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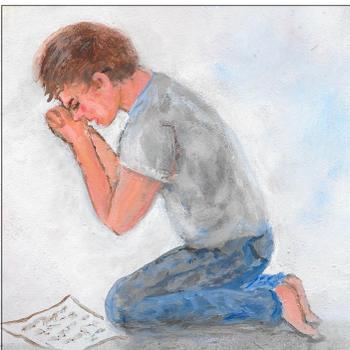
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Discernment 10 IT'S YOUR CHOICE

By Rayola Kelley

On Friday mornings I teach a Bible Study, and one of the topics that always raises the expectation of those attending is that Jesus is coming back soon. Our opinions may vary in regard to how matters may play out, but we all agree that even if we do not know when He is actually coming, it is becoming obvious that we are living in those days where various prophecies concerning Israel are coming together. These prophecies point to a certain season in relationship to national Israel, certain events that must come together to usher in Jesus' coming, and prophecies that unmistakably outline the spiritual environment that will be present when this blessed event occurs. Jesus clearly stated that we would be able to recognize this time if we cared to properly discern the signs.

As I mentioned in the past, I became a Christian when eschatology was the going subject. It seemed that because of the excitement exhibited concerning this subject, there were many sermons on what it would mean to be ready for the coming of the bridegroom (*Matthew 25:1-13*). Jesus is coming back and each day and each sign and fulfillment of prophecy should dictate the emphasis of what is being preached from the pulpits. If Jesus is coming back soon, then people must be truly saved and prepared for this wondrous event, but how



many religious leaders believe He is coming back and how many people who affiliate themselves with Christianity will be ready?

I don't know what is being preached from every pulpit today. In the church I attend, the pastor is 90 years old. He still has a strong voice and is an evangelist at heart because he does not want to see people go to hell. He cries at the altar over the goodness of God while praying for others. As he preaches he often sheds tears over the glorious salvation he has received by grace, and those tears speak of an overwhelming awe and appreciation towards God. Every Sunday he contends for lost, wayward, backslidden, and hurting souls. He wants to see God move on hearts, the unfeigned Word of God stir up souls, the Holy Spirit quicken lean spirits, the hurting healed, the seeking found by the great Shepherd, and the lost saved. He believes there can be revival and that God wants to bring forth revival, but the Spirit of God must come, not just to manifest His presence during worship, but to do a deep work of repentance in order to bring forth regeneration, sanctification, and transformation in His church (*Titus 1:5; 1 Peter; 1:2; Romans 12:1-2*).

This pastor preaches the simple Gospel as described by the Apostle Paul in *1 Corinthians 15:1-4*, "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

How important is the Gospel? I have discussed this in the past. The Apostle Paul stated that he was not

ashamed of the Gospel for it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," but Paul feared that many would stray from its simplicity and promote a gospel that could not save. He warned that those who preach any other gospel would stand accursed (*Romans 1:16; 2 Corinthians 11:2-4; Galatians 1:6-9*).

Some people may say, "Hearing the Gospel on most Sundays must be boring." However, Jesus stated that if He is lifted up, He will draw all men to Himself (*John 12:32*). The reality is that the Holy Spirit wants to lead us into all truth and the Gospel often serves as a springboard (*John 16:13*). Like all pastors, our pastor is an imperfect man saved by grace, who simply serves as a vessel of the Lord. However, it is clear he wants to be faithful to his calling and commission, and the one thing he understands is that as long as Jesus Christ and the message of Him being crucified is lifted up for all to consider in light of their spiritual plight of sin, struggles, and needs, that the Holy Spirit can anoint such a message and quicken the spirit of people.

There are always two main challenges our pastor often puts forth. One is found in *Hebrews 9:27*, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Every man will stand before the great Judge and there will be no pardon offered to those who rejected God's solution, just judgment of death passed down, and there will be no escaping His wrath with flimsy excuses to try to cover up wickedness.

The second scripture he often quotes is one I use to remind myself that the Christian life, whether it be that of repentance, faith, believing, righteousness, godliness, and obedience is a matter of choice, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (*Deuteronomy 30:19*).

It is hard to watch many of the people of this age rush towards the abyss with their fingers in their ears and blinders on their eyes, while some rage against righteousness and others are covered with shrinking fig leaves to try to hide their spiritual nakedness before a holy God. It's hard to know that no man would knowingly choose an eternity of damnation, but in selfishness and foolishness he prefers and is quick to outright mock and reject the salvation offered through Jesus Christ. And, the reason for rejecting God is because man wants to determine his own truth, live the way he wants to live, and do as he pleases.

