

A Sign of the Times

One of the more pressing issues in the on-going judgment of the United States and all its people, is the blatant hypocrisy in which they engage. Rather than be a sharply noticeable departure from the norm, it is endemic to the extent it is not even noticed by the vast majority of people. It is certainly not noticed by the major media. Rather, they traffic in hypocrisy. Under the guise of reporting news, they routinely advance agendas, all the while swearing they are presenting “unbiased news.” This occurs in both the liberal and conservative media.

However, it sells. The reason it sells is because the American people want it. It doesn't seem to bother the electorate unless... This “unless” has to do, not with the fact the individual engaged in blatant hypocrisy, but with the fact they did so while belonging to the opposite political party. This “conditional hypocrisy” is one of the major reasons for the judgment of America.

It should be understood that hypocrisy involves lying and deceit, both of which are an abomination to the LORD God and are cause for Him to bring judgment:

Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight. (*Proverbs 12:22*)

He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit. (*Proverbs 12:17*)

Those who engage in hypocrisy do so to the destruction of those around them:

An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered. (*Proverbs 11:9*)

Thus it becomes of interest when those who profess to be the

messengers of the LORD God and are supposed to be guardians of the truth of the Gospel, themselves engage in hypocrisy. While this behavior deserves rebuke and admonition from other pastors and elders, ultimately it is up to the church they belong to to censure them and remove them from positions of trust.

Normally, I wouldn't be concerned about what happens in a church halfway across America. But this isn't a normal situation, and it threatens the perception of all who encounter this situation as pertaining to the actual duties and calling of pastors, particularly Baptist pastors. The creator of this situation is Raphael Warnock, a "Baptist pastor" at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. There is reason why Baptist pastor is in quotation marks. It is simply due to the man's doctrine. Unsurprisingly, it isn't standard Baptist doctrine. Yes, he indeed holds the position of pastor in a church that labels itself as Baptist. While the church is free to call themselves whatever they want, they are not free from scrutiny concerning their doctrine and practice.

So what is it that generates so much attention? It is a statement that is, at best, poorly worded. At worst, it's condemning of a group of individuals that the Lord Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, Peter, or Paul condemned. When we realize that none of the above condemned the military of that day (which were far worse in behavior than the American military), we have to consider why Mr. Warnock stated what he did in a sermon back in 2011:

"America, nobody can serve God and the military," Warnock said at the time. "You can't serve God and money. You cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. America, choose ye this day who you will serve. Choose ye this day." – Raphael Warnock, April 2011

Now, the statement that you cannot serve God and mammon is

indeed in the Scripture and the Lord Jesus Christ stated it more than once. However, he never stated you could not serve in the military and serve the LORD God. The Lord Jesus Christ certainly had many opportunities to make such a condemnation. He certainly knew of the excesses military members engage in from time to time. In fact, John the Baptist expressly admonished the soldiers that came to him asking what they should do:

Luke 3:1-14

(1-2) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

(3-4) And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

(5-6) Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

(7) Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

(8) Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

(9) And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

(10) And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

(11) 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.

(12) Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

(13) And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

(14) 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.

We should note that he didn't tell them to stop being soldiers. He didn't tell them they were being disobedient to God by being soldiers. A careful study of all the New Testament reveals that none of the apostles ever advised any Roman soldier to stop being a soldier, or that they were in disobedience to the LORD God for being a soldier. When the Lord Jesus Christ encountered a Roman centurion who desired the LORD to heal his servant, the LORD made the following observation:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (*Matthew 8:5-10*)

If there were ever an opportunity to rebuke a soldier for being a soldier, this would be it. Instead, that is not what happens at all. Because the centurion displays remarkable

faith in the LORD, it is pointed out by the LORD as the example all Israel should follow.

Hence, it is strange that a Baptist pastor would do something the LORD never did:

Lump military service in with worshipping and serving money.

As a rule, Baptist pastors should have the attitude of the apostle Paul:

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (*Galatians 1:10*)

This is because there is no higher calling than to be entrusted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Only the Gospel has the power to convert a child of iniquity to a child of God. It only has the power to change the soul, and thus the eternal destiny of the individual. Christ, and Christ alone is the Savior of all persons, regardless of where and when they are born and what station of life they occupy, if only they will place their complete reliance in Him.

But that doesn't seem to be the message Mr. Warnock is preaching here. Rather, in looking at the totality of Warnock's public testimony, something else seems to be the focus.

What that focus is becomes glaringly obvious when it is considered what Mr. Warnock seeks to do:

He seeks to be a US Senator.

The only position that is more powerful in the US Government is that of the President, although a single senator can stop certain actions of the President.

Moreover, US Senators get compensated handsomely for their

time in office – even if they only do a single term. There are many worldly benefits, not the least of which is public recognition. After all, you are one of an exclusive club of 100, making decisions (or not), but certainly getting the recognition. And, while single term senators won't get a fantastic pension, getting any pension after only five years of service is quite the deal. Making \$174k a year isn't a bad gig either.

Hmmm...

Who is serving mammon here: US Senators or the members of the US military?

Now, whether or not any particular senator happens to be serving only for monetary gain is a question only the LORD God and that individual can answer. However, it is quite obvious no one goes into the military to "make money." While it cannot be said about everyone in the military, it's going to be a tough sell to promote the idea that any significant number of military members seek to make the United States into a "god" and worship it. Rather, the vast majority of US military simply want to keep the United States free, and if possible, better themselves while they do it.

Hence, Warnock's comment in the sermon from 2011 now becomes an hypocrisy that he must own. It is after all, utterly hypocritical to condemn individuals in the US military by lumping them in with those who love money, and then turn around and seek a worldly position in that same government, that has financial benefits far beyond anything anyone in the military receives.

Perhaps Mr. Warnock should acquaint himself with the writings of the apostle John:

I John 2:15-17

(15) Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is

not in him.

(16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

(17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Mr. Warnock, go bury yourself in your hypocrisy.

If Americans expect to do better as a nation, they must begin by recognizing hypocrisy and rejecting it, both in themselves and in the people they elect to office to represent them. It has to start somewhere.

Mr. Warnock, you speak of repentance, but you, yourself have refused to recognize that you are in need of repentance. If you want to be a US Senator, fine. Resign your pastorate and quit calling yourself a Baptist pastor. You're divorced anyway, which disqualifies you from the pastorate.

But be advised, if the people of Georgia elect you, it is only because they, themselves are utter hypocrites.

Not Too Bright

One of the problems with being busy is that posting on the website suffers. After all, it takes time to write and then edit articles – particularly articles concerning doctrine. And, it takes time to keep up with the garbage that goes on in this world. There simply are not enough hours in the day to do everything that must be done.

