

GENTLE SHEPHERD MINISTRIES

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH ~ MAKING DISCIPLES ~ EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY

PO Box 3572 * Oldtown, ID 83822 * www.gentleshepherd.com * July 2018

Discernment 14 FRUITFUL OCCUPATION

By Rayola Kelley

This is the last in my series on the subject of discernment. Discernment is a necessary ability, gift, and exercise that keeps a person on track of what is true, alert as to the spirit in operation, and a means to rightly judge the times they are living in. The key is that discernment must be exercised. Sometimes Christians assume a speaker is okay; therefore, they do not exercise discernment and become vulnerable to a wrong spirit which confuses them or conditions them to buy a lie and become indoctrinated into greater delusion.



The Bible is clear that it is about the message and not necessarily the instrument that is being used to deliver the message. Receiving the truth of a matter and coming spiritually into agreement are two different matters. I must always receive a matter if it is truth, but I can only come into agreement with someone when there is the same spirit present. After all, deep calls to deep and everyone of like agenda, attraction, and spirit will sink to the same level. We must test the spirit to see if we can come into agreement spiritually with a person and actually fellowship with them, but the ultimate test in most matters of the kingdom of God comes down to the message.

The Apostle Paul made this fact clear in *Philippians 1:15-18*. There were some preaching Christ out of envy, strife, and contention in order to add to his afflictions, but he goes on to say, *“What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”* As Paul clearly stated to the Corinthians

when they were arguing over water baptism in relationship to the person who baptized them and not because of obedience to the actual ordination, *“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).*

There are people who are of a wrong spirit but their message can be true, but it will be very limited. People who have a wrong spirit, but a true message are those who have a self-serving agenda when it comes to the matters of the kingdom of God. In the end, they will prove to be personally treacherous to those who do not serve their purpose or go along with their agenda.

There are also those who have a mixed spirit. These are the individuals that have a combination of truth and false teachings. They can bring much confusion because they may start from a premise of truth, only to subtly take a detour into a heretical presentation. In a sense, these people are more dangerous than a wolf in sheep's clothing because they can defuse true discernment in God's people by presenting truth up front, opening a Christian up to innocently come into agreement with their heretical foolishness. These people prove to be hard and judgmental when you challenge them in their heresy.

Finally, there are those who are wicked, ever operating in a wrong spirit and are obvious about their heretical agendas. They could be motivated by a “religious spirit,” “seductive spirit,” an “anti-Christ spirit,” or a “familiar spirit.” Those who operate with right doctrine but are under a wrong spirit want their way in those matters that are part of their agenda. These individuals believe that since they are right doctrinally everyone should line up to their deviant ways and thinking as well. Those who have a mixed spirit insist on being right even if they are wrong, and believe you should come into agreement with them without questioning or discern-

ing them, but those who are wicked, and clearly in the wrong spirit are looking to be exalted like God and followed like the Pied Piper into destruction.

This brings us to the ultimate test when it comes to spirit and that is the fruit that is being produced. Everything will leave some type of taste or “wake” behind it that will reveal the character, influence, and agenda of a person. It is easy to discern a person's agenda by listening for what they emphasize the most. Jesus of the Bible will be the center and source of the emphasis of those operating in the right spirit, but those who are in the wrong spirit will make some left turn and make it about their doctrine, their beliefs, their deeds, or their insights. Such emphasis will be man-centered and not Christ-centered. It will bring you to the feet of self-importance of the person and not to the precious feet of Jesus where you will walk away with a greater sense of who He is.

The fruit left behind in one's spirit after such encounters will clearly reveal the real spirit behind something. When man is being exalted in any way, the fruit will be confusion, frustration, and division of some type; but, when Jesus is lifted up, one experiences oneness of spirit as he or she walks away in an attitude of worship, knowing and sensing that the spirit is satisfied and the soul is at peace.

Jesus clearly tells us we will be known by our fruits and not by our pet doctrines, our religious presentations, and our deeds (*Matthew 7:16, 20; Galatians 5:22-23*). Fruit entails attitude, motive, and approach. The right attitude in a Christian should be the fear of the Lord to ensure wisdom and discretion in the handling of matters (*Psalms 111:10*). The right motive must be godly love that will express itself in kindness, gentleness, patience, and moral goodness towards Jesus' flock, lost souls, and struggling sheep; and, a person's true character will be clearly exposed in times of challenges as to the credibility of their word and how

they approach a matter. There is only one way to approach a matter in the kingdom of God and that is under the leading of the Holy Ghost. The main evidence of such leading will be meekness and not rudeness, unbecoming conduct, aggressiveness, judgment, and the out of control, flapping tongue of false accusations (*Matthew 5:5; 2 Timothy 2:24-25; Titus 3:2-4*).