In a world that has dulled people down with sensationalism and artificial forms of communication and now "artificial intelligence," many "churchites" could easily become bored with the simple message of the Gospel which poses the question, "How many have really heard the true Gospel, believed it and received it?" There is nothing boring about the Gospel because it is the power of God to save people but it does so by cutting right to the core of man's rejection of God, exposing that he is a sinner, and doomed in sins that have already been judged.

We know the word "gospel" means "good news." However, I fear that much of the "good news" that is promoted is not about the sin that spiritually ails people but about how the Gospel will benefit them. The crux of the "Gospel" is the bad news that man is lost to God because of sin, but the "good news" of the message is not that man is saved in his sins; rather, that God provided His Son to not only address sin, but take it away so man could be redeemed from the judgment of sin (eternal damnation) and be reconciled back to God, the giver of eternal life. Clearly, if any gospel is missing the "bad news" about the reality of sin, then the "good news" of Jesus' redemption will not mean a thing. Jesus did not come so man could be saved and blessed "in his sin;" rather Jesus died to save man "from the claim" that sin had on his lost soul so he could be blessed with a new life. The Apostle Paul made this clear in *Romans 6:14-15*, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are

not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid." Keep in mind the law was given to show each of us we are transgressors of God's holy Law, sinners or offenders of the Law. As Scripture states, "*For all have sinned...and the wages of sin is death (eternal separation from God), but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 3:20, 23; 6:23).*"

Although we live in a world that lives in denial about what lies at the core of man's plight, the reality, consequences, and destruction of sin abounds all around us. Families are falling apart, future generations are being systematically aborted, immorality is taking center stage as the land is beginning to spew the people out in greater measure, lawlessness abounds in our societies, the stagnation of indifference and corruption marks much of our leaders, people are looking to various addictions to exist, and there are activists instead of judges overseeing our courts who make an absolute mockery out of the law of this nation. In fact, we live in a culture of death, that is caught up with deception, anger, hatred, and death.

Sin is the problem and the only One who can address sin and take its power away and replace its deadly consequences with life is the Lord Jesus Christ. However, the matter of sin does not fit in our politically correct society. Man wants to feel good in his sin, not be broken over it in complete repentance because it cost God His Son. Man wants to hide behind God's love thinking he deserves grace rather than face the fact that God's love provided the solution for sin because man warrants judgment and damnation and is deserving of hell. Man wants to believe his sin is not so bad in spite of the fact that it is leaving a wake of destruction behind it. He wants to take some artificial stimulant to try to keep ahead of the depressing reality that surrounds him in his pathetic plight instead of facing it along with fear that torments him. Man wants to blame his misery on everyone else from those who disagree with his insanity to those who will not play along with him in the cesspool and stench of the sandboxes of the

world.

Sadly, it appears that much of the visible church has been conditioned to not only accept a watered-down gospel but to promote it as well. The popular gospel that is gaining momentum fits into the present day narrative. It is the "feel-good gospel" or the "social gospel." In this gospel man is encouraged to do those things that ultimately will make him feel good about himself, whether it is doing good deeds or certain religious activities, while appearing spiritual enough to others, but false gospels do not address the guilt, the regrets, the vicious cycle, and the fear that often besets him when he comes face to face with the loneliness created by the vacuum of his fleshly activities and appetites. Sadly, these modern gospels have nothing to do with pleasing God or lining up to God's righteous attitudes (*Hebrews 11:6*). In some cases religious people are covering up a half-hearted commitment, moral deviation, unbecoming dispositions and practices with a few good deeds here and there to soothe whatever religious conscience might be remaining after it has been seared by constantly feeding on the logic and deceptive philosophies of this world.

As I was meditating on what to write about, my plans changed. The reason the subject changed is because I realized that I first must deal with the matter of why man is not prepared to meet Jesus. Until the reason for man's lack of preparedness is confronted, the instructions behind preparation will have no real meaning.

The crux of the problem that confronts us today in Christendom is nothing new. In fact, it has plagued the world since the Garden. It is called "unbelief." People do not believe God's Word and as a result they do not believe God; therefore, they do not believe in the God of the Bible. But, should this surprise us? According to the Barna Group research done in 2009, one quarter of those who describe themselves as Christians dismiss the idea that the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches.