However, the event that prompts this post is impossible to pass up as it highlights exactly what is wrong with this

country. It seems that during the Black Entertainment Television “Soul Train” awards, that one Jamie Foxx declared:

“First of all, give an honor to God and our lord and savior Barack Obama. Barack Obama.”

Which is utter wickedness and evinces a corruption in the black community as the comments were not immediately condemned as being blasphemy and in very poor taste. Instead, there is silence from the black churches and overall black community.

There was a day in this country in which this would have been roundly condemned. However, that day is not today. Rather, today in the United States, man is worshipped and God is forgotten. Because of this, we can rest assured – the utter destruction of America is not that far away.

Thank You for Your Service? – An Open Letter to Laurence Vance

The following is in response to a column by Laurence Vance, dated 19 July 2011, and titled “Thank You for Your Service?” in which Mr. Vance excoriates the U.S. Military and those who support them and thank them for their service to America. This response is written and published publicly because of one outstanding feature of the column: overt and blatant bitterness.

And four, what is a Vietnamese man – who most certainly has relatives, or friends or neighbors of relatives, that were killed or injured by U.S. bombs and bullets during the

Vietnam War – doing joining the U.S. military where he can be sent to shoot and bomb foreigners like the U.S. military did to his people?

And aside from these four things, I'm afraid I must also say: Sorry, soldiers, I don't thank you for your service.

- *I don't thank you for your service in fighting foreign wars.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in fighting without a congressional declaration of war.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in bombing and destroying Iraq and Afghanistan.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in killing hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in expanding the war on terror to Pakistan and Yemen.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in occupying over 150 countries around the world.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in garrisoning the planet with over 1,000 military bases.*
- *I don't thank you for your service in defending our freedoms when you do nothing of the kind.*
- *I don't thank you for your service as part of the president's personal attack force to bomb, invade, occupy, and otherwise bring death and destruction to any country he deems necessary.*

*Thank you for your service? I don't think so.
((<http://lewrockwell.com/vance/vance250.html>))*

Everyone needs to know: This is not a Christian spirit and attitude. It is not a Scriptural spirit and attitude.

Mr. Vance,

Have we just a bit of bitterness? I see NO justification for your attitude and spirit anywhere in the New Testament.

I don't find it in John the Baptist:

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. (*Luke 3:14*)

I don't find it in the Lord Jesus Christ:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, ((An officer in the Roman military.)) beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour. (*Matthew 8:5-13*)

I don't find it in the apostle Peter:

And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius ((Cornelius was a Centurion in the Roman Army.)) met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went

in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, *I* say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever

believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

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 10:25-48)

I don't find it in the apostle Paul:

But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. (*Acts 27:21-36*)

In fact, I do not find your attitude and spirit among any of the apostles, or in Christ, or in John the Baptist. Your spirit is bitter and hateful and not conducive to ministry or presenting the gospel to anyone, let alone a member of the military. What? Are members of the military not worthy to be presented the gospel? Instead of trying to reach them, you preach hate. Are you kin to Fred Phelps? You must be spiritually, because you share a common spirit. ((Note: Phelps use of the passage is out of context. However much he would like it to be so, America is not ancient Babylon.))

Wouldn't it be so much better to have the spirit and attitude presented in the following passage?

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (*I Timothy 2:1-6*)

Next time you see a member of the military, present them with the gospel. I guarantee you – they need it. Unless of course, you hate them so much that you want to keep them on the road

to Hell. But what kind of person would that make you?

In Christ,
Paul W. Davis

An Infantile President

If there is any doubt about where America stands – and that America is at the place that ancient Israel found itself before it was severely judged by the LORD God, events of recent ought to put those doubts to rest:

Obama Disappointed With Lack of 'Cool' Phone in Oval Office
WASHINGTON – Turns out President Obama would like a phone upgrade. The president, in an unscripted moment with donors in Chicago, was talking about the need to innovate in technology. "The Oval Office, I always thought I was going to have really cool phones and stuff," he said during a small fundraising event at a Chicago restaurant. "I'm like, c'mon guys, I'm the president of the United States. Where's the fancy buttons and stuff and the big screen comes up? It doesn't happen."

If anything ever sounded like a child complaining, the above does. But this is not the first time that Obama has acted like a petulant child when he doesn't get his way. Rather, this seems to come up every single time that Obama's handlers and ever-present teleprompter are absent. Instead of speaking to the issue of communications technology improvements in some sort of mature, professional way, Obama takes on the language of a pre-teen and speaks as if he is talking to his friends in the schoolyard.

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a

duck – it must be a duck.

In sum, America elected a child (and a little one at that), to be its President. It reminds me of the Scripture in Isaiah:

As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. (Isaiah 3:12)

The only thing needed now is for Sarah Palin to be elected President next and the above Scripture will be fulfilled in full. After all, Rob Bell's heresy "Love Wins" is certainly no worse than Joel Osteen's pop Christianity (which is not Christianity at all), and the people of this nation eat it up. The only thing left wanting is the coming oppression:

For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator. And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable. (Isaiah 3:1-5)

It is not a good thing when a child rules...

Were the Pharisees

Fundamentalists?



All Scripture is Authorized King James Version, 1769 Edition of the 1611 King James Version.

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In popular, or mainstream “Christianity” there are some people who are simply unwelcome. This is primarily due to what they believe. The attitude of the leaders of mainstream Christianity toward those individuals is certainly not Christian, and borders on outright persecution. It is understandable that those such as the Atheists would refer to Bible-believing fundamentalists as “fundies,” but it’s not at all understandable for someone who claims Christ and professes to be a Baptist to refer to another, far more conservative Baptist as a “funny-dementalist.” When this occurs, it is evident that the individual using the pejorative holds in disdain those who desire to abide strictly by the Scripture. Somehow, I find it hard to believe this is an attitude the Lord Jesus Christ approves of in any of His children. However, this kind of attitude is not at all uncommon; rather it is a very prevalent attitude among those in mainstream Christianity. The following excerpt from a “Christian” forum illustrates the point quite well. Please note that all emphasis in the excerpt below is mine, and is made by the use of underlining>.

cowboyinaf

7/24/2005 5:44 AM 36 out of 39

(http://jesus.beliefnet.com/boards/message_list.asp?pageID=9&discussionID=426833&messages_per_page=4)

Whilst we are defining terms, I would submit that some are posting here under the guise(sic) of conservatism, when they are more closely allied with fundamentalism. Conservative thought and theology is careful, rarely malleable, but not

intolerant.