Meekness points to strength under control. A person cannot have temperance or self-control as to personal reactions unless he or she is under control. People who instantly react instead of wisely responding to a situation are those who are going with the ways of the carnal flesh, whether it be logic, assumptions, and/or feelings. Christians who realize that all fleshly reactions first must be properly channeled by the Holy Spirit in line with God's Word will respond with sobriety and humility to a situation in order to ensure they do not bring a reproach on the Lord and discredit their testimony. After all, we are here to bring glory to the Lord and to grow in our knowledge (testimony) of the Lord. As Christians we must approach any challenge in meekness to ensure that we are sensitive enough to move with the Spirit to address the matter, humble enough to enter in with the struggles of others, and open enough to learn or be instructed in the ways of righteousness when we may be veering off in our attitude, motive, or approach.

When we talk about discerning the end times, it will come down to something other than simply our religious activities or worship. Granted, our activities and worship will reveal aspects of our Christian life, but we have to be prepared to walk through the times we live in, while maintaining the integrity of God's Word, and displaying the fruit of the Spirit as our testimony of Jesus grows and is perfected.

Jeannette made an interesting statement to me. She stated that it appears that Christians in America are escapists. They want to escape the responsibility of personally studying the Word, escape the process of their faith being refined in fiery ovens, escape the challenges of walking out the Christian life in child-like obedi-

ence, escape the testing of their character to see if they are prepared to stand, the shaking of their religious foundation to see if they are truly standing on the Rock, the adversities of tribulations that will reveal their real point of reliance, and to somehow escape the times they are living in by hiding in something that amounts to nothing more than wishful thinking and fantasy. They want to escape the realities and challenges of this world by having some type of emotional experience in worship, finding someone who will tickle their ears with what will make them feel good in their present inept state, and allow them to take a spiritual nap in some pew while soothing their religious conscience. In essence, they want heaven to be a type of "nanny state," where they simply slide into heavenly bliss, without selling out to the Lord and living a life truly consecrated unto Him.

These individuals want the happiness of the world and not the holiness of God. They seek the adoration of the world and not the approval of God. They want deliverance without changing their master, new life without transformation of the mind, justice without moral rightness, mercy without true repentance, and grace without faith and righteousness. They want the things of God handed to them without denying self of its right to life on its terms, while picking up a personal cross to become crucified to and separate from the world to follow Christ into the godly disciplined life of a disciple. They want the flesh satisfied while ignoring how lean their spirit is becoming in the midst of the world's endless vanity. They want it all, the world, heaven, and their sin, while tacking God onto their vain activities. However, God will be missing from their pursuits while they compromise the truth of His Word, the holiness of His character, and the redemption of His work to gain the world as they continue to sell their soul to the god of this world. In their half-heartedness towards God, their driving desire is to compromise with the world without facing the corruption that will ultimately take their soul down into the cesspool of desperation.

Right now we are in the book of Hosea on Friday nights. God's main complaint against Israel (Ephraim)

was that the people strayed from Him so they could marry the world. Because of their compromise with the idolatrous and pagan practices of the people of the land, God called them a cake unturned (*Hosea 7:8*). In other words, they were half-baked, black on one side because their burning lusts caused them to come into unholy agreement with their enemies to gain the world, and doughy on the other side. The reality was that in their spiritual state they did not taste good to the world and they were useless to God. They had come under the spirit of whoredom and were walking in a state of rebellion and deception.

I had to ask how much of the church is unturned and how many Christians are half-baked? Keep in mind, the major sign in the last days is deception. I want to point out again that the last days started at Pentecost according to *Acts 2:14-18* at the time the Lord actually poured His Spirit out on His new Church. We have been in the last days for two thousand years, and for two thousand years the greatest affront against the Church in each generation has been leveled at truth. To confirm this, all you have to do is study the history around the written Word and if you want to understand the subtle attack taking place against it today, check out Gail Riplinger's website:

(<http://www.servantofjesuschrist.com/archives/tag/gail-riplinger>), and order either her book or DVD, called the, "New Age Bible Version."

Let me clearly state, "JESUS IS COMING!" The question that will and should naturally follow such a statement is, "Are you ready for His coming?" In the late 1970's whether one was ready or not was a major question that was being asked in the churches I attended.

