

# Twisted to Fit: Pt. II

There are so many spurious charges and broad brush statements made in Laurence Vance's speech that I almost do not know where to begin in addressing the outright errors present. Perhaps then, after answering some outright erroneous statements, it would be best to concentrate on a few certain things the Bible states about war and the relationship of the Christian to civil government.

In beginning, I think it essential to separate out the fact that, like Jeremiah Wright, Laurence Vance uses the Scripture as a cloak for his actual agenda, in which he attempts to legitimize his claims with out of context and partial quotes from Scripture. In going through his speech, and then perusing his other writings, it is quite apparent that Mr. Vance, despite his claims to the contrary, has another agenda besides trying to turn Christians back to a stricter adherence to Scripture. The essence of that agenda is found in the closing statements of his June 8th speech:

*It is high time for Christians who still defend the state, its leaders, its military, and its wars to wake up and open their eyes and recognize some cold, hard facts:*

- \* The United States has become a rogue state, a pariah nation, an evil empire.*
- \* The United States' military is the greatest force for evil in the world.*
- \* The United States is the arms dealer to the world.*
- \* The United States is not the world's policeman.*
- \* The United States cannot redeem the world through violence.*
- \* The United States is not the God-anointed protector of Israel that enjoys a special relationship with God.*
- \* The United States government is the greatest threat to American life, liberty, and property – not the leaders or the military or the people of Iraq, Iran, Syria, China, Russia,*

or Venezuela.

*Our republic is crumbling. It is imperative that we return to the noninterventionist foreign policy of the Founders. Christians, of all people, should be leading the way.*

*Now, is it really the purview of Christians to direct the society of the United States, and thus its government to return to the Constitution?*

*Moreover, is it absolutely true that the United States has become "a rogue state, a pariah nation, an evil empire."?*

*Is it true that "The United States' military is the greatest force for evil in the world."?*

*Is it true that "The United States is the arms dealer to the world."?*

*Is it true that "The United States is not the world's policeman."?*

*Is it true that "The United States cannot redeem the world through violence."?*

*Is it true that "The United States is not the God-anointed protector of Israel that enjoys a special relationship with God."?*

*Is it true that "The United States government is the greatest threat to American life, liberty, and property – not the leaders or the military or the people of Iraq, Iran, Syria, China, Russia, or Venezuela."?*

The problem with so many of these statements is that they sound just like known communists and propaganda straight from the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. One would have to be a fool or totally ignorant of the statements and publications of the Soviet Union, the PRC, and their agents

and front men to not be familiar with the theme espoused in the above statements.

However, the real question is:

*As a Christian, whose purpose it is to serve the LORD God and put forth the gospel every day, what does any of this really have to do with me and my service to God?*

In answering that, which must be done to thoroughly answer the rest of Mr. Vance's assertions, we must understand the Christian's relationship to the world, and to the nation in which the LORD God put them. However, before continuing, a brief answer to the above questions are:

*No, it is not the responsibility of Christians to force or "lead the way" to a return to constitutional government. Please note the use of the word "force" in the answer. It is the duty of the Christian to witness and testify of the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel, and uphold the constitutions, State and Federal, as they were framed.*

*No, the United States is not "a rogue state, a pariah nation, or an evil empire." If you think so, try living in Russia, the PRC, Cuba, or North Korea. Now, while we are not that bad, we are certainly not following the Constitution, or the spirit and intent of it. We do need to return to what the Founders intended as they did understand how a nation ought to function in this world.*

*No, it is not true that "The United States' military is the greatest force for evil in the world." If it is, then it is worse than the FSB (formerly KGB), Islam (which sends people to Hell every day), the Catholic Church (ditto), Buddhism (ditto), Taoism (ditto), Jehovah's Witnesses (ditto), Mormonism (ditto), etc. etc., and a host of other false religions. The greatest force for evil in this world is our*

*own individual hearts. If you doubt that, then you call the LORD God a liar – and I wouldn't want to be in your shoes.*

**No**, *it is not true that “The United States is the arms dealer to the world.” Try China and the former Soviet satellite states for that one. The most common combat small arm in the world is not the M-16 or its variants. Rather, it is the AK-47/74 and all its variants. By the way, who did produce the most tanks, combat aircraft, missiles, ships, bombs, etc. all those years of the Cold War? Moreover, just where are those weapons now?*

**Yes**, *it is true that “The United States is not the world's policeman.” However, it is also true that the United States should be an influence throughout the world. We simply do not need to, and should not “impose” our form of government on everyone else. Education is far more effective at demonstrating the superiority of the American system.*