Fundamentalism brooks no deviation, nor dissent. The Pharisees were fundamentalists. And we all know, or should know, what Jesus thought of their self rightouesness(sic) approach to worship. As has been stated above, Jesus taught on many occasions we must be humble in thought and in deed. You may not agree with someones(sic) approach to thier(sic) relationship with God, but the best way to show that your path is superior is through the way you life your life. When you reach the point of being judgmental, you have poisoned your own well, and it becomes difficult to be of service to God or yourself. Much harm has been done in the world through fundamentalist thought and action, within all of the major religions.

Now, I find it amazing that this person and others have taken it upon themselves to determine what a fundamentalist is, what fundamentalists believe and practice, and that they are identical to the Pharisees of the Lord Jesus Christ's day and time. It is an interesting, but not uncommon claim that the Pharisees were fundamental in their doctrine and practice, when the Scripture in no place describes what a fundamentalist is, or even uses the word "fundamental" or "fundamentalist." However, since it is a common assumption that the Pharisees were "fundamentalists," it is fair game and scripturally proper to challenge that assumption to see if it is actually valid and true.

Before even beginning to discuss whether fundamentalists are as some claim they are, it is appropriate to actually define the term. The term fundamentalist is not in the 1971 Oxford Dictionary of the English Language on a Historical Basis. However, the word "fundamental" does appear, and we can use it as a basis for the word "fundamentalist." In contrast, the word "fundamentalism" does appear in the Random House Collegiate Dictionary, along with the word "fundamental." If

we hold that fundamentalists practice fundamentalism, it is possible to derive a definition from the word "fundamental," as defined in the dictionary. Although, if the definition is inaccurate in any degree, we are going to arrive at an inaccurate determination of what a fundamentalist actually is. Thus, to cover all the bases, both dictionaries, along with all the pertinent words, will be used in defining the term. That way, we don't depend upon someone's subjective and possibly pejorative definition.

Oxford Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged, Compact Edition

Fundamental adjective and subjective

1. *Of or pertaining to the foundation or base of a building.*

Obsolete

1b. *Having a foundation, fixed, not temporary. Rare*

2. *Of, or pertaining to the foundation or groundwork, going to the root of the matter.*

3. *Serving as the foundation or base on which something is built. Chiefly and now exclusively in immaterial applications. Hence, forming an essential or indispensable part of a system, institution, etc.*

3b. *Primary, original; from which others are derived.*

4. *Of strata: Lying at the bottom.*

The rest of the definitions (5 through 7) apply to science, music and humor (British) and thus do not apply here.

Fundamentalness

1. *A leading or primary principle, rule, law, or article, which serves as the ground work of a system; an essential part.*

1b. *Fundamental requisites*

Definition 2 applies to music, and thus is not applicable here.

Random House College Dictionary, Revised Edition, Abridged, copyright 1983.

Fundamental adjective

1. *Serving as, or being an essential part of, a foundation or basis; basic; underlying: fundamental principles.*

2. *Of, pertaining to, or affecting the foundation or basis: a fundamental revision.*

3. *Being an original or primary source: a fundamental idea.*

Definitions 4 through 7 apply to music and physics, and thus do not apply here.

Fundamentalism noun

1. *A movement in American Protestantism that arose in the early part of the 20th century and that stresses the infallibility of the Bible in all matters of faith and doctrine, accepting it as a literal historical record.*

2. *The beliefs held by those in this movement.*

Now, judging from the words used by *cowboyinaf*, who posted to the *Beliefnet* forum above, there are some questions that he ought to answer as to what basis he used to define fundamentalism, and precisely what standard was used in his determination of what fundamentalists believe. It is rather clear what he thinks they think and behave like, and it is also abundantly clear that he doesn't like them.

However, regardless of how *cowboyinaf* arrived at what he believes defines fundamentalism, the dictionaries plainly demonstrate that there is nothing inherently dangerous or destructive about being fundamental, or a fundamentalist. In fact, if we examine the following passages of Scripture in light of the above definitions, we will arrive at some startling conclusions concerning fundamentalism and just who was actually fundamental in their doctrine.

In examining the following passages, please note carefully the setting and the individuals involved.

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of

Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. (*Matthew 15:1-9*)

In the above passage, the parties involved in this exchange are the Lord Jesus Christ and the scribes and Pharisees. Plainly, the incident involved an accusation by the Pharisees and the response of the Lord Jesus Christ to that accusation. In the second passage below, this incident is covered in greater detail.

Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far

from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (*Mark 7:1-13*)

In both accounts of this incident, there is something that is readily apparent in the way that Christ responds to the scribes and Pharisees. It is plain that the Lord Jesus refers to Scripture and depends upon nothing else for His answer to the Pharisees. It is notable that the scribes and Pharisees lay blame or find fault, and that their finding of fault is determined by the standard of tradition. It is equally notable that the Lord Jesus Christ answers them with something far more fundamental than tradition – the commandment of God. In fact, by the above dictionary definitions, it is not the scribes and Pharisees who are the fundamentalists here. Rather, they appear to be what one could easily define as “progressives” or “traditionalists” rather than fundamentalists, in that they have the charge laid against them by the Lord Jesus Christ of changing the commandment of God, and thus setting it aside in favor of a tradition they developed. Given the charge laid by Christ, and the record of the Scriptures, it is evident that the scribes and Pharisees accepted this tradition handed down to them, in plain opposition to the Scriptures they outwardly revered. If the scribes and Pharisees were true fundamentalists, as some claim, they would have overthrown the tradition and followed

Scripture. Then the Lord Jesus Christ could not and would not have laid this particular charge against them.

The commandment the Lord Jesus Christ referred to is and was far more fundamental than the tradition the scribes and Pharisees were depending upon to prove themselves righteous. Why? Because the commandment was given even before Israel entered into covenant with the Lord to be the House of Witness. In fact, this commandment was one of the strictures laid before the children of Israel as a condition of their acceptance of the covenant. Please note that the expectations of the covenant are given in Exodus, chapters 20 through 23, and the covenant is accepted and agreed to in chapter 24.

And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death. (*Exodus 21:17*)

Thus, Israel had no prior tradition of how a child was to respect and deal with his parents. If they had, it certainly would have been set aside in the acceptance of the covenant at Mount Sinai. Hence, the real fundamentalist in the above exchange recorded in both Matthew and Mark is the Lord Jesus Christ, not the scribes and Pharisees.

However, this is not the only incident in which the Lord Jesus Christ rebuked the religious leaders of Israel for their "progressive" attitude and behavior. In the following passage, the Lord Jesus Christ contrasts his absolute obedience to the Father with the Jews' failure to keep the Law of Moses as it was delivered to them.

Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh

his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? (*John 7:14-19*)

if we understand the import of the above exchange, we cannot help but understand that the Lord Jesus Christ is plainly accusing the Jews of having a progressive and modernist mindset. In contrast, the Lord Jesus makes it very plain that he will not depart from the express commandment of God the Father.

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (*John 12:44-50*)

The Lord Jesus Christ held this same mind toward the Scripture, in that he quoted the Old Testament extensively and never raised question as to its authenticity, or whether what it stated was to be taken literally. In the following passages the dependence the Lord Jesus Christ placed upon the Scriptures it is clearly evident. It is also quite evident that the Lord Jesus took the Scriptures literally and applied them in that way.

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And

beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25-27)

And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took *it*, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. (Luke 24:40-44)

In the following passage, the Lord Jesus references the event that happened to Jonah the prophet for his disobedience to the plain commandment of God. Immediately after that, He references the queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. In so doing, He draws an equality between these events, and thus places both events on the same level of authenticity. Moreover, this also declares that these events were clearly and accurately recorded in Scripture, and are both to be taken literally.

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here. (Matthew 12:38-42)

Thus, from all evidence that can be gathered from the Scripture, and judging by the definitions given in the dictionaries above, the scribes and Pharisees were not fundamentalists in any sense of the word. Rather, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the fundamentalist, and rightly so, as he is Almighty God manifest in the flesh, and the Creator of all, and the foundation of all.

So then, what are we to make of *cowboyinaf's* definition of fundamentalism and fundamentalists, which is very much the popular, albeit wrong, definition of fundamentalism?

Plainly, such statements as:

"Fundamentalism brooks no deviation, nor dissent."

"The Pharisees were fundamentalists."

"Much harm has been done in the world through fundamentalist thought and action,"

evinced an attitude of nothing more than ill-informed "judgementalism," which is the very thing that the poster to the *Beliefnet* forum accused those he perceived as fundamentalists of practicing. The sad part of this whole affair is that those who label themselves "Christian" and do not hold to the Scripture are quick to use the label of "fundamentalist" as a pejorative against those who do hold to Scripture, not realizing that the Scripture is express in demonstrating that the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Fundamentalist. The Lord Jesus Christ is Almighty God, and He has never changed and never will change. Moreover, He is the only Foundation upon which to build one's life. In all things, God is fundamental, and He takes a very fundamental view of His word.

The Catholic View

What then does this mean with regard to the Catholic view of

fundamentalism? If we note the writings of Catholic apologists, we find that they brand “fundamentalism” a heretical view, and condemn it roundly as being opposed to Catholicism. In looking at this we will examine two authors, as they state the Catholic Church’s opposition to fundamentalism rather well, and put forth their reasons for not being fundamental about as lucidly as can be done.

One of the primary tenets of fundamentalism holds that the Scripture forbids the making of images for worship, and that the LORD God is not pleased with such, as it is rank idolatry, or leads to idolatry, which is to be avoided at all costs. Simply put, the position on idolatry in the New Testament is summed up in the apostle Paul’s commandment to the church at Corinth:

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. (*I Corinthians 10:14*)

This is about as succinct as it can get for how the Christian ought to view anything that tends to, or flavors of idolatry. However, this is not the Catholic position as outlined in their Catechism. In the following quotation, the author of the article summarizes how he understands the use of images, and then gives the reference from the Catechism for support. I have underlined certain points for emphasis.

The Catholic position is simple: If Jesus really is true God and true man, and if he has existed physically in this world, then he can be represented in visual arts. The Old Testament decrees against images were made when mankind was just beginning to understand who Yahweh was and how he related to humanity. The “fullness of time” had not yet been realized—humanity had much to learn before God would come as man and dwell among us. But with the Incarnation came big changes. The Catechism explains this beautifully:

“The sacred image, the liturgical icon, principally

represents Christ. It cannot represent the invisible and incomprehensible God, but the Incarnation of the Son of God has ushered in a new 'economy' of images: Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face, absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God . . . and contemplate the glory of the Lord, his face unveiled. . . . The veneration of sacred images is based on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is not contrary to the first commandment" (CCC 1159, 2141; see 1160). ((The Heretical Roots of Fundamentalism, Carl E. Olson, This Rock, 1999, Catholic Answers, <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1999/9910fea4.asp>))

Now, in the first paragraph, I emphasized two points that fly in the face of what the Scripture declares plainly – that man has known and understood what the LORD God has required of him from very shortly after the Fall, when the LORD God walked in the Garden and called to Adam, condemned his sin, and then presented the Gospel to him. It is plainly testified in Hebrews that Abel knew the gospel, and that his faith was expressed in the acceptable sacrifice to God. It is also testified throughout the Old Testament that many knew the very same Gospel that is preached in the New Testament, and were saved in the very same manner as someone is today: by grace through faith, not by works. The following passage of Scripture is clear evidence of this very fact:

Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me. (Job 19:23-27)

Since Job was a contemporary of Abraham, and he expresses plainly and clearly that he knows, not guesses, that his redeemer lives, and that He will come in the flesh, and that at some point he (Job) will see his Lord and Redeemer in his (Job's) flesh. This is as much to say that Job understood fully that Christ was to come at some point, and that, at some point, Job would be resurrected with a body similar to the body he was in at that moment.

However, Job is not the only witness of the fact that men during Old Testament times understood every bit as much about God as we do today. It is interesting to note what both the Old and New Testaments declare about Abraham's knowledge of God, and of Christ to come.

Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed. (*Galatians 3:6-8*)

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (*Hebrews 11:17-19*)

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. (*Genesis 14:18-20*)

In the three preceding passages addressing Abraham, we find that Abraham had the very same gospel preached to him that is

preached in the New Testament. Moreover, Abraham had absolute confidence when asked of the LORD God to sacrifice Isaac, that when he did so God would raise Isaac from the dead, as Christ was promised to come through Isaac's lineage. Finally, in Genesis, chapter 14, we find that Abraham was not the only one that knew and understood what God required of man. Rather, what is clearly testified to is that Melchizedek, king of Salem, which would become Jerusalem, was an anointed priest of the LORD God.

Now, since Abraham knew all that he knew and understood about the LORD God, which was considerable, as he was called the "Friend of God," ((James 2:23, Authorized King James Version, 1611, 1769 Edition.)) what can we then make of Melchizedek's understanding of the LORD God, seeing that he is a priest of the Most High God (the LORD God)? Certainly, it was no less than Abimelech's understanding of God and what God required of him, as is testified to in Genesis, chapter 20:

But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou *art but* a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she *is* a man's wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I

offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. (*Genesis 20:3-9*)

What then are we to make of the statements recorded in Scripture as to Abimelech's understanding of God, seeing that he states that the Philistines are a righteous nation, and he is a righteous king, and the LORD God does not disagree, but confirms this very fact? Plainly, the fact that Abimelech tells Abraham that Abraham caused him to sin and that is not to be done, means that Abimelech understood something that many Christians today don't seem to grasp at all.

