, the NEA, the NAACP, etc., against him; the government might send in the local police, sheriff, SWAT team, or National Guard to arrest him for "hate speech."

What can the modern pastor preach and get away with? Well, it sure isn't "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." All he can preach is "love, love, love"; "peace, peace, peace"; "prosperity, health, and wealth"; and "liberty, social justice, civil

rights." A congregation is going to get *anything but the truth*, because the Body of Christ no longer has any use for the truth. That means they no longer have any respect for the One who said, "**I am the way, THE TRUTH, and the life**" (John 14:6). They have been educated out of their belief in the Book that Jesus said "**is truth**" (John 17:17).

Jesus said, "**he that doeth TRUTH cometh to the light**" (John 3:21), but "**every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light**" (John 3:20). What is "**the light**"? It's the "**truth**" (John 17:17): it's *the word of God* (Psa. 119:105, 130). The Body of Christ in America

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## Bro. Donovan's Meeting Schedule

### August 12–14

Bible Believers Bapt. Church  
1055 N.E. 25th St.  
Hillsboro, OR 97123  
Pastor John Robinson  
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### September 16–18

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19702 E. Old Lexington Rd.  
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Pastor Mark Velder  
(816) 550-7782

### October 7–9

Bible Baptist Church  
114 Hall Lane  
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Pastor Tim Wilson  
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# Cooperation—The Way to Hell

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doesn't want the truth, because the truth will shine the light on their deeds, their friends, their beliefs, etc.; and they don't want to "rock the boat." If the truth is the least bit unsavory, disgusting, disarming, condemning, or judgmental, or if the truth endangers their standing with their friends, relatives, and acquaintances, they are going to throw the truth out the window just as quick as they can throw it.

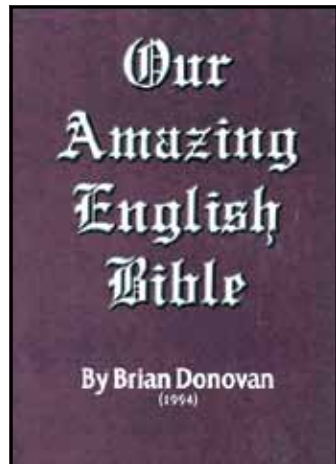
The Body of Christ in America started throwing out the truth in 1901 (after the British did it in 1885). The pace picked up in 1952 (*RSV*) and again in 1964 (Civil Rights Act). By the time Obama moved into the White House, this country was *gone* when it came to the truth.

Yes, the truth is still out there in small enclaves, here and there; but Americans, as a whole, have so rejected the truth that you hardly dare to quote it, demonstrate it, discuss it, or convert folks to it *publicly*. Christians today are in the same position as the Christians in the First Century. The circle is complete. What goes around, comes around.

**"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not . . . . And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God"** (John 8:45–47).

Those words of Jesus Christ can be aimed at 90% of the professing *Christians* in America today. Over the past sixty years, they have lost their *foundation*, their *culture*, and their *vision* through *higher Christian education*. They are now at the whims and disposal of a black-African, New

Age-Moslem, Socialist-Communist *dictator* to get all peoples together and make them all cloned automatons. They are all to be programmed to think the same things so they can all "get together." God is helping things along in order to gather all the tares into bundles **"to burn them"** (Matt. 13:30). But oh, what good intentions Obama, Hillary, Kerry, the State Department, the Muslim Brotherhood, the EU, and the UN have: "peace on earth," "redistribution of wealth," "everyone doing their part," "respect and dignity for all men," etc. "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."



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# **The First Missionary Journey**

**By Mike Dobbins** (*Part Two of Three*)

(Editor's note: The first installment in this series of articles covered the use and origins of the words *apostle* and *missionary*, and how modern missionaries are not the "**apostles**" of Ephesians 4:11. This article takes up the process of becoming a missionary.)