This enthusiasm over eschatology occurred over four decades ago, but since our present life is like a fading flower, it may seem a while back that this enthusiasm actually existed, but in the Lord's time frame, His coming whether tomorrow or 50 years from now or a hundred years in the future, is going to prove to be very soon. Clearly, we are closer to His coming, but it will always come back to whether we are spiritually prepared and ready for His coming, which will

be revealed by the fruits we are now producing or will leave behind. We can talk about His coming every day, but if we are like the five foolish virgins in *Matthew 25:1-13* who were watching for the bridegroom but did not have enough oil to endure the long night until he came for them, we will still miss the actual event of going with Him.

It is obvious that it is not enough to watch for an event, we must be prepared to become part of that event. It is also clear that we must have the oil (Holy Spirit) to endure the great night that will come upon the face of the world in the end of the age. In fact, when the night is the darkest, the oil will burn the brightest as it maintains the integrity of the light (witness). Jesus verified this when He stated, *“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matthew 24:13).*

Endurance has to do with faith that walks according to expectation (hope) of what is yet to come (*Hebrews 11:1*). As Jesus clearly warned in *Luke 18:6-8*, *“And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”*

Obviously, we have much religious activity going on in various churches and there has been a great push for worship, but such activities do not constitute preparation. We have to be prepared to walk through the times we live in, while maintaining the integrity of God’s Word, displaying the fruit of the Spirit, and establishing our testimony. Preparation for the last days has to do with the Christian walk and not religious activities or outward worship.

The Apostle John made this statement in *1 John 2:6*, *“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.”* Walk has to do with our attitude and conduct. One of the statements that I keep thinking of in regard to the end of the last days is found in *Luke 19:13*, *“And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.”*

There are a couple of things I want to point out in this scripture. The first is that the lord gave the servants the talents they needed to function until he came back. He clearly did not leave them to their own devices. Is this not true of our Lord? He has given us the Holy Spirit who distributes gifts and talents as He will to ensure the edification of the Church and the proper function of the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men (*1 Corinthians 12:4-11*).

The next thing I noticed about this verse is that the lord of this household left a simple instruction that could easily be followed by his servants. Our Lord has left us simple instructions that can be followed because we have been given the means to do so. These instructions can be found in His Word but have been summarized in the commands to love God, others, and the brethren in an honorable, sacrificial way (*Mark 12:29-31; John 13:34-35; Romans 13:8-10*). Godly love ensures proper submission to that which is honorable, and when honoring or preferring others over self, such love will always choose the excellent way of righteousness (*Romans 12:9-10; Ephesians 5:21*).

The simple instruction the Lord left us in this text was to, *“Occupy till I come.”* This brings us to the final point of preparation. We must be prepared to endure the age we are living in and trust that we have all we need at hand to carry out the simple instructions of the Lord, which points to “occupying” until He comes.

“Occupy” is an interesting word. It points to inhabiting, living, and residing. In order to live in something, we must conquer the territory we are to live in in order to claim it. It means overcoming that which opposes us in order to take possession of it. A good example of this was the Promised Land.

In God’s plan the Promised Land belonged to Israel, but they had to go in and conquer it before they could occupy it and benefit from it. We must be in possession of what God has ordained in order to lay claim to our spiritual inheritance. As pointed out, we are instructed to possess our souls in patience (*Luke 21:19*). *Hebrews 6:12* states, *“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through*

faith and patience inherit the promises.”

The opposite of occupy is vacant. Vacant points to empty, unused, and lifeless. Clearly, the opposite of “occupy” shows us how the fruit of rebellion, half-heartedness toward the Lord, and compromise will manifest itself. *Luke 21:34-35* charged us to, *“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”*

In *Matthew 24*, *Mark 13*, and *Luke 21* we are told what we need to do to occupy. We are to watch in relationship to the times we live in. We watch to guard our own spiritual lives against the thief who wants to rob us of our right standing in the Lord, kill our life in Christ, and destroy our testimony. Watching ensures that we will not be spiritually sleeping but in a ready state for what comes. To be ready we must become a faithful servant in the household of Jesus Christ. We cannot be foolish and say to ourselves that our Lord is delaying His coming; therefore, we can live contrary to our Christian life and responsibility.

We must not let our hearts fail regardless of what we see happening. Instead we must look up, knowing that our redemption is drawing nearer and take heart that we are not of this world; rather, we belong to the world to come. We must not only watch and be ready but we must pray always that we are counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man without dread because we failed to do what was right, ashamed because we have done our own thing, or sense His rejection because we have rejected Him as the way, the truth, and the life. (*Luke 21:36*).