The fact that man changes, or rejects, God's Word reveals that he does not believe it is God's Word, and if it is, it has been changed or is becoming obsolete. But, let me remind

the reader, the validity and authority of God's Word rests solely on His character and power and not on man's ineptness to do something right or perfect. Granted, there are many watered-down, questionable, and blasphemous versions out there, but the trusted KJV is still available. Whether we love the truth or not is a choice and what we partake of—truth or the poison of heresy—is a choice, and we need to know that when we stand before the Lord, it will be His truth that will judge us as all other arguments, philosophies, false doctrines, and excuses are shaken and end up collapsing in utter ruin (*Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 16:25-31*).

My question to the unbelieving, skeptical Christians is, is God big enough and powerful enough to maintain the integrity of His Word in spite of imperfect man being the vessel in which it has been passed down? Was He lying when He made statements such as *Matthew 4:4*, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," or *2 Timothy 3:16-17*, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," and *2 Peter 2:20-21*, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit?" When we declare that God's Word is not trustworthy and applicable for today, we are calling Him a liar because He has declared differently.

If a person does not believe the Word of God why would he or she take its various warnings seriously about such subjects as sin, Jesus' coming, hell, and damnation? Why would such individuals see the need to do right when they can be contrary to God's Word, believing that if there is such a day of reckoning it will not really matter? Why would people gamble with their souls to secure something that is temporary and will prove to be useless in the end? The answer is simple, they do not believe the Word of God; therefore, they do not fear God and tremble before His

Word.

If people do not believe the Word of God, we can only reason they do not believe God. By not believing Him, they are calling Him a liar and questioning His character, stripping Him of His authority in their mind, and showing contempt towards His Word (*1 John 1:8, 10; 2 Samuel 12:9*). Just how serious will such disregard play out on judgment day for such people? *Romans 1:18* already makes it clear that those who mishandle His Word in unrighteousness are already under His wrath, and that which is not of faith is a sin (*Romans 14:23*). Clearly, people may have some knowledge of the Bible, but they are not mixing faith with what they know and walking it out in obedience. As *Hebrews 4:2* declares, God's message cannot spiritually benefit them.

This brings us to the reason people risk their souls by calling God a liar: they want to do their own thing and the Word of God brings an indictment against fleshly activities. God's Word establishes clear absolutes about morality. There is an eye opening statistic that was pointed out by the Barna Group and that is only 46 percent of born-again adults believe in the existence of absolute moral truth, while 41 percent of self-proclaimed Christians believe that the Bible along with other religious books such as the Koran are simply different expressions of the same spiritual truths.

How do such attitudes play out as far as moral conduct? In a 2003 survey, 49 percent of born-again Christians believed that living with someone of the opposite sex outside of marriage was morally okay. The *World Magazine* reported that 53 percent of men who belong to Promise Keepers visit porn sites every week, where an Internet survey of 6,000 pastors conducted in 2002 found that 30 percent of pastors had viewed Internet porn in the last 30 days, and the figures have gone up every year. One figure I heard had 50 percent of church leadership being involved in some form of pornography and another staggering figure has 68 percent of Christians involved with some form of pornography.

The figures do not end with these alarming percentages. With

over 173 million Christians in the U.S. there are tens of millions who say that they love God and yet they are liars, thieves, fornicators, adulterers, and child-murderers (had abortions). And, what does the Bible say about such actions in *Galatians 5:19-21*, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Emphasis added.) We must not forget what the Apostle John said in his first epistle in *1 John 3:9*, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." It is important to point out that this Scripture is in relationship to those who walk in and continue to practice sin. If the Holy Spirit is in a person, He will convict that individual of sin, causing repentance.

When it comes to our young people 61 percent believe a place in Heaven can be earned through good works, 63 percent believe Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, and all other people pray to the same God, and 58 percent believe all religious faiths teach equally valid truths, and yet the Bible warns us the way to life is narrow because it can only come through one way, the person and work of Jesus Christ, while any other way outside of Jesus will prove to be the broad way that leads to destruction (*Matthew 7:13-14*). In fact, many will strive to enter in through this narrow gate and fail to do so, while others will try to come in from other ways, but will be found to be thieves who have no part in the Lord's flock (*Luke 13:24; John 10:1-5*). No wonder Jesus posed the alarming question, "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily, Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (*Luke 18:8*). (The statistics from the previous four paragraphs was taken from the book, *God Has a Wonderful Plan For Your Life*, by Ray Comfort, pgs. 10-12.)