The above examples are not the only ones in the Old Testament that expressly demonstrate and prove that they knew just as much about the LORD God and Christ to come as the most knowledgeable of Christians today. In fact, I would hazard that the Old Testament saints knew and understood more about the LORD than the vast majority of believers today. Indeed, it is in the Old Testament that the guidelines for what one may glory about are given:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

Thus, we are forced to ask the question: If, as Carl Olson claims, men in Old Testament time did not really know and understand the LORD God, what is the above passage doing in Scripture? How is it that Carl Olson is more authoritative on what men during the time of the Old Testament knew than the Scripture, whose Author is the LORD God Himself?

Plainly, the LORD God would never give such a guideline if it

were not possible, both then and now, to know and understand the LORD in a very personal way. Just as it is today, so it was all during the time of the Old Testament: we can know and understand the LORD, who He is, and what He likes and does not like. In short, it is, and has always been, possible to know the LORD God personally.

There is one final example before moving to the second paragraph of the Catholic author's quote. This example is best understood in light of the question: Is it possible to please someone when you do not have a good understanding of their personality and nature, and what they like and dislike? While you consider the question, carefully read the following passage of Scripture from Hebrews that addresses Enoch and Noah:

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 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. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. (*Hebrews 11:5-7*)

The short answer to the question is: No. It is impossible to please anyone when you understand little to nothing about their character and nature. Thus, it is plain both Enoch and Noah knew the LORD God personally, and they ordered their lives in accordance with what faith showed them.

The second paragraph of the Catholic author's quotation consists of an excerpt from the Catechism and it states the following:

“Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face,

absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God . . .”

“Previously,” in the context of the quote, means that before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, no man had seen God so that an image could be made. This logic is used to justify the following:

“But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God . . .”

To the above logic, I must respond with the testimony of Old Testament Scripture:

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. (*Isaiah 6:1-5*)

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD *am* I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord

unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so. (*Joshua 5:13-15*)

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed. (*Daniel 7:9-14*)

And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready

quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. (*Genesis 18:1-8*)

I have only quoted four passages of Scripture, but there are many more, both before and after the giving of the Law at Mount Horeb when the Old Covenant was entered into by the Jews. Thus, I take great exception to the statement that God (the Word) had not manifested Himself in the flesh prior to His birth in Bethlehem. Now then, if the LORD manifested Himself in the flesh to both Abraham and Joshua, which He did, and one is prior to the giving of the commandment, and the other is after, why did neither one ever make an image of the LORD God that they saw? Moreover, why is the physical appearance of the LORD God never described in anything other than general terms? Plainly, Daniel and Isaiah both saw the LORD God upon His throne, and knew and understood that it was the LORD God that they were looking at. In fact, Daniel describes the appearance of the Son of man, which is the exact term used for the Lord Jesus Christ throughout the Gospel of Luke, and yet nowhere is it ever recorded that Daniel made an image of Christ to come. The very plain reason that no images were authorized or produced to represent God in the Old Testament holds true today – and the reason is expressly given in the following passage addressing the brazen serpent:

Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. And he did *that which* was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves,

and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. (*II Kings 18:1-6*)

Now, Moses made the brasen serpent at the express commandment of God as a representation of the work of Christ to come. However, the LORD did it knowing that there were some in Israel who would follow after it to worship it as an idol, thinking that their salvation would come from it. That is an unavoidable consequence anytime that any image is made of anything that can be construed to represent God or thought to have the power of God, as the brasen serpent did. In the following passage from Numbers, chapter 21, the incident that involved the brasen serpent is detailed:

And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is* no bread, neither *is there any* water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of

brass, he lived. (*Numbers 21:4-9*)

And so it was that there were some in Israel who worshipped the brasen serpent, despite the fact that they were commanded to worship and serve the LORD God only. This is the snare of images that are used to represent God and the power of God. Thus, the commandment is given in the New Testament to “flee from idolatry,” which is to say that we ought to flee from any hint of idolatry. This, taken with the totality of witness from the Old Testament concerning those who saw God in the flesh, means that we are to have no images at all of what is supposed to represent Christ. To do otherwise is to fall into the trap and snare of idolatry, which the Catholic Church has done and seeks to justify, even though the Scripture plainly testifies against them.

Thus, one of the most obvious reasons that fundamentalism is condemned by the Catholic Church is the fact that the practice of fundamentalism, which includes extensive study of the Bible and taking the Scriptures literally, roundly condemns significant elements of the Catechism. ((The use of images is by no means the only place the Catechism violates Scripture. There are numerous places in the Catechism that cannot be reconciled with Scripture, it just so happens that the use of images is one of the most prominent.))

The second Catholic author’s view is also consistent with the Catholic Church’s attempt to discredit fundamentalism as a movement by claiming it to be of recent origin, and by mislabeling it as a Protestant oddity.

“Fundamentalism is a relatively new brand of Protestantism started in America that has attracted a tremendous following, including many fallen away Catholics.” ((*Fundamentalism, Catholic Answers,* <http://www.catholic.com/library/fundamentalism.asp>))

“While the origin of the term “Fundamentalist” has a fairly

simple history, the movement itself has a more confused origin. There was no individual founder, nor was there a single event that precipitated its advent. Of course, Fundamentalist writers insist that Fundamentalism is nothing but a continuation of Christian orthodoxy. According to this theory, Fundamentalism flourished for three centuries after Christ, went underground for twelve hundred years, surfaced again with the Reformation, took its knocks from various sources, and was alternately prominent or diminished in its influence and visibility. In short, according to its partisans, Fundamentalism always has been the Christian remnant, the faithful who remain after the rest of Christianity (if it can even be granted the title) has fallen into apostasy.” ((Ibid.))

Now, it is plain in the Scriptures what constitutes “orthodoxy,” if we can even use such a term, and those things of “orthodoxy” are quite provable by the Scripture. However, the Scripture is not the only witness to contradict the above author. Books such as *Martyrs Mirror* and *Fox’s Book of Martyrs* detail the persecution and suffering of persons, who can only be labeled as fundamentalists, at the hands of the Catholic Church. In fact, at least one Catholic Cardinal was honest enough to admit that they actively persecuted those who held strictly to Scripture.

“Were it not that the baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in greater number than all the Reformers.” ((Cardinal Hosius, 1524, President of the Council of Trent: Hosius, Letters; Apud Opera, pp. 112, 113.))