The question remains simple, “Are you presently occupying until He comes?” †

“We are quick to be content to carry the title of being a ‘Christian’ instead of walking out the Christian life. Carrying the title of ‘Christian’ will not get you to heaven—walking out the life attached to it will.” - Rayola Kelley

APPROVED UNTO GOD

Part 1

By Jeannette Haley

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” – 2 Timothy 2:15

A lot can be, and has been, said about the powerless, undiscerning, sleepy, weakened, and ignorant state of the organized church of today, and most of that is due to a failure on the part of God’s people to apply the above verse to their own lives. The first part of this verse says to “study.” Even though this was written to Timothy by the Apostle Paul, it applies to every Christian because the truth is if a Christian cannot learn how to feed him or herself, he or she will become spiritually anemic. Period. We can’t afford to sit back and expect to be fed enough “spiritual food” (even if it’s “meat,” which it normally isn’t) once a week for 45 minutes on Sunday mornings to last us all through the week, let alone cause us to grow and mature in the Lord.

Just how complacent is modern man towards the things of God? A. W. Tozer wrote, “Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain.”

The question is just what are we to study? First, we are to study God’s Word. That means we aren’t in study mode when we pick up our Bible and breeze through a short portion of Scripture, hoping something pops out at us that makes us feel good about ourselves and our standing in God. Study means dedicated devotion and desire to dig deep, to never be fully satisfied because there is, and always will be, more to learn, and that we are actually more interested in the Person and work of God and what He has to say to us than we are interested in ourselves and our own so-called “wisdom.” To study God’s Word means that we also use study helps such as *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, *Halley’s Handbook of the Bible*, and *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

If a person is truly serious about

knowing God, understanding His ways, walking in close communion with Him, daily pleasing Him, worshipping Him in Spirit and in Truth, growing in Him, and serving Him, then studying the Holy Bible is not an option. If you are sincere about wanting the most accurate Bible to study, then may I suggest you do your homework and research to learn about the origins of the KJV as opposed to all the other so-called “versions” out there today, and why there are thousands of missing and/or altered Scriptures in the new “versions.” If you can talk yourself into doing a solid, in-depth study on this subject, go to: http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/Bble/1611_authorized_king_james.htm and also check out David Daniels’ books on the subject of Bible versions <https://www.chick.com/ask/aboutdaniels.asp>. It is wise to compare any other version with a KJV Bible and note the differences. You will be shocked at Satan’s attacks on God’s Word through the centuries (especially concerning the Godhead, deity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit).

Suppose you asked me for one of my recipes, and suppose I only gave you half of the ingredients. Do you think for one minute that you would end up with the right dish? Of course you wouldn’t, and you would be rightly mad at me! The same is true with the Bible. Those who continually quote and emphasize certain portions of Scripture while ignoring the whole counsel of the Word of God, or who eliminate certain verses in order to bend the Word to “fit” culture, personal preferences, political correctness and questionable worldly practices end up with “another Jesus, another spirit and another gospel.”

The state of the organized church today gives evidence in and of itself that weak Bible “versions” result in weak Christians, and a weak church, just as a steady diet of processed junk food results in a weakened, sickly, dying body. Jesus told Peter to “feed His sheep.” Lambs must be carefully tended until they are old enough to begin to feed themselves. How ludicrous it would be to see a shepherd wrestling with a full-grown sheep in order to shove a bottle of milk into its mouth. Yet, that is what happens in so many of our

dulled down modern churches Sunday after Sunday for years on end with disenchanting believers who never get beyond the milk stage of newborn babes in Christ. (Naturally newborn babes must “*desire the sincere milk of the word, that [they] may grow thereby*” 1 Peter 2:2. The “milk of the word” is doctrine.) BUT then they must go on to follow Christ, work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; that is, work out what God is working in, and go on to perfection (maturity.) *Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1, 2* tells us, “*Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. THEREFORE leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*” [Emphasis added.]

The truth is it is impossible to grow in Christ and overcome the world, the flesh and the devil unless we commit to the study of His Word. This is how we come to know Him, understand the “beginning from the end of all things” and become established upon the Rock. The most exciting and rewarding treasure hunt any of us could ever undertake is when we dig into the real Bible to discover precious gems and nuggets that we never knew or even imagined existed, and then realize that they’ve be there all along, just waiting for us to discover them, and praise God for them, rejoice in them, and cherish them. But, just as in any treasure hunt, if we do our searching and digging in the wrong environment where no real treasure is waiting for discovery, we will be sorely disappointed.