## The Sending of the Missionaries

In Acts 13, the Bible says two times that Paul and Barnabas were "**sent.**" Verse 3: ". . . **they sent them away**"; verse 4: "**So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost . . .**" Note that there are two sending agents in Acts 13: in verse 3, the members of the local church fast, pray, lay their hands on the missionaries, and send them forth; in verse 4, the Holy Ghost sends them forth. In the New Testament, the precedent is set to have both the church and the Holy Ghost do the "sending" in order for the missionary to be sent out properly.

Some may ask, "What if I know the Holy Ghost has called me to be a missionary, but no one will send me out or lay hands on me?" Then one of two or three things is happening. Either that particular man on whom no one will "lay hands" is in too big of a hurry (1 Tim. 5:22), or he is unstable (Gen. 49:4; James 1:8) and problematic enough that the leadership recognizes it.

But perhaps the man is truly called, and the leadership he is under has little or no concern for a zealous, God-called man. In other words, the man might be too hard to control, so the man-made "stamp of approval" is not forthcoming. Normally, it is easy to ascertain whether the problem is the man or the leadership. Some time for observation and a Bible are usually the elements needed to get to the bottom of the problem.

Now when we talk about men being sent around the world from a local church, there is a progression that normally takes place. The progression corresponds with four groups of people in the local church.

## Listeners

The first group in which the prospective missionary finds himself, while attending the local church, is the group we will call "Listeners." The Listeners do just *that* when they come to church: they listen. Every pastor and preacher appreciates the people who will come and "listen" to the sermon. But unfortunately for most of the Listeners, that is *all* they do: they just listen and do nothing else.

Ezekiel 33:31 says, "**And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, AND THEY HEAR THY WORDS, BUT THEY WILL NOT DO THEM: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.**"

It's a bad problem if you come to church and listen, and do not "do" the word while choosing, rather, to go after covetousness. The New Testament is clear: if you *hear* the word, you should be a *doer* "**of the word**" and *con-*

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# The First Missionary Journey

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*tinue* in it (James 1:22–25). But most who listen to the word nowadays are “**hearers only**.” Very few listeners grow to become Learners or Laborers.

## Learners

From the group of “Listeners,” there will be some who become “Learners.” The Learners are characterized by always taking notes and “marking” their Bibles. Men in this group make a concentrated effort to read, memorize, and study the Bible in their spare time. Sometimes this means they enter organized Bible school classes or discipleship courses. Other times, they might not have the opportunity of an organized Bible education, so they just motivate themselves to read, study, and commit themselves to learn the word of God (Acts 6:4).

It takes discipline to be a continuous learner (James 1:25); that is a characteristic of men in this group. It is impossible to be lazy and be a continuous learner. One must read and make sacrifices of free time and leisure in order to constantly learn the word.

Nowadays, few men will move from the group of Listeners to the group we are calling “Learners.” Few will give up their free time with the TV, Internet, iPad, and other time wasters like “watching the news” (Eccl. 1:9–10; Acts 17:21). Many Christians today think they must track Glenn Beck, Rush, and FOX News; or they are not “learning” what they should “do” about our country.

As I heard one saved man say recently, “I would love to teach my kids how to hunt and fish, but I’ve got to keep up with *the news* and what’s happening in this country. If I don’t do that, then my kids won’t have a future!” That guy *really* thought that his personal knowledge of the “news” would change the direction of the USA! Someone is not thinking.

The news media is a system geared at upsetting people about things about which they can’t do anything. When was the last time your knowledge of the news changed the direction of the USA? It’s spiraling downward regardless of how much attention you give the news. You would do better to spend time with your children and learning the Bible rather than give the news five minutes a month. In other words, you cannot become a “Learner” of the word of God while wasting hours of your time each week.

## Laborers

Sometimes, nowadays, we do find men who go from being Listeners to Learners, and then on to the next group. We will call that group “Laborers.” The Laborers in the local church are easy to spot. They do not sit around and assume that someone else is going to do the job. They will find something to do for Jesus Christ without having to be “given a position.” They do not complain, saying, “There is no job for me to do in this church.” If a job

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# The First Missionary Journey

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needs to be done, no matter how miniscule, they jump at the chance.