**Yes**, *it is true that “The United States cannot redeem the world through violence.” However, it is also true that no one else can either. This statement displays nothing but ignorance of the Scripture, and presents a straw man to be destroyed by Mr. Vance. The fact is, this world will never be redeemed by any method – violent or otherwise. No, the LORD God is interested in redeeming individual souls through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and Him alone (which, by the way, was a violent act). This world will be, in the end, destroyed – not redeemed. Did the Lord Jesus Christ die for the world (all the people in it)? Yes, He certainly did. However, the Scripture does not lie, and it plainly states that the vast majority of people in this world reject the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel, and consign themselves to eternal damnation.*

*Yes, it is true that "The United States is not the God-anointed protector of Israel that enjoys a special relationship with God." However, to say that we should not stand by Israel, is to fly in the face of Scripture. Mr. Vance ought to know this as well. Israel, whether they currently follow the LORD God or not, is still the apple of God's eye, and they will not depart from His presence. When the United States is long gone, Israel will still be around. Why? Because they are the physical children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which the LORD gave certain promises to, which said promises are not yet completely fulfilled.*

*No, it is not true that "The United States government is the greatest threat to American life, liberty, and property – not the leaders or the military or the people of Iraq, Iran, Syria, China, Russia, or Venezuela." However, this is not the "us versus them" shallow issue that Mr. Vance makes it out to be. In fact, again Mr. Vance has set-up a straw man to knock down. **The truth is that the American People are the greatest threat to their own liberty – not the American Government.** There are approximately 300 million people in the United States. Of that, over half own some sort of firearm (most own several). In fact, there are probably enough firearms in private possession to equip every man, woman, and child in the United States with at least one firearm, and ammunition to boot. Plainly, the liberty of the American citizen is in their own hands, and not in the hands of the government. Moreover, the majority of individuals in the U.S. Military believe in liberty, and in private possession of arms. While they may disagree over the extent of the right, they do agree that private possession of arms should be the case. Now, whose fault will it be if the American citizen loses their liberty? The problem with the American Government arises from a problem with how American citizens think and behave, and what they allow the American Government to "get away with," and not with the government itself. I would remind Mr. Vance*

*of the truth of the following statement by Samuel Adams:*

*“A general dissolution of the principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy... While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but once they lose their virtue, they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader... If virtue and knowledge are diffused among the people, they will never be enslaved. This will be their great security.” – Samuel Adams*

*The problem with the American people is one of a loss of virtue and accountability. Thus, the American people do not demand those in government be virtuous, nor do they demand accountability from their government. If they did so, America would not have the problems she has.*

This, interestingly enough, brings one right back to the duties of a Christian in civil society, and what a Christian's view of war ought to be.

To be continued . . .

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## **Twisted to Fit**

Today, LewRockwell.com posted a speech given by Laurence M. Vance at the June 8, 2008, Future of Freedom Foundation's conference on "Restoring the Republic: Foreign Policy and Civil Liberties." In this speech, Mr. Vance spoke specifically on the subject of Christians and war. In his speech, he critiqued "Christians" severely for their support of war. He also drew no distinctions about what makes one a "Christian," and where, in Scripture he finds the support for his

contention that war, in and of itself, is wrong for a Christian to engage in. In the very first paragraph of his "talk" he states:

*"If there is any group of people that should be opposed to war, torture, militarism, the warfare state, state worship, suppression of civil liberties, an imperial presidency, blind nationalism, government propaganda, and an aggressive foreign policy it is Christians, and especially conservative, evangelical, and fundamentalist Christians who claim to strictly follow the dictates of Scripture and worship the Prince of Peace. It is indeed strange that Christian people should be so accepting of war. War is the greatest suppressor of civil liberties. War is the greatest destroyer of religion, morality, and decency. War is the greatest creator of fertile ground for genocides and atrocities. War is the greatest destroyer of families and young lives. War is the greatest creator of famine, disease, and homelessness. War is the health of the state."*

And if ever there were a broad brush, Mr. Vance has used it. About four-fifths of the things given in the first sentence do not even belong together. If we examine this list, we find some things that are strongly supported by Scripture, and others that Scripture expressly condemns. However, according to Mr. Vance, for one to be a Christian, one must oppose all items on the following list:

*"If there is any group of people that should be opposed to war, torture, militarism, the warfare state, state worship, suppression of civil liberties, an imperial presidency, blind nationalism, government propaganda, and an aggressive foreign policy it is Christians . . ."*

If we take this list at face value, according to Mr. Vance, King David could not have ever been a Christian.