The problem is clear: "unbelief" is rampant in the American Church,

which would explain its ineffectiveness in this age as a witness, its lack of power to affect souls, and its lack of vision. For years there have been a few in the wilderness trying to warn Christians about the environment that has been produced by such teachings as “easy believism” or the improper emphasis of God’s love at the expense of His holiness. God has not changed His attitude towards sin, and if anyone is moving from the center of what is true and right, man will be found to be the culprit every time.

Regardless of unbelief, God’s Word will have the last say about such matters, and what about those who choose to not believe His Word? *Revelation 21:7-8* speaks of their end, “*He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*”

The last Scripture seems like gloom and doom, but it is from this premise that one can receive the good news of the true Gospel, that Jesus died for our sin. He took our place on the cross and by believing, for today is the sure day of salvation, we each can flee the wrath that is coming upon the unbelieving. (*Matthew 3:7; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 5:3-6*). †

QUOTABLES

“No man is greater than his praying life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people who are not praying are straying. We have many organizers, but few agonizers; many players and payers, few pray-ers; many singers, few clingers; lots of pastors, few wrestlers; many fears, few tears; much fashion, little passion; many interferers, few intercessors; many writers, but few fighters. Failing here, we fail everywhere.” - Leonard Ravenhill

“What is it about tears that should be so terrifying? the touch of God is marked by tears...deep, soul-shaking tears, weeping...it comes when that last barrier is down and you surrender yourself to health and wholeness.” “Love is not only something you feel, it is something you do.” - David Wilkerson

SETTLING FOR SUBSTITUTES

By Jeannette Haley

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” – John 10:16

When it comes to hearing Jesus’ voice, according to the lost, sin-sick soul on “The View,” Joy Behar, “It’s one thing to talk to Jesus. It’s another thing when Jesus talks to you.” She added that hearing voices is a “mental illness.” Really?

While she has a right to her opinion, I wonder how many born-again believers who *do* know and hear their Shepherd’s voice realize how dangerous, and threatening, her personal conclusion is in light of the history of communism’s atheistic psychology’s role in torturing and murdering millions of Christians, such as in the Soviet Union. Excerpts from Wikipedia tell us: “Throughout the history of the Soviet Union (1922–1991), there were periods where Soviet authorities suppressed and persecuted various forms of Christianity to different extents depending on State interests. Soviet Marxist-Leninism policy consistently advocated the control, suppression, and ultimately, the elimination of religious beliefs, and actively encouraged atheism in the Soviet Union. The total number of Christian victims under the Soviet regime has been estimated to range between 14-22 million. Protestant Christians in the USSR (Baptists, Pentecostals, Adventists etc.) in the period after the Second world war were compulsively sent to mental hospitals, or endured trials and imprisonment.” Russia’s goal was to replace any form of religion with “militant atheism.”

If you have even a smidgen of knowledge about the horrors, abuse and torture that millions of Christians and political dissenters suffered (and are still suffering) in communist countries, Behar’s flippant “stated-as-fact” opinion should send chills up your spine. While she may be just one blasphemous mouthpiece of the devil on TV, her opinion nevertheless expresses the entrenched belief of countless numbers of militant, left

wing, liberal haters of anything biblical or traditionally American. We should be daily thanking our gracious God that Hillary lost the election. Consider what she said on April 23, 2015, “Far too many women are denied access to reproductive health care and safe childbirth, and laws don’t count for much if they’re not enforced. Rights have to exist in practice—not just on paper. Laws have to be backed up with resources and political will. And deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases have to be changed.”

So, how does an evil tyrant change “deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases” on a national scale? It’s simple. All one has to do is follow the ideologies of Stalin, Lenin, Karl Marx, Chairman Mao, Castro, Kim Jong-il, Saul Alinsky, to name a few, and through propaganda, state-controlled media, altered textbooks, anti-Christ legislation along with sheer military might cause the devil’s “two-pronged religion” of humanistic psychology and evolution to ascend to the imaginary throne of “scientific reasoning.” Since these two lies have been crowned by unbelievers (and some ignorant professing believers) as being “scientific,” any dissenters would naturally have to be categorized as being mentally ill, emotionally unstable, dysfunctional, or socially unfit and be either “reprogrammed” or locked away, tortured and abused in a mental institution for life.

Communism is not dead, but its Godless ideology has successfully infiltrated and entrenched itself in our schools and colleges, government institutions, the Democratic Party, and fake news media. It expresses itself through art, music, literature, garbage movies, and openly manifests in rallies, marches, and demonstrations. Lenin said: “We will find our most fertile ground for infiltration of Marxism within the field of religion, because religious people are the most gullible and will accept almost anything if it is couched in religious terminology.” How right he was!