The Laborer is found in the nursing home and hospital regularly. The Laborer is in that very small group of folks who are always at church visitation and soulwinning. But the Laborer doesn't wait for an organized time of witnessing to speak for the Lord Jesus Christ. That is just his "life" (2 Cor. 4:13 cf. Phil. 1:21).

The jobs of the Laborer are not limited to witnessing and "spiritual" jobs. He is sometimes found mowing the grass of a weak church member or cleaning the bathrooms in the church building. Many times, his jobs entail just "being a blessing" to people who need him. The Laborer is generous with time, money, and his very life (Phil. 1:22–25; 1 Thess. 2:8; 2 Cor. 8:1–5).

Some of the Learners come to church for years and years, but never have the desire or interest to be a Laborer. Hearing and learning the word is enough for them. They hear the word, but refuse to *do* much about it.

However, the Laborer is a servant. The Laborer realizes that a disciple of Jesus Christ is someone who serves as a "minister" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). Even in the modern business world, the aspect of being a "servant-leader" is recognized. The Laborer is the servant who goes on to be a Leader in the local church.

## Leaders

The man who is sent out of the New Testament local church as a missionary normally goes through the above progression until one day it is obvious that he is a Leader in the church. Maybe he is a Leader without any official title. Many times in the church, there are "**aged men**" (cf. Tit. 2:2) who are great leaders, but they don't have any title like *deacon* or *elder*. They are just solid men who are "**pillars**" in the church (cf. Gal. 2:9).

In my own personal testimony, it was my blessing to be a youth director, children's church director, and the captain of two bus routes at a church in Little Rock, Arkansas (1988–1992). However, many men are sent out as missionaries who were leaders in their local assembly, but they had no official title or position. But somewhere along the way, they went from Listener to Learner to Laborer to Leader in the local church. What comes next?

## Leavers

It may not be very good English to call a missionary a "Leaver," but he still has the office in the local church where he cannot stay. He must leave. Like Abram, he must get out from his country, kindred, and people, and "go." In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas were Leaders who became Leavers. They had that office in the local church where the Holy Ghost said, "Get out."

It is a calling to *go away*—"far away" (Isa. 6:12). When a man has this

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# ***The First Missionary Journey***

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calling, he cannot stay “home” because no place in this world can feel like “home.”

It never occurred to me just how much my family and I would “go” when the time came to yield to the call of God to “**Go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel**” (Mark 16:15). There was an understanding that we might move 8,000 miles away, but the thought never entered my mind that we would travel all over the United States whenever we were here. We averaged 50,000 miles a year and went to ninety church meetings for every year in the States.

There are times when the missionary wonders, “Can we ever sit still again?” Do we have to be “going” every week? That might seem a bit overstated, but our family lived out of suitcases and in the homes of other people *for a year at a time at least twice*. That was a lot of *going and leaving*. Some men are called to *leave*, and Paul and Barnabas were Leavers in Acts chapter 13.

Next month, I will discuss the *resistance* and *results* encountered by missionaries.

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# Satan's Chokehold

By Robert Militello

**“And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection” (Luke 8:14).**

Here in large measure lies the answer to why the Body of Christ in America is spiritually anemic. Dr. Ruckman's reference Bible has this caption above Colossians 3:1–7, *“The most disobeyed commandment to the Body of Christ.”*

**“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1–2).**

Failure to obey this injunction has produced the church described in Revelation 3:17–18. The world and its vanities have wrapped themselves around the Body of Christ like a straitjacket, choking the life of Christ in the believer. Think of it like a python coiling around its hapless victim, contracting itself until the victim breathes no more.

**“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10).** How's that for encouragement just before Paul leaves this earth for glory? Were the pleasures and enjoyments of the ancient Roman world greater than what we have in America today? I doubt it. What got ahold of Demas? He didn't have all-you-can-eat buffets, music on MP3s, or Facebook. What took him down? He took his eyes off the prize.

When a motorist takes his or her eyes off the road just for a moment to send a text, a crash is what you can expect sooner or later. Regardless of how often you hear this message, “Please don't text while driving,” millions now have this electronic python squeezing out what sense of caution they once had. Have you been on the roads lately?