If we fail to study God's Word we will be like a wanderer, aimlessly roaming about in the wilderness without a compass. If we truly want God to use us, as His servants, and to make a difference in the lives of others, then there are no shortcuts when it comes to diligent study of the Bible. Oswald Chambers taught, "If you cannot express yourself well on each of your beliefs, work and study until you can. If you don't, other people may miss out on the blessings that come from knowing the truth. Strive to re-express a truth of God to yourself clearly and understandably, and God will use that same explanation when you share it with someone else. But you must be willing to go through God's winepress where the grapes are crushed. You must struggle, experiment, and rehearse your words to express God's truth clearly. Then the time will come when that very expression will become God's wine of strength to someone else. But if you are not diligent and say, 'I'm not going to study and struggle to express this truth in my own words; I'll just borrow my words from someone else,' then the words will be of no value to you or to others. Try to state to yourself what you believe to be the absolute truth of God, and you will be allowing God the opportunity to pass it on through you to someone else. Always make it a practice to stir your own mind thoroughly to think through what you have easily believed. Your position is not really yours until you make it yours through suffering and study. The author or speaker from whom you learn the most is not the one who teaches you something you didn't know before, but the one who helps you take a truth with which you have quietly struggled, give it expression, and speak it clearly and boldly."

Some proudly emphasize that they don't need any teaching because the Holy Spirit is their teacher. This conclusion is a dangerous example of not "rightly dividing the Word of God: it is confusing for the simple reason that it is generally not spoken in the right context. Here is why: **First**, concerning teaching, Jesus told His disciples to go and make disciples, teaching them to observe (obey) all that He commanded them. (*Matthew 28:20*). Jesus spent 3½ years teaching his

disciples (students) so that they would be prepared to teach others. *Ephesians 4:11-15* says "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: 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." *Colossians 1:28* says, [Christ] "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" [Emphasis mine.]

Teaching was commanded by God in the Old Testament, and by Jesus in the New. The reason the institutional churches are so far removed from true Christianity is because of a failure to teach the unadulterated Word of God. **Secondly**, the Holy Spirit needs something to work with; that is, the Holy Scriptures that a person is personally studying or being taught. As a person meditates on and studies the Word, the Holy Spirit illuminates the Word, giving it life and confirming it as truth when He imparts it into our hearts by revelation. Seasoned Bible teachers who know how to "rightly divide the Word of God" may impart to our mind facts, truths, precepts, words of wisdom and so forth, but the Holy Spirit is the One who quickens, or reveals it to our spirits and makes it living in our hearts. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the discernment to be able to test the spirit behind what is being taught, preached, or proclaimed. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us discernment to recognize half-truths, twisted Scriptures, and the spirit behind the self-proclaimed false "prophets" that are so prevalent today that Jesus repeatedly warned us of as did the Apostles Paul, Peter, John and Jude. **Thirdly**, when people over-emphasize being taught by the Spirit at the expense of being thoroughly disciplined in the Word of God by God-ordained teachers, and through personal study and application of the Word (both Old and New Testaments) to their daily lives, then

they risk becoming 1) prideful in their so-called "spiritual superiority," 2) judgmental "experts" concerning the spiritual lives of others, and 3) they mislead hungry sheep into believing that once they are "born again" they have somehow "arrived" and no study and spiritual growth is necessary: that the Holy Spirit will supernaturally "show" them what they need to know without diligent study, and personal application, of the Word of God. All in all, such an error results in an unbalanced Christian who is often open to a religious spirit, and who can do much damage to those in the Body of Christ who are unstable, or immature in their walk.

In these "*latter times*," Christians who are weak in the Word are often enamored by self-proclaimed "prophets," various "*winds of doctrine*," "*seducing spirits*," and "*doctrines of demons*." (See *Ephesians 4:14*; *1 Timothy 4:1*.) We must pattern ourselves after the noble Jews of Berea who "*in that they received the word with all readiness of mind . . . searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so*" *Acts 17:11*.

A. W. Tozer wrote, over 50 years ago, "We now demand glamour and fast-flowing dramatic action. A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals...The tragic results of this spirit all about us: shallow lives, hollow religious philosophies...the glorification of men, trust in religious externalities....salesmanship methods, the mistaking of dynamic personality for the power of the Spirit. These and such of these are the symptoms of an evil disease." I wonder what Mr. Tozer would say today if he could see how far the faithless church has fallen into apostasy!