So, who flung the gates wide open to this Trojan horse, and why? Sadly, most of the blame can be laid at the door of the visible church when she grew weary of watching and pray-

ing; became bored with earnestly contending for the faith; lost interest in the "Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"; forsook being sober and vigilant against the devil; let her oil (anointing) run dry; lost her zeal and became lukewarm; failed to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil; grew weary with "holding the line of righteousness" and morality, such as embracing perverted lifestyles, fornication, and murder of the unborn; and, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (See 2 Timothy 3:15; Mark 13:33; Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 3:16; Jude 3; Romans 1:20, 21.) The cause of all this can be summed up in one word: *unbelief*.

A. W. Tozer said, "The church has lost her testimony. She has no longer anything to say to the world. Her once robust shout of assurance has faded away to an apologetic whisper. She who one time went out to declare now goes out to inquire. Her dogmatic declaration has become a respectful suggestion, a word of religious advice, given with the understanding that it is after all only an opinion and not meant to sound bigoted. Pure Christianity, instead of being shaped by its culture, actually stands in sharp opposition to it." Dr. E. Stanley Jones said, "If you don't make up your mind, then your unmade mind will unmake you. Here's a place where there must be no dallying, for any dallying will be the Trojan horse that will get on the inside and open the gates to the enemy. God can do anything for the man who has made up his mind. He can do little or nothing for the double-minded man." So, there you have it. Christians must choose between the Trojan horse of humanistic psychology (and evolution) or biblical Christianity. Both cannot be true, both cannot be served, both cannot co-exist in the true Church that Jesus is building, and is coming for.

God will have no other gods before Him. Jesus must be Lord of all or not Lord at all. God's people need to repent of their double mindedness which makes them unstable in all their ways. They need to repent for substi-

tuting man's "mental health solutions" for the plain truths of the Bible concerning what to believe, what to think upon, how to live, how to please God, and so forth. The church needs to repent for substituting introspection and the practice of looking inward instead of looking upward. The church needs to repent for teaching that self-love and pride is the correct substitution for humility and meekness.

The apostate church needs to repent of unbelief in the truth and power of the written Word and the Living Word, Jesus Christ; repent of putting their faith in "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith" 1 Timothy 6:20; 21. The church needs to repent of trying to impress the world by adopting "political correctness," "positive confession," and "philosophies of men" as substitutes for the truths of Scripture, and after genuine repentance, cleanse the church of every book, teaching, sermon and song that is contrary to, and a substitution for the principles, doctrines, facts, and truths of God's Word. We need to clean house of all substitutes if there is ever to be a true revival. If there is no return to the Way, the Truth and the Life—there can be no revival. It must be all or nothing—God, and God alone! "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3:3. A person cannot be "half-born." You are either born again, or you are not!

Concerning being born again, here are some wise quotes from Oswald Chambers: "When a man is born again, he knows that it is because he has received something as a gift from Almighty God and not because of his own decision." "Everyone who is born again of the Spirit of God knows that there is no good thing outside the Lord Jesus Christ." "If we are born again of the Spirit of God, our one desire is a hunger and thirst after nothing less than holiness, the holiness of Jesus, and He will satisfy it." "When we are born again we have exactly the experience of going through death." "We inherit by nature certain strong cardinal virtues, but these are not the slightest atom of use to us, and when a man or woman is born again of the

Spirit of God, these virtues are nearly always a hindrance instead of a benefit." "After we are born again, the Bible becomes a new Book to us, and we search the Scriptures, not to get life out of them, but to know more about Jesus Christ."

"Accepting" Jesus as your Savior but then thinking, speaking, and doing the same as you always have does not make you a true Christian, or prepare you for heaven. You have merely bought into a substitute "conversion" and are deceiving yourself. If a person is truly born again, (born from above) that means they have received Christ by faith, and believe that He is God incarnate. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" John 1:12-14. If a person is truly born again, he or she will become a new creation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" 2 Corinthians 5:17. 1 Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

God is still speaking to people today, but we need to be able to discern His voice from all the substitute voices in the world. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" John 10:27. Jesus assured us that His sheep would hear His voice, not a substitute, although there are many false voices. Jesus' sheep "hear His voice" because they know Him. They know His Word, they discern by the Holy Spirit, and Jesus knows them. This speaks of relationship between Jesus and His sheep. Therefore, Jesus' sheep follow Him, not another. They are not interested in substitutes; that is, another Jesus, another gospel, or another spirit. Christians must be discerning of Satan's false light

behind the so-called “science” of humanistic psychology. We must not be deceived by the misnomer of “Christian Psychology.” All psychological methodologies are based on man’s attempts at problem solving according to his own vain philosophies and unregenerate reasoning. *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power”* Colossians 2:8, 9.