Thus, by several witnesses, including one of their own, they hold (or held) fundamentalists to be such heretics that they must be put to death. The plain and clear reason for this is not that fundamentalists and fundamentalism is dangerous.

Rather, fundamentalism exposes the deficiencies in Catholic doctrine and practice, and undermines the power of the Church to control what people think, who they worship, and how they worship Him.

Traditionalism and Modernism

Earlier in this article, I referenced the Pharisees as traditionalists when I noted that they held to tradition instead of setting it aside when it plainly contradicted the Scripture. Thus it is expressly true that they were traditionalists. However, at some point in the past, some number of the Jewish leadership decided to innovate and arrived at a very interesting interpretation of the commandment regarding children cursing their parents, and what ought to be done about that. In fact, the interpretation they arrived at was entirely contradictory to the commandment itself. We are not told how this was accomplished. What we are told by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is that it happened, and that it was and is wrong.

Nonetheless, we need to examine an aspect of this for the lesson contained in it. That is, how the traditionalists of the Lord Jesus' day were at one time modernists and progressives. After all, this doctrine that is and was entirely contradictory to the commandment of God had not always been there, and it certainly was not there prior to the commandment being given at Mount Horeb. Thus, one or more persons sometime in the past were progressive and modern in their thinking, and arrived at an interpretation that can only be described as "twisted." The problem is not that someone in Jewish antiquity arrived at such a twisted determination of what the Scripture plainly stated, though that is a serious problem for that individual and all who believed him over the Scripture; rather, the greater problem is that successive generations of Jewish leaders and priests did nothing to change that abominable interpretation. Instead, what they did was the ancient equivalent of the modern legal theory of *stare*

decisis.

Stare Decisis is defined in Black's Law Dictionary as "To abide by, or adhere to, decided cases. ((Black's Law Dictionary, Sixth Edition, The West Group, 1990.))" which is given as "Policy of courts to stand by precedent and not to disturb settled point." This raises the question: Since when is the original not a settled point? It would seem to be a pretty settled point that children are to always honor their father and mother. How is it then that this clear point was moved away from – to the extent of being interpreted as meaning the exact opposite of the express words given?

Moreover, herein lies an interesting phenomena: How is it that the original (which was still readily accessible) was set aside in favor of the "interpretation" of the original? This is especially intriguing when the interpretation is exactly like the Lord Jesus described to the Pharisees – directly contradictory to the original. We could say that this phenomenon is strictly limited to the Scripture, but that would be to deny what we observe every day. The practice of *stare decisis* seems to occur in just about every endeavor of man. However, it's effect is particularly evident when constitutional issues are examined, especially concerning individual rights. Without going into detail, the "Commerce Clause" is one such area of constitutional law that has been subject to *stare decisis*, much to the detriment of individual liberty.

In much the same way, I suppose we ought not be shocked when someone utterly misinterprets the Scripture to his or her own advantage. However, it is disturbing when they do so and then have the audacity to claim that they are expressly *not* doing so. This tends to be one of the most distressing tendencies of man – to look right at and plainly read a text, and then claim that "so and so said that this passage means this, or that, and thus we will follow what so and so said," despite the fact that the passage read is simple and easily understood. The problem lies in the basic nature of man – we do not want to

follow the plain, literal, simple teaching, but would rather have the most convoluted and hard-to-understand “interpretations” of the Scripture given. That way we can say that we are something special and have a unique and highly-educated understanding that is just not available to the “common man.”

Conclusion

Were the Pharisees fundamentalists? By the Scripture and the dictionaries, clearly they were not. By the standard of those who choose to utilize their own definitions to suit their purposes, they most certainly were. However, if we understand what the Scripture has to say about creating private definitions and using our own standard to judge things by, we will understand who is in error here. In this matter, the Scripture is express:

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. (*II Corinthians 10:12*)

The principle is consistent here: for a person to create their own definition when established meanings exist is to become an authority unto themselves, and to measure things by the standard of their own understanding. For those who say it does not matter, I would suggest to them that they develop their own system of measurement and define their own length for a foot, yard, pound, ton, etc. and see how well-received it is – particularly when they want to use it in trade for goods. Of course, the LORD has very much to say about this subject:

Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt. (*Leviticus 19:36*)

Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. (*Deuteronomy 25:13*)

Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD. (*Proverbs 20:10*)

Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good. (*Proverbs 20:23*)

Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? (*Micah 6:11*)

The principle here is one that bears directly upon this issue: when there exists an established standard or definition of measure, departing from it is an abomination to the LORD, and is inherently deceitful. By the same principle, so is creating a new definition of an established word to fit your own purposes.

Plainly, we are not free to use unequal weights and measures, and we are not free to redefine the foot, yard, pound, etc. In short, we are not to use unorthodox, proprietary definitions in place of provable, established meanings for various weights and measures. In like manner, we are not free to redefine words so that they mean something other than what the dictionary says they mean – and then use them for a pejorative.

The most sad part of this is that those who claim to be fundamentalists allow themselves to be defined by their detractors. Moreover, they never attempt to defend why it is necessary to hold strictly to the literal (physical and spiritual) meaning of Scripture. Instead, they seem to openly embrace and choose the definitions created by those who would discredit them. I have on more than one occasion heard fundamental, unaffiliated Baptist preachers expressly state that the Pharisees were indeed fundamentalists. However, by the established definitions, and by the express declaration of Scripture, the Pharisees and scribes were traditionalists and modernists, *not* fundamentalists.

Though this lack of discernment on the part of those claiming

to be fundamentalists may call into question fundamentalism as a movement, it can never set aside the plain testimony of Scripture and the open fundamentalism of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those things are forever settled in heaven and men will be required to answer for their lack of acceptance of the clear, literal testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. (*John 12:48*)

Finis

Whatever Happened to Simply Believing the Bible?

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I read the news, not generally from the newspapers, though that occasionally does happen, but on the internet. Most every link in my Bookmarks is to some news source, technical or religious site. The problem with reading the news is that the bias of the reporters must be accounted for, and the truth of the matter has to be carefully discerned. I wish it were the case with the following.

On Thursday, August 23, 2007, MSNBC ran a story of a megachurch in Tampa, Florida that is having some trouble. Specifically, the church's *pastors* are divorcing. Now, I know this is not something new to modern day America. But it does highlight a very real problem – one of claiming to follow God,

all the while being totally disobedient to His word. It does not take the proverbial “rocket scientist” to see the very clear differences between what the pastors of this church were doing, and what the Bible plainly states.