Other evidence that we are in the latter days is the rising tide of secularism in the professing church. Out with the old, and in with the new. The problem is, the "old" that is "out" is the KJV of the Bible, the old hymns, the careful teaching of the foundation of our faith (Jesus Christ); a faith that will stand the test of time and endure every assault of the enemy; such as, to name only a few: Creation, Satan, sin, the fall of man, Noah's flood, the Tower of Babel, the covenant of God

with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt through the ten plagues and miracle of the Red Sea, the existence of the nation of Israel in history and prophecy, the Ten Commandments, the Tabernacle and how it points to Christ, the Prophets and fulfilled prophecies, the Virgin birth, the miracles of Christ, and His death, burial and resurrection, and His coming again. Now that the old is out, the new that has come into the secular, modern church is how to be healthy and wealthy, rich and happy; how to get your own way (psychic prayers); how to love yourself (self-esteem); how to get in touch with God through occult practices, eastern (contemplative) meditation, and witchcraft. False prophets and heretics are fawning and falling all over each other to see who can come up with the "latest ear-tickling hair-singeing prophecy" in order to attract followers (and their money) to themselves.

If God's people through the years had maintained diligence in studying the Word of God for themselves, and had emphasized the importance of Bible study to each succeeding generation, perhaps the influx of false prophets and heretics could have been stemmed; or perhaps at least the sheep may have remained awake and alert, prepared to withstand the evil flood that has since spread over the face of the whole earth, while proclaiming a clear and consistent warning to others. There are, of course, a few steady lights still shining in the gross darkness who do *"earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"* Jude 3b, but they are few and far between as many have been called Home, while others have been silenced through marginalization. By marginalization I am referring to the loss of freedom of speech concerning abominable perverted practices; "political correctness"; evolution vs. creation; abortion vs. life; psychology vs. the reality of sin; public education vs. God; banning the Bible in schools, and so forth. In the church world worldliness and/or Nicolaitainism within denominations (and many non-denominational churches as well) has closed the doors to the ministry of God-ordained evangelists and other servants of the Lord whom God has

called to do His work among the sheep. "Christian" bookstores no longer stock books that are truly Bible (KJV) based on such subjects as discernment, hell, sin, repentance, holy living, discernment, etc. The prevailing atmosphere is 99% "Christianity lite." Even "Christian" DVD's are so weak on the Gospel that nobody (in my opinion—I certainly haven't seen them all) could get truly saved by watching them.

Returning to *2 Timothy 2:15* we see that the result of study is to become *"approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."* A workman is someone who knows the rules, procedures and protocols of his or her trade or job well enough to produce an efficient or satisfactory result that is acceptable to his or her boss or clientele. No self-respecting laborer, businessperson, artist, or worker in any other profession wants to compromise his or her work and end up ashamed of the results of his or her labor. How much more so should God's servants be when it comes to their service to the Majesty on High! Isn't Jesus worthy of more than our "leftovers?" We think nothing of throwing at the Lord God Almighty our leftovers of time, energy, and resources and then expect to be blessed now and rewarded in eternity. God gave His very best, Jesus gave His all, and the Holy Spirit came to continue the work in us. The question to ask ourselves is this: "When I stand before the Judge of all the earth to give an account, will I be ashamed?" *"Jesus said, 'Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'"*

In conclusion, consider this wisdom from A. W. Tozer, "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called and his work will be as sacred as the work of the ministry. It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it." We do need to beware of our own heart condition and motives behind why we study God's Word, and why we are His "workmen" lest we fall into the temptation of competitive pride that has to always come

out on top, conceited arrogance that makes us "better than thou," selfish stubbornness that is "always right" based on a few Scriptures taken out of context regardless of what the whole counsel of the Word of God says; or the subtle type of pride that is suave, seductive and sinister.

The question is are you prepared to stand before the Lord, *"approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed"*? †

POWERFUL QUOTES

"There are many who speak only of the forgiveness of sin, but who say little or nothing about repentance. If there is nevertheless no forgiveness without repentance, so also forgiveness of sins cannot be understood without repentance. Therefore, if forgiveness of sins is preached without repentance it follows that the people imagine they have already received forgiveness of sins, and thereby they become cocksure and fearless, which is then greater error and sin than all the error that preceded our time." - Phillip Melancthon (1497-1560)

"Blasphemy is an injury offered to God, by denying that which is due and belonging to him, or attributing to him that which is not agreeable to his nature." - Noah Webster (1758-1843)

"A fervent love for Christ and a heartfelt corporate worship of His Person must be the primary mark of a healthy church. The early church was thus characterized. It met regularly on the first day of the week in remembrance of His death. That weekly outpouring of praise, worship, and thanksgiving had one purpose—to give God His due portion. It isn't primarily a matter of my need, my edification, my enjoyment, or my spiritual satisfaction, but of His worth in my eyes and in the eyes of the church." - *The Berean Call*, 10/17

"Jesus calls us to his rest, and meekness is His method. The meek man cares not at all who is greater than he, for he has long ago decided that the esteem of the world is not worth the effort." "The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions." - A. W. Tozer

SOMETHING TO PRAY ABOUT!