**“The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings” (Neh. 2:4).**

Remember when the only drivers talking to a machine were truckers on their CBs. Now, for women especially, cell phones are manna from heaven. The ability to talk and to keep talking, anytime, from anywhere, is an emancipation greater than the one President Lincoln declared to free the slaves. Talk about women empowerment, I suspect the U.S. Army will find it easier to recruit women if a smart phone is included as a sign-up bonus.

**“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (1 John 2:15).** When does wanting to use something become loving that thing? In Colossians 3:5, we are told to mortify five wicked tendencies, the last being **“covetousness, which,”** the Spirit says, **“is idolatry.”** But notice among these wicked practices the term **“inordinate affection.”** *Inordinate* means “beyond ordinary, irregular, disorderly, excessive, immoderate.” Failure to put the believer's **“affection on things above”** can only lead to some excessive attachment to things down here. Our life in America, in 2016, is presented

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with a full menu of offerings that can steal our hearts. Folks can choke when they stuff themselves.

**“Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith”** (Prov. 15:16).

There is a price to pay in the pursuit of material things. I lived most of my life in a city where the majority of inhabitants lived with constant stress. The pace of life in New York City is brutal, and over time, that ungodly pressure will take its toll, mentally, physically, emotionally, and every other way. There is a satanic energy about New York, and if you are walking with the Lord and happen to be in that city, you'll know what I mean. Today, our **“present evil world”** (Gal. 1:4), with all its gadgets, is giving rise to an anxiety level that has made heart failure, stroke, and cancer routine.

**“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”** (Matt. 6:31–33).

Later, when Paul was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles, he discovered in a practical way the mindset of the Gentiles. Paul labored in cities and among materially-minded Gentiles. He was looked upon as a great threat to the “life of the community,” so to speak. Notice, in Acts 19, the “popularity” (sarcasm) Paul enjoyed among the merchants of Ephesus.

Real Christianity and consumerism should not share the same bed, yet in our day, Laodicean Christians have joined these opposites together.

**“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked”** (Rev. 3:16–17).

Satan's great success in these last days before the Lord comes for His Bride has been the rise of the “megachurches.” Countless Christians in America, or at least those professing to be in Christ, have found a refuge for their carnal and covetous mindset in these handsomely decorated “worship centers.” There they gather on Sundays by the tens of thousands to be “preached to” by wolves in sheeps' clothing skillfully employing **“good words and fair speeches”** (see Rom. 16:18). To placate the spirit of this world in the hearts of these lukewarm believers, these megachurch preachers major in success-oriented exhortations designed to convince the listener that he or she is called to be a winner in this world. How nice!

While Christians slept and turned to modern “Bible” versions, Satan **“sowed tares among the wheat”** (Matt. 13:25) and filled the ministry with the men and (God help us) women who excel in double-speak. These “ministers” have cleverly removed the cross from Christianity. Self-denial is no longer preached

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# Satan's Chokehold

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as a noble virtue. How could it be when everyone knows God wants us to be happy, amen?

I've listened to some of these ministers and have noticed that they are all careful not to present **"this present world"** as an evil place. Think about that. What better way to kill, inside the heart of a believer, the longing he or she should have to see Jesus. If you are against the world and see it for what it is, you are **"Looking for that blessed hope"** (Tit. 2:13). If this world still possesses too much of your heart, that longing has vanished.

Notice in Luke 8:11–15 that **"The seed," "the word of God,"** falls in four places. In verse 12, it falls **"by the way side"**; in verse 13, **"on the rock"**; in verse 14, **"among thorns"**; and in verse 15, **"on the good ground."** America, today, is not **"good ground"** for sowing God's word; that should be obvious.

The desire to accumulate things has greatly accelerated since television brought the world into everyone's living room. A new Christian, going forth with a heart desiring to please God and escape the old life, is soon made aware that he or she is in a war zone. This world is diametrically opposed to the moving of the Holy Spirit. Upon realizing this, the novice believer must choose sides, and it must be done quickly. If this is delayed, the babe in Christ will never grow to maturity. Decisiveness is the key.