Why?

Because King David engaged in virtually everything on this list almost his entire life. Now, was everything David did right and proper Scripturally? No, obviously not. However, there are only three specific incidents of transgression the LORD God was displeased with:

*The unlawful and improper transport of the Ark of the Covenant. (I Chronicles 13, 15)*

*The matter of Uriah the Hittite's wife. (II Samuel 11-12)*

*The numbering of Israel. (I Chronicles 21)*

Funny how that only when it came to building the temple was King David told by the LORD God that his wars prevented him from doing that. (*I Chronicles 22:6-8*)

However, before going further, I suppose it ought to be established whether King David was a Christian or not, seeing that most do not believe that believers in the Old Testament were.. In a word: yes, King David was a Christian. The proof of King David believing in Christ to come is throughout the Psalms. The proof that people were saved in the time of the Old Testament by grace through faith in Christ (or the Messiah) to come is extensive in Scripture and I have written about it in the following articles:

Where Did the Old Testament Saints Go?

A Departure

A Departure, Pt. II

A Departure, Pt. III

Any proper study of the Scriptures will indeed show that, as Christianity is defined (a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ – the Saviour), all believers in the Old Testament were (and still are) ((An understanding of what it means to be “in Christ” is essential to understanding how one, once born again, will never leave the status of “in Christ.”))

Christians. This applies to everyone from Adam and Eve forward. (*Hebrews 11:4*)

To return to the issue at hand: how can it be that someone who has a degree in Theology, and claims to have studied the Scripture, have such a remarkable lack of understanding of what the Scripture states about war, its origin, what a born-again child of God's relationship to, and view of war ought to be? Instead, the extent of Mr. Vance's citation of Scripture in his speech consists of three (3) verses, one of which is taken out of context and another is only partially quoted. Mr. Vance fronts his citations with the following paragraph:

*"The early Christians were not warmongers like so many Christians today. They did not idolize the Caesars like some Christians idolize President Bush. They did not make apologies for the Roman Empire like many Christians do for the U.S. Empire. They did not venerate the institution of the military like most Christians do today. They did not participate in the state's wars like too many Christians do today. If there was anything at all advocated by the early Christians it was peace. After all, they had some New Testament admonitions to go by:*

- \* Blessed are the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9)*
- \* Live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:18)*
- \* Follow peace with all men (Hebrews 12:14)"*

Then, Mr. Vance goes on to begin the next paragraph with the statement:

*"Aggression, violence, and bloodshed are contrary to the very nature of Christianity."*

Now, whatever evidence Mr. Vance has for his contentions concerning early Christians, he certainly does not use the Scriptures to support it, and indeed mixes things that are

valid Scripturally, with things that are invalid. For instance, it is true that aggression, violence and bloodshed are incompatible with spreading the gospel. But, they are ordained and given to the state by the LORD God. The assertion that "early Christians" did not participate in state wars is patently against what the Scripture plainly states concerning Cornelius and many others in the Roman army:

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. (*Acts 10:1-4*)

What we find in this chapter is Cornelius' obedience to God in sending for Peter, Then Peter coming to Cornelius' house and preaching the gospel to Cornelius and all his house and close friends. During Peter's preaching we find the following occurs:

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. (*Acts 10:44-48*)

Now, we will search in vain to find where Peter explains to Cornelius that he must leave the Roman Army to serve God. Why? Because it is not there, and it is not there because it is not

required nor demanded. In fact, the relationship of the child of God to military service was explained much earlier by John the Baptist as he preached the gospel and prepared the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ:

And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. (*Luke 3:10-18*)

If we note what John told the soldiers, we will note the absence of any demand they leave military service. Rather, he tells them to uphold their duty in a right and just manner, ((The statement "Do violence to no man," does not mean to avoid combat in the line of duty. What it means in the context given is to not arbitrarily and capriciously, wantonly do harm to someone simply because you can. It is a frequent temptation for armed soldiers, especially stationed in a foreign land, to lash out and unnecessarily strike someone simply because they can.)) and be content with their wages. He does not say "Don't go to war." or "Leave the military." or "Don't support the Roman empire's wars." Those statements, and others like them