Occult Roots Of The Modern Bible Versions

By David J. Stewart | October 2014

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." - 2 Cor. 2:17

Luciferian Doctrines Infiltrating the Christian Churches. In essence, Theosophy is the worship of Lucifer. Occultists Helena P. Blavatsky and Henry S. Olcott founded the Theosophical Society in 1875. Their number one goal, as stated in "The Secret Doctrine" (a book written by Blavatsky), is "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Man without distinction of race, colour, sex, or creed." (The Secret Doctrine, 1888, Index, p. 32)

The founder of "Lucifer" Magazine in 1887, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), and editor Annie Besant (1847-1933), along with other occultists believed that Christian churches were the key to introducing the doctrines of Lucifer to large masses of people. The 1904 annual report of the Theosophical Society stated: "I believe it is through the Churches and not through the Theosophical Society that Theosophy [the worship of Lucifer]... must and should come to large bodies of people in the West." (Transactions of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky, Annie Besant, 1904, p. 377).

And then just eight years later the 1912 report of the Theosophical Society stated: "Our Lodges continue their propaganda work....Outside the Lodges many of the members engage in what is really Theosophical work such as lecturing, talking on the principles we are trying to put forward, preaching and other activities in connection with the Christian Churches and other organizations...." (Theosophist Magazine, Annie Besant, 1912, p. 88).

Nineteenth century occult mystic Fenton Hort is perhaps best known for his part in the work of the corrupt bible revision committee of 1881. Speaking on the subject of creating a new eclectic New Testament text Hort stated: "At present very many ortho-

dox but rational men are being unawares acted upon by influences which will assuredly bear good fruit in due time, if the process is allowed to go on quietly;" (Life and letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort, Vol. 1, 1896, p. 400).

In the Old Testament Jeremiah said that "their course is evil, and their force is not right" (Jeremiah 23:10). The apostle Paul warned, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." (II Corinthians 11:14,15). Here's some startling information about how Theosophy has infiltrated groups Like "Focus On The Family" and "Christianity Today" magazine. <http://watch-onto-prayer.org/fof.html>

Satan is not sitting idle as are most churches today. Rather, Satan "knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12). Although this particular Scripture reference is to the time during the Tribulation, it is clear to anybody with spiritual discernment that we are living in the end times (toes mixed of iron and clay on Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2:31-45).

Westcott and Hort butchered the Greek. Rudolph Kittles butchered the Hebrew. (http://www.jesusisprecious.org/bible/translation_origins.htm)

All of the modern so-called easy-to-read Bible versions have been corrupted by Luciferian-worshipping occultists. Sadly, the average churchgoer doesn't realize it, and worst, the one's that have been warned don't care enough to address the issue. Please research the evidence. When you do, you'll trash your modern Bible version and cherish the trustworthy King James Bible. †

"Truth stands alone, but Scripture must be compared with Scripture to make sure the intent of God's heart and purpose about a matter is not changed to embrace delusion." - "The Word of God needs to serve as our reality, but the Holy Spirit must ensure and confirm the intent, attitude, or spirit in which we receive it."
-- Rayola J. Kelley

NO PRIVATE INTERPRETATION

(From CREATION MOMENTS)

*"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 Ghost."
2 Peter 1:20-21*

The Apostle Peter reminds us in 2 Peter 1:20 that "no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation."

In this context, prophecy refers to God's words told forth by those who wrote Scripture. In that sense, all of the Bible is prophetic because it is all God's word, breathed out by Him. This general principle, which applies to the whole Bible, clearly applies to Genesis, which is the focus of most of our studies in this ministry.

So, when we read in the early chapters of Genesis how God made the world and how He destroyed that first world in a worldwide Flood, we must recognize that the interpretation of these verses is not to be a private matter.

Yet, interpreting Genesis has indeed become a private matter for many Christians who refuse to believe that God's word means what it says at this point.

So, Genesis tells us that God made the world in six literal 24-hour days. But we don't like that because our scientific textbooks tell us that the universe is billions of years old. So we impose the billion years on Genesis in a private interpretation.

Genesis tells us that God made plants and animals directly. He made plants two days before the flying insects that can pollinate them. But our high-school textbooks tell us that animals evolved from simpler organisms, so we interpret the Creation Week in a figurative sense – another private interpretation.

It is time for Christians to get back to believing that God meant what He said. †

*"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
— Matthew 24:35*

RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

CAN CHRISTIANS REMIT SINS?