**"A double minded man in unstable in all his ways"** (James 1:8).

A soldier of truth does not fraternize with the enemy.

**"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? WHOSOEVER THEREFORE WILL BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD IS THE ENEMY OF GOD"** (James 4:4).

The Holy Spirit must remind a believer every day that this world killed the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are in the Book, you'll see this world for what it is, and you'll hate it. If you are not in the Book, you'll discover, to your regret, that behind the pretty packaging in which this world wraps itself is a maggot-infested, rotting corpse. Jesus never prayed for this world (John 17:9), and no Christian need admire any fool whose life's work is to make the world a better place in which to live. The world will never be a fit place to live for anyone who loves God's word until the living Word returns and gives this place a good housecleaning, amen?

Covetousness is a disease of heart without a cure unless the Holy Spirit controls you.

**"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity"** (Eccl. 5:10).

The great engine of American consumerism is the purchase of bigger and bigger houses in order to store more stuff. When mortgage rates are low, a great American pastime kicks into high gear—house hunting. Buying and selling, "flipping houses," and pressuring the seller to drop the asking price is endemic to the American consumer. Also, it makes the stockholders of Lowe's and Home Depot very, very happy. Let's face it, loving this world is relatively easy when you have money to spend. Again, refer to Revelation 3:17 to see

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# Satan's Chokehold

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what this does to the Body of Christ.

There's a lot of "Egypt" in the heart of a Christian, although most are loathe to admit it. Lack of contentment with those things with which we are to be content ("**food and raiment**"—1 Tim. 6:8) causes us to long for the extras of this world. Early on in their wilderness journey, the Jews found it impossible to subdue their cravings.

**"But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul"** (Psa. 106:14–15).

In our day, the Lord has allowed the Laodicean church in America to satisfy their lust for worldly things, yet because of spiritual blindness, these carnal believers are unaware of how the Lord sees them. Surprise and shock are words not quite strong enough to describe the horror and shame these believers will experience at the Judgment Seat of Christ. If you are still too attached to the things of this world, fasten your seat belts for the severe turbulence ahead when asked to give an account to the Lord face to face. There will be no place to hide on that day.

**"And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it"** (Luke 4:5–6).

Don't forget that Jesus was fully human as well as God in the flesh, but as a man, He could sin. Why would the devil tempt Him if it were a useless exercise? Satan has no equal in searching out the weakness of human nature. That human nature showed itself in the Garden of Gethsemane. That human nature showed itself in a man filled with the Spirit from birth. John the Baptist, in a moment of weakness just before his death, sent two of his disciples to Jesus.

**"And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another"** (Matt. 11:3).

John knew exactly who Jesus was, but the Baptist needed a little help. No doubt he was under a ferocious satanic attack before he left this world.

Human nature hasn't changed one iota in 6,000 years. It is fickle, fragile, and badly flawed on its best days. It wilts under pressure, as Peter shamefully discovered the night the Lord was taken.

Today, no people in the history of the world has been subjected to the ceaseless advertising and pressure to buy like the American consumer. Since 1888, when Richard Sears and Alvah Roebuck published their first catalog, marketing executives have devoted their lives to finding new ways to separate people from their cash. Many in the ministry also learned quickly how to turn a religious sideshow into a lucrative enterprise. Shopping, like religion, makes lots of folks feel good. Cable TV offers two seven-day, 24-hour shopping stations to help feed the ever-expanding desire of Americans to possess things.

**"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for**

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Hendrickson Thinline Ref. Bible (Chestnut Brown Imitation Leather)...	BL-4515 \$14.95

### BOOKS

Leviathan's Nightmare (Dulmage) .....	GN-9420 \$10.95
The Bottle & The Bible (Melton) .....	GN-9300 75¢