Hearing the voice of God is something we may tend to take for granted as we read through the Old Testament, but if you take special note of how often the Lord spoke to man, you begin to realize that our “earthbound” perspective is a great hindrance to faith and spiritual insight. Man was created in God’s image, and his priority was to have been spirit, soul and body. After the fall, man’s order changed to body, soul and spirit. Instead of being spiritually minded, he became fleshly-physically and soulish-worldly minded. Jesus came to restore us first spiritually, then regenerate our souls (mind, will and emotions) and eventually redeem our bodies at the resurrection.

For your consideration from <http://www.awmi.net>: “The word ‘psychology’ comes from the Greek word “psycho”, which is a derivative of the Greek word ‘psyche’ meaning ‘soul.’ Psychology looks no deeper than the soul of man for answers. It totally ignores the spirit realm: our spirits, God’s Holy Spirit, and demonic spirits. The Word of God is replete with teachings and examples of the influence of God, demons, and our spirits on our actions. Any ‘answer’ that doesn’t take the spirit realm into account isn’t going to the root of the problem. The Greek word ‘psyche’ was also the name of the Greek god of the soul. ‘Eros’ and ‘psyche’ were lovers in Greek mythology. Who wants that?”

Here are four major tenants of psychology that are incompatible with biblical Christianity: 1) We are products of our environment. 2) Therefore, we are not responsible or accountable for our actions. 3) This leads to placing blame for our actions on anything else

but on us, making us victims. 4) Self-esteem is paramount.”

What a dangerous substitution for the truth that makes us free this is! First, we are not products of our environment, but of how we think in our hearts. *“As he thinketh in his heart, so is he”* Proverbs 23:7. *“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life,”* Proverbs 4:23. Secondly, we are accountable for our actions. *“Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same”* Job 4:8. *“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting”* Galatians 6:8. Thirdly, we are not victims, but rather we are responsible for our decisions. *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* Galatians 6:8. *“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”* Deuteronomy 30:19. Fourthly, self-esteem is taught nowhere in the Bible! (Self-respect, on the other hand, is necessary because man was made in the image of God, and this is what we need to develop in humility, thanksgiving, and reverent fear of the Lord.) The Bible says, *“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away”* 2 Timothy 3:1-5. [Emphasis added.] *“But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble”* James 4:6.

Is it any wonder that we are losing our young people to the world, drugs, alternate lifestyles, Satanism, cults, communism, and suicide? By substituting worldly entertainment and emotional hype for true worship in the beauty of holiness we have robbed them of experiencing the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit. By substituting

man’s vain philosophies and psychology for the Bible, we have robbed them of experiencing faith, and the life-changing power of prayer and the Word of God. By substituting the “God loves you” “cheap grace” message instead of preaching the biblical gospel, we have robbed them of experiencing true conviction of sin and of their lost state so they can find a place of true repentance and joy of salvation. By substituting play for prayer we have deprived them of learning to seek the Lord God of heaven and expecting His answers. By substituting the world’s methods, the world’s beliefs in “many roads to heaven,” the world’s exaltation of man and humanistic liberal ideologies for the solid biblical truth that never changes and the real Jesus who lives today, we have set them adrift to come to their own conclusions instead of guiding them to a life of solid faith and holy living.

No wonder the youth are confused about who they are, why they are here, and where they are going. No wonder they are depressed since, after all, they are simply a product of godless, mindless, soul-less evolution. No wonder they find themselves plunging into despair after “looking within” for answers only to discover the dark, empty void of self.