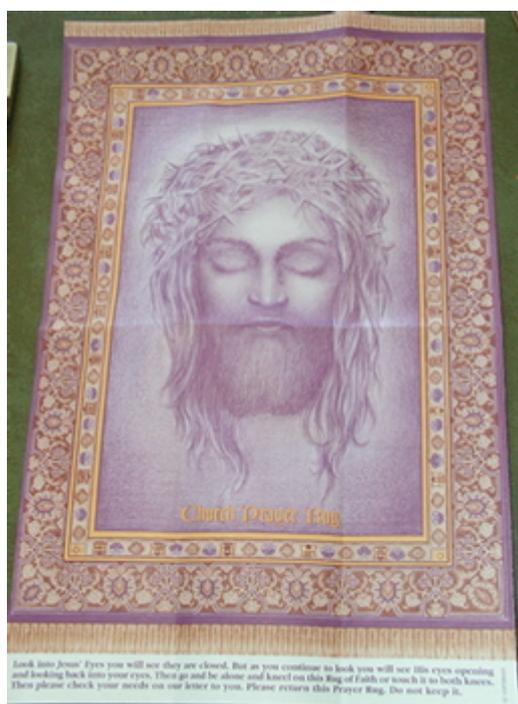
are notably absent throughout the New Testament. Surely, if a Christian serving in the military were such a serious issue, don't you think the LORD God would have addressed it directly?

To be continued . . .

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## Predators



This is a day and time in which one must be utterly cautious about the associations and influences that are allowed into one's life. The picture above illustrates this rather well.

I went to check the mail yesterday and lo and behold, I had a rather stuffed letter in the box from Saint Matthew's Churches. This is not the first time I have received things from them as they mass mail. It is very much like a fisherman casting out a net to catch whatever he can. Unfortunately for those caught in the net, it is the end. The analogy to what

Saint Matthew's Churches is doing with their mass mailings is very apt.

This particular mailing included a "Prayer Rug" that has instructions at the bottom of it, which state:

*"Look into Jesus' Eyes you will see they are closed. But as you look you will see His eyes opening and looking back into your eyes. Then go and be alone and kneel on this Rug of Faith or touch it to both knees. Then please check your needs on our letter to you. Please return this Prayer Rug. Do not keep it."*

On the back of this "rug" it also states:

*"This St. Matthew 18:19 Bible Prayer Rug is soaked with the power of prayer for you. Use it immediately, then please return it with your Prayer Needs Checked on our letter to you" It must be mailed to a second home that needs a blessing after you use it. Prayer works. Expect God's blessing."*

Oh, I didn't mention that the letter **STRONGLY** pushes sending "seed" money to "multiply God's blessing" and that you can get a "Prosperity Cross" that will be sent "free of charge" just for returning the "Prayer Letter" with the option checked for the "Prosperity Cross, blessed by the church." However, right below that option, is the option for sending your "seed gift."

**Predators.** Only the desperate, lonely, ignorant, and uninformed would fall for this scam. The really despicable part of this is the use of the LORD's name for their dirty work. They certainly don't use Jesus' picture or portrait as there were no pictures then, and He never sat for a portrait. Moreover, nowhere does it describe His physical features in any detail so that one could even begin to paint an accurate portrait of Him. In fact, all the "paintings of Jesus" came about over one hundred years AFTER Christ died, arose, and

ascended. I would think it would be nigh impossible to get any accurate description of the appearance of a person one hundred years after they left this earth. In short, the “paintings of Jesus” are a scam and lie of the Devil as well. By the way, the “Jesus” portrayed in the picture above, doesn’t have JEWISH feature one. Nope, the “Jesus” portrayed above has white EUROPEAN physical features, not Semitic features.

The Lord Jesus Christ was a JEW. Get over it. As pertaining to the flesh, my LORD and SAVIOUR is a Jew of the House of David, King of Israel. As pertaining to the soul and spirit, He is the Word, the Second Person of the Godhead.

The “person” portrayed above, I don’t know who “he” is, except to say that “he” is of the Devil. Additionally, if you read the “instructions” for the “prayer rug” you surely noted the admonition to stare into “Jesus’ eyes” until you see them “open” and then go and pray. This is nothing more than self-hypnosis. However, it does open one up for demonic influence and control. It is very dangerous.

It strikes me that Saint Matthew’s Churches as very much like Satan himself – a predator preying upon those who do not know any better, and who cannot or will not resist the lure of prosperity. However, like the lure the fisherman uses, this also contains a hook to trap and snare the unwary.

It is regrettable, shameful and dishonorable what Saint Matthew’s Churches are doing. I wonder what those involved in this scam will say when they stand before the real Jesus at His throne of judgement?

BTW, I didn’t keep the “Prayer Rug” or the letter – I burned them. I would advise everyone else to do the same.