## THE CREED OF THE ALEXANDRIAN CULT

1. There is **no final authority** but God.
2. Since God is a Spirit, there is **no final authority** that can be seen, heard, read, felt, or handled.
3. Since all books are material, there is **no book on this earth that is the final and absolute authority** on what is right and what is wrong, what constitutes truth and what constitutes error.
4. There **WAS** a series of writings one time which, **IF** they had all been put into a **BOOK** as soon as they were written the first time, **WOULD HAVE** constituted an infallible and final authority by which to judge truth and error.
5. However, this series of writings was lost, and the God who inspired them was **unable to preserve their content** through Bible-believing Christians at Antioch (Syria), where the first Bible teachers were (Acts 13:1), and where the first missionary trip originated (Acts 13:1-52), and where the word "*Christian*" originated (Acts 11:26).
6. So God chose to **ALMOST** preserve them through Gnostics and philosophers from Alexandria, Egypt, even though God called His Son **OUT** of Egypt (Matthew 2), Jacob **OUT** of Egypt (Genesis 49), Israel **OUT** of Egypt (Exodus 15), and Joseph's bones **OUT** of Egypt (Exodus 13).
7. So there are two streams of Bibles. The most accurate—though, of course, there is **no final, absolute authority** for determining truth and error; it is a matter of "preference"—are the Egyptian translations from Alexandria, Egypt, which are "almost the originals," although not quite.
8. The most **inaccurate translations** were those that brought about the German Reformation (Luther, Zwingli, Boehler, Zinzendorf, Spener, et al.) and the worldwide missionary movement of the English-speaking people: the Bible that Sunday, Torrey, Moody, Finney, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Wesley, and Chapman used.
9. But we can "tolerate" these if those who believe in them will "tolerate" US. After all, since there is **NO ABSOLUTE AND FINAL AUTHORITY** that anyone can read, teach, preach, or handle, the whole thing is a matter of "PREFERENCE." You may prefer what you prefer, and we will prefer what we prefer. Let us live in peace, and if we cannot agree on anything or everything, let us all agree on one thing: **THERE IS NO FINAL, ABSOLUTE, WRITTEN AUTHORITY OF GOD ANYWHERE ON THIS EARTH.**

This is the Creed of the Alexandrian Cult.

# Satan's Chokehold

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**a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"** (Luke 12:15).

We live in a land of plenty. Our lifestyle is light years above 90% of the people who share our planet. Just how important is the Lord to millions of Americans? The rich have grown considerably richer, and billionaires are as common as millionaires once were. The value we place on temporal things is on display every Christmas. People who show little or no concern for their souls are fond of saying, "I live in the here and now." What about eternity, you fool?

Here is the Lord speaking to the man who has done well and squirreled away much, and now needs to build bigger barns: **"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"** (Luke 12:20–21).

**"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"** (Prov. 16:16).

I've heard some in the ministry say that America cannot see revival again because we have too much. Maybe that is so, but even if a collapse should happen, a national turning to God is no guarantee that revival would break out. September 11, 2001 brought terror to America and took New York City to its knees. Was there a turning to the Lord? No, not really.

What I heard from fellow New Yorkers was this: "Why did God let this happen?" There was bafflement, anger, and fear; but not the godly fear that leads to repentance. Why not? Well, it has to do with the road our nation has taken these past fifty years.

**"I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh . . . Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices"** (Prov. 1:26, 31).

How's that for comfort in a time of national distress? But our currency says, "In God We Trust"; that is the official motto of the United States, adopted in 1956. It first appeared on coins in 1864 and has appeared on paper money since 1957. It also happens to be the motto of the state of Florida. What a joke!

Why put such an overt religious statement on your money? Don't we have separation of church and state in America? I suspect the phrase was placed on our money because of a bad conscience concerning the relationship between real faith and money. Think about that a while.

Now for those Laodicean Christians in New York whom I heard say, "Why did God let this happen?" (referring to the collapse of the Twin Towers), I suggest they turn to Philippians 4:19.

**"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."**

Well, would the Lord hold back a good beating when we need one? If your heart is inordinately attached to worldly things, you have a beating coming; if not here, then at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Smile, God loves you and so do I!

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<b>IDAHO</b>		
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<b>TEXAS</b>		
Abilene-KTXS-Ch 12 Brownwood-Ch 77 San Angelo-Ch 55		7:00 AM Sun. 7:00 AM Sun. 7:00 AM Sun.

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