Right now America may be enjoying a reprieve from the darkness of the previous godless administrations, but if she is to “be great again” and survive, the Church needs to thoroughly “clean house” and repent of her fornication (both spiritual and physical) with the world; repent of her unbelief; repent of her rebellion and failure to be the salt and the light; repent of her pride, self-love, unbelief, and lukewarm state; repent of her failure to make disciples, and repent of all the unscriptural, aberrant, heretical, strange “winds of doctrines” and practices she has so gladly embraced. She needs to repent of forsaking the true Word of God by substituting watered-down versions, and she needs to repent of teaching from modern man-centered, “purpose driven,” pop psychology books instead of from the Holy Bible. God’s presence will never abide with mind-science, positive confession beliefs and practices, nor will He wink at Hinduism in

the church (Yoga, contemplative meditation, chanting, labyrinths, etc.); nor will He dwell in the presence of ancient, mystical, secret societies and lodges. All of these things are just the tip of the iceberg of all the unholy mixtures of “doctrines of demons,” syncretism, and ecumenism within Christendom today. The Church needs to forsake “Babylon” and return to the Bible

God is holy! *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.*

The Church is all that stands between the communistic ideology of the Joy Behar’s and the survival of this nation and our freedoms. Communism is not dead, because it is a *religion* and it is very much alive. (Common Core, by the way, is pure communism, and is still being taught in the public schools today.) In response to a question about how the agenda of the “far left” in America mirrors that as detailed in *The Communist Manifesto*, former Senator Rick Santorum (R-Penn.) said it is worth noting that the words “separation of church and state” do not appear in the U.S. Constitution but are cited in the constitution of the former Communist Soviet Union.

The question is will the Church wake up before it’s too late? Will the Church of Jesus Christ repent, clean house, and return to biblical Christianity? Will men and women of faith turn their affections away from the world, and commit their lives for the sake of the Gospel and the truth? Will Christians find the courage to take a stand, and remain standing? Will God’s people repent and then reach out, rescue and restore our young people back into a relationship with the God of

heaven and earth before it’s too late?

What about you? Are you prepared and willing to separate yourself from all the religious substitutes, and be a courageous contender *“for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” Jude 3b?* Will you be a martyr (witness) for Christ in these end days? *“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” Revelation 21:7.*

May it be so. Amen. †

LEST WE FORGET....

100 Years — 100 Million Dead Under Communism (Excerpted from BattleCry—Jan/ Feb 2018)

100 years ago this year the Bolsheviks stormed the Winter Palace in Petrograd, Russia. That set off the revolution that ended in the USSR, the first Marxist-based government.

Marxism, like evolution, denies the God of creation. But, Marxism is necessary for the evolutionist. Those who believe in evolution must ignore Genesis in the Bible. Without God and His principles of government, another form of government must be fabricated. Evil still exists and must be addressed by some set of laws.

However, evolution presumes that evil is in the environment, not in the heart. Thus, when man does evil, it is because of his outside circumstances. Without God, big government is then needed to change the circumstances. . . . America’s founding fathers were right in declaring that no government will work without “self-government”—every person living out a life of virtue as specified in the Bible. They knew that any other set of laws was inadequate because they did not address the depravity of the heart.

In these 100 years, Communist and Socialist countries have proven over and over the failure of their dream. Education (or re-education) is the main tool they use But when it fails, execution is the only alternative. Witness the 100 million dead under the hands of communist regimes in the last 100 years.

Yet, dozens of countries still pursue the humanist heaven on earth without God. Their “strong delusion” (2 Thes. 2:11) is the old definition of in-

sanity: doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different result. In the U.S. we have been blessed with unheard of freedom to share the gospel for over 250 years. Nowhere on earth and at no time in history has the common man shared such prosperity and personal freedom for so long.

How is it that we can sit and watch the agony in neighbors like Cuba and Venezuela and still tolerate the humanist takeover of our universities and the encroachment of socialism in our policymaking?

However, in the light of prophecy, that 200 plus years of prosperity may have provided the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14 that when the gospel has been shared with all nations, then the end would come. That, along with other signs, will point to the soon coming of our Messiah.

Marxist ideology is rapidly shaping up as the most likely foundation for the emergence of the Beast of Rev. 17. Government control is humanism’s answer to the depravity of man. And what better way to do that than with a one-world government?

Another sign of the near end could be the amassing of the enemies of Israel, with Russia, Iran and Syria all camped just outside Israel’s northern border. All are stockpiling enough “weapons of mass destruction” to cook not only Israel, but the rest of the planet.

Jesus said that unless the last days be shortened, no flesh would be saved. There surely seem to be enough mad men loose to qualify for the Lord to step in with His planned interruption. But when He does, our opportunity to share the gospel one more time will be ended.