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# Not From God

While looking through the classifieds the other day I ran across the following Help Wanted ad:

*DIRECTOR OF Adult Discipleship for large membership church. Responsible for adult Sunday school classes, short-term studies, small groups, development, leadership recruitment and training. Bachelor's degree in education or related field required. Experience in education or working with adults helpful. Salary commensurate with experience. Send letter and resume to Martha Barnes martha@fumcwired.com First United Methodist, Springdale, AR or fax to 479-751-4612*

And to add to it, today I found this ad:

*PART TIME pianist for vital, growing congregation. Interested applicants please send resume and 3 letters of reference to First United Methodist, 20 Boyce Drive, Bella Vista, AR 72714, attn: Dr. L.E. Zehring, Director of Music Ministries. Phone (479)855-1158. Email fumcbv@cox-internet.com. Website [www.LeadLearnLove.com](http://www.LeadLearnLove.com)*

Now, to most of the world this may not seem out of place. However, for what is supposed to be, or purports itself as a New Testament church, this is ludicrous.

Why?

Well, the Scripture has something to say about how churches get the teachers, preachers, and various ministers that carry out the ministries in a New Testament church. For instance:

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also

that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: . . .(*Ephesians 4:8-12*)

And again from Acts:

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (*Acts 13:1-2*)

And from I Corinthians:

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. (*I Corinthians 12:7-11*)

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. (*I Corinthians 12:18*)

Now, could it be that the phrases:

*“And he gave some”*

*“whereunto I have called them”*

*“For to one is given by the Spirit”*

*“But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”*

and the statement:

*“But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.”*

are actually not intended of the LORD God to mean anything? Or, is it that, as far as the Methodist Church is concerned, the above statements are just the fabrications of men, and the Bible really doesn't reflect accurately what God intends?

If so, why bother? Why not just advertise for the job position and call yourselves the Methodist Social Club? Why pretend? After all, if you are not going to depend upon the LORD God to provide for ministry positions as He plainly states He does, why pretend to be a New Testament church?

You know, it really would be better for all if the Methodist Church would simply quit pretending – that, or honestly return to following the LORD and His word.

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## Suppression

Ah yes, back to the “good ole days” where there exists no such thing as liberty of the conscience. Yes, you would never know this is America, nor would you know that the U.S. Army defends the United States of America. No, this is not the home of the likes of Patrick Henry, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, et al. Rather, “America” has chosen the road of persecutors and the thought suppression police.

The offense?

Preaching the gospel in church services!

Now, if the gospel cannot be preached in church services, just where can it be preached?

Worse yet, the offended party is a Brigade Chaplain at Forward Operating Base Loyalty in Iraq, who told the Unit Chaplain, Stuart Kazarovich, a fundamental Baptist, that the term "born again" was unacceptable and not compatible with the Army. ((Military honchos 'suppress' chaplain's Baptist services))

Gee, I wonder who told the Brigade Chaplain that he set Army policy? The problem with the Army and its response is typical Army (which is why I joined the Air Force 28 years ago, and retired 8 years ago) – they are dragging their feet on dealing with an uppity Brigade Chaplain.

Am I surprised by this?

No, not really. Fundamental Baptists have never been liked by hierarchal, pompous, "organized" denominations that call themselves "Christian." Moreover, fundamental Baptists are less liked by Muslims and other pagan religions.

The following then, is directed at the Brigade Chaplain of FOB Loyalty and his enablers in Iraq and Washington. They should recognize it. After all, spiritually, the folks doing the persecuting described below could well be their ancestors:

*In Virginia, religious persecution, directed at Baptists and, to a lesser degree, at Presbyterians, continued after the Declaration of Independence. The perpetrators were members of the Church of England, sometimes acting as vigilantes but often operating in tandem with local authorities. **Physical violence was usually reserved for Baptists, against whom there was social as well as theological animosity.** A notorious instance of abuse in 1771 of a well-known Baptist preacher, "Swearin Jack" Waller, was described by the victim: "The Parson of the Parish [accompanied by the local sheriff] would keep running the end of his horsewhip in [Waller's] mouth, laying his whip across the hymn book, etc. When done*

singing [Waller] proceeded to prayer. In it he was violently jerked off the stage; they caught him by the back part of his neck, beat his head against the ground, sometimes up and sometimes down, they carried him through the gate . . . where a gentleman [the sheriff] gave him . . . twenty lashes with his horsewhip."