In looking at the problem, let’s begin at the obvious: the fact that the church’s pastors are divorcing. In Scripture there are specific instructions given for pastors, including the requirements to be a pastor. Since there are requirements, it really is important to heed them since God gave them to be followed, not to be ignored or set aside as drivel.

First, the position of pastor is one of calling. What this means is that the LORD God calls a specific person to a specific task (a calling) and gifts (or enables and empowers) them to perform that task. This calling is always consistent with everything that the Lord has stated and performed elsewhere. Moreover, it is fully consistent with what He has recorded in His word. As such, we should find an example of callings the Lord has done in Scripture. There are two (among many) that are clear and prominent in Scripture – one Old Testament, and one New Testament, that I will use.

In I Samuel, chapter 3, the calling of Samuel is detailed for all history. There are some things that are done differently in our time as opposed to the time of ancient Israel, particularly the working of signs (no longer done) and such like. But, the essence of the calling remains the same – the LORD plainly communicated to Samuel’s heart what He wanted from Samuel, what He was displeased with in Eli and his house, and Samuel’s response to the calling, which is encapsulated in the following verse:

And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. (*I Samuel 3:19*)

In the New Testament there are examples of several callings that we can to choose from, but the one most like the calling

of a pastor today is found in the life of Timothy, who was disciplined by the apostle Paul and called of God to be a pastor.

Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. (*Acts 16:1-4*)

in the above passage we should take note that Timotheus (Timothy) already had a good testimony before the brethren, and had plain and clear evidence of true faith in the Lord. This was evident enough that the apostle Paul took Timothy with him to be disciplined and to assist in the work of preaching the gospel and establishing churches. In the following passages, the work of Timothy in assisting the apostle Paul is demonstrated, and Timothy's calling is validated. As an aside, please note the total lack of Bible college or seminary in the training of Timothy.

For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. (*I Corinthians 4:17*)

After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. (*Acts 19:21-22*)

Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren. (*I Corinthians 16:10-11*)

But *as God is true*, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus*, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. (*II Corinthians 1:18*)

But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. (*Philippians 2:19-23*)

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. (*I Thessalonians 3:1-3*)

Thus, when the apostle Paul wrote unto Timothy, as Timothy was pastor of the church at Ephesus, it was to remind and exhort Timothy to calling that the LORD had laid upon him. In writing, Paul reminded Timothy of his beginning and gifting for the work of the LORD. But he also reminded him of something else that the pastor's of modern America's churches seem to have utterly forgotten – the afflictions of the gospel.

. . . When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is

in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, . . . *(II Timothy 1:5-9a)*

Thus, Timothy's calling and proof of the ministry, though not identical to Samuel's, had some common features:

First, the service and discipleship under an established and proven man of God. In short, Samuel and Timothy both served others for long periods of time prior to being established as the man of God. (As an aside, we should not take Eli's failure in service as proof that he was not a man of God, rather it demonstrates the ever present pressure to depart from the LORD's established criteria for service, particularly from a man's family.)

Second, and extremely important, is the fact that neither Samuel nor Timothy ever departed from the express, literal word of God. If ever there were an imperative, this is it. The man of God, called unto a work, must not ever depart from the solid foundation of Jesus Christ and His teaching. To do so is to preach and teach another gospel. It does not matter how subtle the change or changes may be, any change at all will not accurately represent the truth of the Word of God. I am convinced by the testimonies of both men that, by the LORD, they knew and understood this.

Thus, we come to the point of examining what the Scripture states plainly about the requirements for a pastor or bishop. In the following passage from Ephesians, chapter 4, instruction is given to the church at Ephesus, and recorded

for us all, how that God, through Christ, gifts everyone in the church for some work, and for the express purpose of the believer's growth in Christ

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 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: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (*Ephesians 4:7-16*)

Now, it should be plain that it is the LORD who does the calling, as was clearly seen in the case of Samuel and by testimony of Paul concerning Timothy. It should also be clear that it is the LORD who gives the gift to perform the calling as evidenced in the foregoing passage. It is more succinctly put in another place:

Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*. (*I Thessalonians 5:24*)

So then, it is the LORD's calling, and the LORD's equipping

for the ministry. Will the LORD then call someone contrary to a criteria He has plainly laid out? As part of his admonition and instruction to Timothy, the apostle Paul set forth the criteria for a pastor in the following passage. Plainly, this was not to establish to Timothy that he was called of God to pastor, rather it was to give a brief listing of criteria that could and would quickly establish whether or not a man was qualified for the calling he claimed to have. We can see this in the very first sentence of the passage, wherein it is stated "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." indicating clearly that there were individuals who desired to be pastors then even as now. And, that some of those individuals were not and could not be qualified for the office of pastorate. Thus, the list:

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (*I Timothy 3:1-7*)

Now, we can order this as a list, because that is what it is. As such, to quickly determine whether a man is qualified or not, we can simply check off the list to eliminate the would-be pretenders:

- A bishop then must be blameless
- the husband of one wife
- vigilant
- sober
- of good behaviour

- given to hospitality
- apt to teach
- not given to wine
- no striker
- not greedy of filthy lucre
- patient
- not a brawler
- not covetous
- one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity
- he must have a good report of them which are without

Beyond doubt, the second item and last items on the list eliminate the “ministry” of Paula White as a pastor of anything relating to God. Quite clearly, the first word of the last item is “he”, in addressing this particular qualification of the pastoral candidate. However, if we carefully note in the reading of the article, it eliminates Randy White as well as it is quite clear in the article that this was his second marriage, and thus he is not “the husband of one wife”.

Worse yet, the article is very plain that they (the pastors) preached a prosperity theology that is condemned both in the above passage and in other passages of Scripture as well. Suffice to say that both Randy and Paula White have let the word of God fall to the ground, if indeed they ever held it in the first place. In this, there is a fundamental difference between the Whites and their testimony, and Samuel and Timothy and theirs. From what I perceive, that difference is expressed in the LORD’s statement in John 14:

If ye love me, keep my commandments. (*John 14:15*)

Which raises the question posed by Christ:

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (*Luke 6:46*)

This is the problem in America, but it is by no means unique

to America, nor to this period of time. There have always been those who claim a calling from God – so that they could use the influence and power they gain for their own ends. However, there is a relatively easy way to thwart the efforts of such individuals – by strict adherence to the word of God. If someone had made it plain to the Whites that they were engaging in something that obviously could not be of God, and hindered their efforts, they themselves might have repented and not led so many people astray.

Nonetheless, what does this state about so many in this nation, particularly those who attend churches such as the “Without Walls International Church,” claim to know the LORD, yet will not be obedient to His express and plain word? I think the LORD stated it precisely when He had Isaiah pen the following words about Israel:

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid. (*Isaiah 29:13-14*)

Is it any wonder that America has totally lost her way? America’s churches, like Israel, have forsaken the true way of God in favor of having the label, but no substance behind it.