Jesus said to work “while it is day” for “the night cometh...” (John 9:4). †

Stephane Courtois, Director of Research at the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS) in Paris, offers the following rough breakdown of the numbers of people that communism killed: USSR -- 20 million; China -- 65 million (to 90 million); Vietnam -- 1 million; North Korea -- 2 million; Cambodia -- 2 million; Eastern Europe -- 1 million; Latin America -- 150,000; Africa -- 1.7 million; Afghanistan -- 1.5 million

RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

Q: "What did Jesus mean when he said that many are called, but few are chosen? How does a person know if they are chosen?"

A: We see this statement being made in two places; one reference is about work and service in the kingdom of God in *Matthew 20:1-16*. Notice it has to do with the vineyard or harvest field. Jesus made it clear in *Matthew 9:37*, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." And in *John 4:34*, He stated that His meat was to do the will of the Father, to finish His work, and then He went on to say, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest, And he that reapeath received wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labours" (*John 4:35-38*). As believers we all stand equal when it comes to salvation, our call to follow Jesus into a life of service in the harvest field of the world, and our commission to preach the Gospel is the same as well. However, we were not all brought into His kingdom at the same time; therefore, we do not receive the call at the same time to follow Him into a life of service. Clearly, we are called into the harvest field at different times to be co-laborers, not only with each other, but with God (*1 Corinthians 3:7-10*). It is all God's work, and at the end of our walk of faith and our service is the glorious reality of the gift of salvation, which is the fruit that such labor should produce in others.

There are a couple of things we must note in the parable in *Matthew 20:1-16*) that whatever wage the Lord gives us at the end of the work day will prove to be fair. He is not an unjust master, nor does He go back on His word as to how and what He will reward His workers with in the end. However, many people judge the matters of God's handling of the work in the harvest field on the basis of the world and their own take on what they

think they deserve. Remember the fruit of the harvest belongs to the owner.

The second thing we must note is that the call to work was a privilege. The men were idle and being unproductive. The invitation to come and work for a wage would be a privilege indeed and at the end of the work day, both the worker's motive and attitude were exposed. Even though each worker agreed to work for a certain wage, those who came first felt they deserved more at the end of the day. However, they were reminded that they agreed to work for that wage without any stipulation. God gives believers an opportunity to serve Him and when He calls us we must make sure our motive is right. The reason we heed His call is not because we expect wages, but because we love Him and He is worthy of all service.

Many of these parables had to do with Israel. This parable in *Matthew 20* is no exception. We are reminded that the first ones called into service (Jews) would be the last to come in from the harvest field and the last that were called (the Church) will be the first to receive what was promised to those who accept the invitation to work in the harvest field no matter the hour.

In the second parable that contains, "Many are called, but few are chosen," it had to do with the parable of the marriage of the king's son in *Matthew 22:2-14*. Many are called to attend the dinner of the marriage supper of the king's son. However, there were those who made light of it and went their way, and some even treated the servants of the king badly. This is when the king sent out his servants to the highways and byways to bid others to come. We know the first to be called to be part of the marriage supper of the Lamb that is found in *Revelation 19:5-9* was the Jewish nation, but because of the nation's refusal to accept the call to receive their Messiah, God's servants were sent into the highways to bid others to come in. The "others" in this case represent the Gentiles (Church).

Sadly, there was one individual who tried to get into the marriage without the right garments. Jesus stated that many will try to come into the promise of eternal life by other ways than the one true door provided by heaven (*John 10:1*). He called such individuals thieves because the wedding garments have already been pre-

pared by His redemption, but we must believe His work on the cross in order to be clothed with His righteousness. Note what happens to this individual in *Matthew 22:13*, "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This brings us down to the practical aspect to what it means to be "called." All believers are called to follow Jesus, but when it comes down to those who are chosen, it will be based on relationship. Jesus made that quite clear in *John 15:15-16*, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Servants of God have a calling, but those who are friends with the Lord are chosen. Jesus called all Christians to follow Him, but He will not choose all to be His friend. Many Christians seem content to be a half-hearted servant in God's kingdom. They choose when and how they are going to serve the Lord. They often linger as close to the world as they can while trying to stay in the outer court of religion, but such individuals will not be chosen to be a close, trusted friend of Jesus with whom He will share matters about His kingdom.

The choice is clear, as believers we must choose to either be content with being a servant to the Lord or choose a very personal relationship with God—that of being considered and called a personal friend of the Lord Jesus Christ. ✠

The chosen ones are those who have come into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ and have had their spiritual condition changed and their ears opened. Then they hear "the voice of the Lord" continually asking, "...who will go for Us?" —Oswald Chambers