**The persecution of Baptists made a strong, negative impression on many patriot leaders, whose loyalty to principles of civil liberty exceeded their loyalty to the Church of England in which they were raised. James Madison was not the only patriot to despair, as he did in 1774, that the "diabolical Hell conceived principle of persecution rages" in his native colony. Accordingly, civil libertarians like James Madison and Thomas Jefferson joined Baptists and Presbyterians to defeat the campaign for state financial involvement in religion in Virginia. ((V. Religion and the State Governments))**

Obviously you don't care what the Scripture states about what you are doing, so I will let you know what former President James Madison thought of you and your ilk:

*Letter from James Madison to William Bradford*

*James Madison*

*January 24, 1774*

*I want again to breathe your free Air. I expect it will mend my Constitution & confirm my principles. I have indeed as good an Atmosphere at home as the Climate will allow: but have nothing to brag of as to the State and Liberty of my Country. Poverty and Luxury prevail among all sorts: **Pride ignorance and Knavery among the Priesthood and Vice and Wickedness among the Laity.** This is bad enough But It is not the worst I have to tell you. **That diabolical Hell conceived principle of persecution rages among some and to their eternal Infamy the Clergy can furnish their Quota of Imps for such business.** This vexes me the most of any thing whatever.*

*There are at this time in the adjacent County not less than 5 or 6 well meaning men in close Gaol for publishing their religious Sentiments which in the main are very orthodox. I have neither patience to hear talk or think of any thing relative to this matter, for I have squabbled and scolded abused and ridiculed so long about it, to so little purpose that I am without common patience. So I leave you to pity me and pray for Liberty of Conscience to revive among us. ((Letter from James Madison to William Bradford))*

No Brigade Chaplain, you've not thrown Stuart Kazarovich in jail yet, but given time and opportunity I'm certain you would.

*You child of Hell.*

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## What in the World?



You know, cell phones with cameras are interesting tools, particularly when you see something of interest and have no actual camera to photograph it with. A couple of days ago I

was sent the picture above, which was taken by a cell phone camera and then e-mailed to me. The technology to do that is interesting, but the picture that caused that technology to be used is not.

I really do not know quite what to say about the picture except that it conveys an ignorance of what grace is, and a total disrespect for the LORD God who bestows it. No, according to the person who produced this bumper sticker, and the people who decide to plaster it on their vehicle, grace is just one of those things that “happens.” In essence there is no real reason for grace, it is just there randomly. It might happen to one person, and not the next. In all, it assigns a randomness to the actions of the LORD God (if that is even who or what they are referring to) that does not exist. No, everything the LORD God does is deliberate and planned as He knows all things at all times. The way I often put it when teaching or explaining it, is this:

*God sees all time all at once, and differentiates every point in time from every other point in time.*

So it is, that nothing is new to God as He is already in eternity future and yet is present in eternity past. He knows past, present, and future simultaneously. Time then, is a creation of God – He is the Author of time. Moreover, the LORD God doesn't need time to exist.

Consider that for a while – if you don't go around the bend a bit, you will begin to understand how the LORD looks at things.

Now, how does this bear on the ignorance displayed on bumper sticker above? Simple. Think about what I just explained about the LORD God and time, and then add the following to it:

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of

soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (*Hebrews 4:12-13*)

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. (*I Chronicles 28:9*)

Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. (*Job 42:1-2*)

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. (*Romans 4:16-17*)

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (*Revelation 13:8*)

Now, I could quote from literally dozens of passages that all speak of the fact that the LORD God knows exactly what He will do with regard to each and every person that will ever live on the face of this earth from beginning to end. He assuredly knows what each and every person who is yet to be born will think and do throughout their entire lives. This also means that the LORD knew all our thoughts in eternity past, before He ever created this earth. In fact, the LORD knew in eternity

past that I would be moved to answer the ignorance displayed above, and that you would read it. Remember, the LORD God knows every thought you have, and ever will have – and He knew so in eternity past. As the LORD said by the apostle Paul:

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. (*Romans 9:10-18*) ((This is not to say that Calvinists are correct. Rather, the rule for how the LORD God deals with man is expressed in *Jeremiah 17:10*, which states:

I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.))

Thus, grace does not “happen.” To claim such, is to assign iniquity to God. The Scripture has a word for that, it’s called “blasphemy.”

You know, the really sad part of this is that supposed “Christians” tout this idea. I did a search of the web and most of the things that came up were either “Christian” or Christian related. The one exception was the first hit which was, well . . . I’ll let their “About Us” page say it:

*Grace is a gift received simply because we declare it so;  
a smile, a sunset, a hand extended, a life well lived.*

*What if we said, "Grace Happens". What if we believed it.  
What if we practiced it- and passed it along.*

*What would be possible?*

*There are a lot more people that believe Grace Happens  
than you might imagine. LOOK AT YOU. Surprise!*

Worse yet is the blog When Grace Happens, which is supposed to be run by a member of the "clergy" and in his profile he has his "information:" ((The man who owns this blog has since removed his profile. At the time of this post the profile was fully visible. Now, it has been removed for whatever reasons he deemed necessary.))