Q: "I have heard some Christians put a lot of emphasis on John 23:20-23 about remitting sins. It sounds great, but what does it mean in layman's terms for someone like me?"

A: This is the only time this particular statement was recorded, but if you compare it with *Matthew 18:15-20* you will gain more insight about it and see an important similarity. People have a tendency to take off with these types of Scriptures and make them into a pet doctrine as if there is some new revelation or insight that has been missed for over 2,000 years, ultimately overemphasizing what they think it says without being a responsible Berean by comparing it with other Scriptures to ensure they are rightly dividing the Word to bring simplicity and clarity to it as an established truth (*Acts 17:10-12; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:15*). Comparing the subject referred to in this Scripture with others simply reveals the need for God's people to walk in forgiveness towards those who have offended them and come into agreement together in order to stand in the gap where sin has been revealed in the church.

I want to point out that "remission" has a couple of different applications depending on who is remitting sin. The Bible is clear that as believers we are to forgive those who offend, hurt, persecute, and slander us. This was brought out many times in Scripture (*Matthew 6:12-15; 11:25; 18:21-23; Mark 3:28-29; Luke 17:4; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13*). When it comes to a believer forgiving sin, it requires a type of remission where the person forsakes his or her right to see justice, lay aside the offense to emotionally go on, omit it from the personal lists, or records, to be set free from possible resentment, to send such offense away to avoid any further mental litigation, or yield up all personal offenses to someone in a higher authority in order to prevent bitterness and anger.

Christians are also to stand in the gap for someone who is in sin. This entails becoming identified with the sin in order to serve as an intercessor

before the Lord on their behalf. It is important to also point out that we can only remit something if we have been personally affected, stand in the gap if sin is troubling other believers, or is hindering the advancement of the kingdom of God in other people's lives.

One of my commentaries stated that the priests of the Old Testament could permit or forbid something based on the Law of God. Since we are part of a priesthood the idea of remitting or retaining something fits into this category (*1 Peter 2:9*). We can only do something if the Word of God permits it and we must forbid a matter any credence if the Bible does not allow it. Our authority in any spiritual matter will never usurp the principle or intent of the Word of God.

The second application of remitting sins points to actually "pardoning" someone from paying for a crime. However, a judge is the only one who can pardon a person from paying the full extent of their punishment as dictated by the law. It is clear that as sinners we have broken the law of God and only God can pardon us from paying the price of spiritual death. This is made clear in *Mark 2:1-7*. As believers we received a pardon when we went to the Lord in true repentance and asked for forgiveness. God issued a pardon to us because His Son paid the price for our sins on the cross.

As Christians we must avoid trying to step into God shoes by believing that we have the power or authority to pardon people of unrepentant sins committed against God's Law and that we have the means to atone or take such sin away. Only the blood of Jesus will cover and change the dynamics of sin with its cleansing power, and it is only by receiving Jesus as we humbly embrace His redemption that our sin can be taken away (*Hebrews 9:22; 1 John 1:7*). †



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LET US BEWARE

"Let us beware of handling the Old Testament irreverently, and allowing our minds to doubt the truth of any part of it, because of alleged difficulties. The simple fact that the writers of the New Testament continually refer to the Old Testament, and speak even of the most miraculous events recorded in it as undoubted true, should silence our doubts. Is it at all likely, probable, or credible, that we of the nineteenth century are better informed about Moses than Jesus and His Apostles? God forbid that we should think so! Then let us stand fast, and not doubt that every word in the Old Testament, as well as in the New, was given by inspiration of God." - J. C. Ryle (1856-1925)

COMMENTS

"I just finished watching the new age Bible versions. [DVD]. WOW, I had no idea!! I have always known the KJV was the "true" and correct version, my grandma always told me to use a KJV but I never realized there were different versions of the KJV..." - ID

"I remain amazed at what the general population does NOT know about the Masons. At the 35th or 36th level they do participate in human sacrifice and it appears some reasonably intelligent folks believe, 'Oh well, I would never do that and the lower levels are GOOD.' Folks have lost the ability to reason logically." - ID

"It's my personal perception that this [discipline] is what is sadly missing for the 'kids' these days! Are ALL of the kids now so bad, and worse than we ever were, or is there an ABSENCE OF PARENTING? I think it's the later. Kid's basic nature will always push them to the limit of what they are permitted to 'get away with.'" - FL

"I just finished your book, *Interview in Hell*" [by J. Haley] WOW!! God bless you! I am overwhelmed with what God showed me!" - ID

"I have long since come to the conclusion there are many fools out here that don't want to walk in the reality of life or with Christ & what He truly has for them, sad but true." - ID