Finis

The Enemies of America

Fundamental Christians, especially Baptists, would never admit to it, and would never want to believe it to be true – that they have become the enemies of America. However, that is not the most serious part of what has happened to Christianity in America. Rather, it is that Christians in America have become the enemies of the LORD God, and through that, the enemies of America.

How?

Because the behavior of Christians, including fundamental, Bible-believing Christians, more closely resembles the behavior of pagans and atheists, than that of a child of the LORD God. Hence, Christians are bringing the judgment of God upon America just like the pagans and atheists.

By the way, just in case you wonder, I stopped watching television sometime in 1999 or thereabouts.

I pray the message is profitable for you.

For those who cannot use the embedded player, wish to use a different player, or want to save the file, the following link is provided:

The Enemies of America

In Christ,

Paul W. Davis

How to Know You Live in A Nation the LORD is Judging

No, the title is not lightly chosen. Neither is it a joke. Rather, it is a serious matter and worthy of sober consideration. The link given below is about a Federal firearms case. What is so striking about it is the blatant hypocrisies that are plainly evident in the case:

Velte pointed out that "There is no way for a citizen to know who is here legally or not. In fact, under Austin's 'sanctuary city' policy, not even the police officer at the door of the gunshow was allowed to ask a person's immigration status, yet the average Texan inside the show is expected to assume that a person standing before them with a Texas driver's license is in the country illegally just because they look Mexican and speak Spanish." Velte noted that the federal government's lawsuit against Arizona was based on that very type of conduct: Concluding someone could be here illegally based on their looks or their language. Velte said gun owners in his group are outraged, and they want to know:

- 1. Why is the illegal alien who purchased the gun, Leonel Huerta Sr., still living in Austin?*
- 2. Why does he still have a Texas Driver's license?*
- 3. Why is ATF using illegal aliens to set up and convict American citizens?*
- 4. What has he been promised for his cooperation?*
- 5. Why has he not been prosecuted? He committed three distinct crimes: he purchased a firearm knowing he was an illegal alien, he possessed the firearm, and he transferred the handgun to another illegal alien (Hippolito Aviles, who was convicted and given time served on June 30, 2010).*
- 6. Why has Huerta Sr. not been deported?*

The really sad part is that a jury of the defendant's peers believed the hypocrisies told them by the Federal prosecutor and convicted the defendant, rather than simply refusing to convict. In English jurisprudence, the refusal of a jury to convict has always been an option when they believe the law has been misapplied or an individual wrongly prosecuted. It is one of the protections we enjoy(ed) from would be tyrants who exercise the law improperly.

You may read the rest of the article by going to the link below, and consider why the LORD God has allowed this to come upon us.

FEDS CONVICT TEXAN FOR SELLING A GUN TO ILLEGAL ALIEN WITH TEXAS DRIVER'S LICENSE

Setting A Society Up For Failure – Pts 1 & 2

This lesson is probably misnamed somewhat. But perhaps not, as it addresses the issue of reproof and our attitude about it. Nonetheless, any society, any nation is made up of its people. Hence, its character is defined by its people. If its people will not bear reproof, will not bear correction, then there is little that can be done for that society, that nation.

This lesson is in two parts.

Part One:

Part Two:

For those wishing to download the file or the podcast does not work, the following link to the mp3 files.

Setting A Society Up For Failure – Part 1

Setting A Society Up For Failure – Part 2

Giving Occasion to the Enemies of God – Pt. 6

This is the sixth in a series addressing those who profess Christ and consider themselves Americans first and foremost. The point of this series is to educate everyone (not just born-again believers) on what the Scripture actually states concerning a proper attitude toward authority and toward those around us, both the froward and the good. As always, my prayer is that everyone learn what is the heart and mind of the LORD God. – In Christ, *Paul W. Davis*

In the last five posts addressing this subject, we have dealt with the heart and mind of the LORD God toward the lost, and how Steven L. Anderson departed from that in his sermon of August 16th, 2009, in which he loudly and strongly proclaimed that he was praying for the LORD to slay Barack Obama,

President of the United States of America, and send him to Hell for his advocacy and support of abortion, among other egregious things.

Now, we turn to how Pastor Anderson justifies his heart and attitude from Scripture. The reason we do this is so we also can understand how not to depart from the truth of the word of God. We know from Scripture that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Moreover, I (and many others) hold that the King James Version of the Bible is the word of God (the Scripture) for the English-speaking people – worldwide. ((Here we must clarify something for American English-speakers: the King James Bible is written in formal modern British English. This makes it acceptable and accepted worldwide. Were it written in the American dialect of English, it would only be acceptable in America and perhaps Canada. But since England (specifically Britain) is the birthplace of English, and thus the source from which all English dialects come, formal British English is acceptable worldwide.)) This means that we must interpret the texts of the Scripture in such a way that they do not end up conflicting with other passages in Scripture. By that, I do not mean wrestling them until they finally fit the way we want them. Rather, what I mean here is that we allow the construct, the grammar, and the setting (context) be the drivers of our interpretation. This does not mean they are the sole factors in driving our interpretation, but that they have a major influence on how we determine what the passage states. The true driver or influence is what we perceive by and through the operation of faith. The proper operation of faith will insure that we never interpret a passage so that it is in conflict with other passages of Scripture.

That stated, we turn our attention to the passage used by Steven L. Anderson to justify his belief: Psalm 58

Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? Yea, in heart ye work

wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth. (*Psalm 58:All*)

What are we to make of Psalm 58?

First, it states this psalm is "To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David." Knowing this, let us begin with understanding something more of David in relation to his service to the LORD. In Acts, we are told by the apostle Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that king David was a prophet, and that he particularly prophesied of Christ. As we shall see, this bears heavily upon the interpretation and application of Psalm 58.

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

(Acts 2:29-31)

The above passage from Acts is a quotation from the 16th Psalm, and is speaking of Christ as the apostle Peter confirms. We can also see in Psalm 22, Psalm 40, Psalm 69, and many others where king David speaks of Christ to come and the work of redemption Christ would accomplish. This should give pause to consider whether Psalm 58 applies to David only, all saints everywhere and at all times, or to the Lord Jesus Christ only. To gain that understanding, it is necessary for us to examine other psalms and see if we can find a consistency of thought with Psalm 58.

And indeed we do find a consistency of thought to two other psalms, both of which are quoted in the New Testament. The first is Psalm 82:

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations. (Psalm 82:All)

Which is quoted by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself:

The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and

sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? (*John 10:33-36*)

To be continued . . .