*Age: 50*

*Gender: Male*

***Astrological Sign: Sagittarius***

***Zodiac Year: Rooster***

*Industry: Religion*

*Occupation: Clergy*

*Location: Rosenberg : TX : United States*

By the way, what was that the LORD God said about astrology and consulting the stars? Didn't the LORD God call that wickedness?

Or even this one: Grace Happens, run by the "Rev." Ken Collins.

Is it any wonder America is under the judgement of God? Based upon the ignorance of this one doctrine alone, I really don't think so. I am reminded of the admonition of my Lord and Savior during the sermon on the mount:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21-23)

Notice what the Lord Jesus said: “Not every one that saith unto me,”

I don't think that calling Him your Savior, and then blaspheming Him by declaring “grace happens” is going to work in the day He judges you. After all, he knows exactly what you are thinking right now, and He knows every thought you will ever have.

Grace doesn't “happen,” it is bestowed by the LORD based upon His criteria. To think anything else is wickedness.

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## Who Do You Worship?

In the Scripture it is made very clear that worship is to be directed to the LORD God and Him alone. Nowhere in scripture are we given to understand that worshipping anything, or anyone else is acceptable in the sight of God. The passages that state this are succinct and to the point, and are as follows:

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any

likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:1-5)

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:21-23)

And he (the angel) saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:9-10)

To be certain, it cannot get much, if any, plainer than the above. This being the case, what are we to make of the following:

*1. Queen of Peace, pray for us!*

*On the feast of your Immaculate Conception,  
I come to venerate you, O Mary,  
at the foot of this effigy, which from Piazza di Spagna  
allows your maternal gaze to extend over this ancient, and  
for me very dear, city of Rome.*

*I have come here, this evening, to render you the homage of*

my sincere devotion.

It is a gesture in which I am joined in this Piazza by innumerable Romans, whose affection has always accompanied me in all the years of my service to the See of Peter. I am here with them to start on the path toward the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the dogma that we celebrate today with filial joy.

2. Queen of Peace, pray for us!

We turn our gaze to you with intense trepidation, we take recourse to you with insistent trust in these times marked by not a few uncertainties and fears over the present and future fate of our planet. To you, the first of humanity redeemed by Christ, finally liberated from the slavery of evil and sin, we raise a heartfelt and confident supplication: Listen to the cry of pain of the victims of war and of so many forms of violence that bloody the earth. Dispel the darkness of sadness and solitude, of hatred and vengeance, Open the minds and hearts of all to trust and forgiveness!

3. Queen of Peace, pray for us!

Mother of mercy and of hope,  
obtain for the men and women of the third millennium  
the precious gift of peace:  
peace in hearts and in families,  
in communities and among peoples;  
peace especially for those nations  
where every day combating and dying continue.

Help every human being, and all races and cultures, to encounter and accept Jesus, who came on earth in the mystery of Christmas

to give us "his" peace.

Mary, Queen of Peace,  
give us Christ, true peace of the world!

*Delievered by Pope John Paul on 8 December, 2003*

Do the words **venerate**, **homage** and **devotion** mean anything? Yes, they certainly do, and they are all synonyms for worship. I don't care what one chooses to call it, worship is worship, regardless of the label applied to it.

This puts the Pope in direct violation of the clear and express command of the LORD God, Who the Pope claims to serve. Moreover, this is not an isolated incident, but is well known despite the denials of some Catholic apologists. In fact the following excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church show plainly the worship of May as a equal with Christ:

*969 "This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation . . . . Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix."*

*970 "Mary's function as mother of men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its power. But the Blessed Virgin's salutary influence on men . . . flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on his mediation, depends entirely on it, and draws all its power from it." "No creature could ever be counted along with the Incarnate Word and Redeemer; but just as the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by his ministers and the faithful, and as the one goodness of*

*God is radiated in different ways among his creatures, so also the unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a sharing in this one source."*

*\* II. DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN*

**971** *"All generations will call me blessed": "The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship." The Church rightly honors "the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of 'Mother of God,' to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. . . . This very special devotion . . . differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration." The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an "epitome of the whole Gospel," express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.*

I have to ask, if Mary was so special, why then did the Lord Jesus Himself make the following statement when His mother and brethren came to get Him one day?

While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matthew 12:46-50)

Or, answer her in the way he did at the wedding feast of Cana?

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. (*John 2:1-3*)

Or even at age 12, where the Lord Jesus Christ had to remind Mary and Joseph that He was to be about His Father's business?

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. (*Luke 2:46-51*)

No, plainly, to the Lord Jesus Christ, other than the fact that Mary physically bore Him, as far as He was concerned, she was no different than anyone else on the earth – a sinner who needed the salvation He provided on the cross. Mary was not to be worshiped, and the Lord Jesus Christ did not accord her that honor, nor did He direct anything to be done through Mary. Instead, His instruction to the Samaritan woman at the well stands pre-eminent, and in perfect accord with the rest of Scripture – worship God, and God alone.

Anything else is blasphemy and idolatry.

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# Looks Like We're There Already



The above message is a prime example of how not to fight the spiritual war we are all involved in.

Why?

Because the doctrinal implications of the message run quite contrary to the Scripture, and sends an, at best ambiguous and at worst flat wrong, message.

Now, I know that the people that put up this message mean well. I am relatively certain that they do not intend harm to the message of salvation, or to its Author. However, if we consider what the Scripture has to say, versus what the sign says, we will find a distinct dichotomy. Why do I see it this way?

Consider the following:

The message of the sign is thus:

*If we are to avoid spiritual foreclosure, we need to bank*

*with Jesus.*

This is reworded, but the meaning does remain the same. Since that is the message of the sign, its plain implication is that we are by default, spiritually solvent. What that would have to mean doctrinally is that we are already justified before God, and that if we do not "bank" with Jesus, we will experience "foreclosure."

Assuming that the word "bank" as it is used here, means that one is trusting Christ for their salvation, and that the word "foreclosure," as it is used here, must mean to lose one's salvation, or to be cast into Hell, then we must conclude that the implied meaning is that, at some point, we might fail to trust Christ and thus be found wanting before God.

However, that is not what the Scripture declares to be the case. Perhaps the most famous passage of Scripture is John 3:16, which declares the wonderful and lovely message of salvation that is available to everyone.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (*John 3:16*)

However, everyone seems to stop there as well, and absolutely go no further in the passage. The problem is, is that the imperative of believing the gospel is lost if one stops at the 16<sup>th</sup> verse. If we continue on, we find that verse 17 is very much like verse 16. But, verse 18 contains a very strong warning to those who refuse to believe:

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (*John 3:17-18*)

Verse 18 tells us two very important things:

- Those who have believed in Christ for their salvation are not condemned.
- Those who have not believed, ***are already condemned.***

You see; we do not have to do anything to be sent to hell. If we just live out our lives and ignore God, or play the religious game and never actually come to Christ for our salvation, we are already condemned and our destiny is set – we will go to Hell. In short we are, in the vernacular of the sign, in foreclosure already. Spiritually, our foreclosure happened a long time ago and we never noticed. If is possible to put it this way (and I'm not certain it is) what we need to do is get out of spiritual "foreclosure."

But, this does raise another question as to the viability of the message of the sign. What is meant by the term "bank with Jesus?" Whatever they meant by the use of the phrase, is not all that clear to me. In fact, it really could be taken at least two ways for sure, and more if we think about it.

If we take it the most obvious meaning of the term, it means that one is to allow Christ to carry something in trust. Taken with the rest of the message, and the fact that a church put up the message, it definitely means something spiritual, but really is unclear as to what that spiritual thing is. We can assume that it is one's soul, but we really cannot be certain.

The second meaning is more akin to buying fire insurance. If we want to avoid foreclosure, let's "bank with Jesus" and that won't happen.

However, neither one of the above meanings even comes close to explaining what salvation is, and why it is imperative that one come to Christ for salvation. Nothing is spoken of, or even implies, that faith has to be operative, and that one must repent. However, the Scripture declares that both are required before one can be saved.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (*Hebrews 11:6*)

And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (*Luke 13:2-5*)

Thus, two vital elements for coming to Christ for salvation are not even hinting at in the sign. Instead, we are told that we should “bank with Jesus” if we are to avoid “spiritual foreclosure.” Moreover, we are not told what in the world the phrases “bank with Jesus” and “spiritual foreclosure” actually mean. Rather, we are left to draw our own conclusions.

When it comes to fighting this spiritual war, unfortunately the individuals at the church which posted this sign have little to no understanding about the critical need for getting the message correct. Without an accurate message about what the gospel is, and what one must do to be accepted in the sight of the LORD God, they will, without ever realizing it, condemn individuals to an eternity of unimaginable suffering in Hell.