

MUSICAL MINISTRIES AND WORDY PREACHERS : PART 1

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Roman Catholicism In Brazil, Praising The Lord Through Song, Hypocritical Lip-Service Or True Christian Examples?, Modern Christian Music, Admonition To CCM Artists, Glory To God Or Glory To The Band?, Some Pointed Questions, Guard Our Mouths And Be Slow To Speak, The Grave Responsibility Of Being Bible Teachers, Humility In Our Understanding Of God's Word, Boldly Preach The Gospel, Don't Be Ashamed Of Your Faith, A Simple Gospel: Faith Of A Little Child, William Tyndale's 1525 New Testament, Smug Roman Catholic Church, Scribes And Pharisees

Some time ago, a dear Christian friend from Brazil mentioned to me in an email message, how as of late, there has been a renewed interest in, and dedication to, the Roman Catholic faith in his country. This rekindling of the spiritual fires from Rome has been due in part to a charismatic movement that was begun by a certain young Catholic priest, who according to my friend, seems to emphasize singing as a part of his ministry. My friend wrote the following. Please note that I have added a few punctuation corrections and a few words in brackets, in order to make his message clearer to my readers:

----- Begin Quotes -----

Some months ago, a young Catholic priest, (he is also a former gym teacher), appeared, and started a movement that [has rekindled] the Catholic faith. The majority of our slow-pace traditional Brazilian Catholics are now more interested in their religion than prior to this young priest['s] arrival.

[I have] nothing against [this] once Jesus is preached, but the problem is that the movement consists of singing and singing and singing.

Once he said that he doesn't like to preach too much, because if he preaches less than five minutes, God speaks;

if he preaches from five to ten minutes, the man speaks; more than that, Satan speaks. (Can you imagine a priest saying this to thousands of Bible-ignorant "christians"?)

----- End Of Quotes -----

To begin with, I am sure that we can all agree that there is absolutely nothing wrong with praising the Lord through our songs. The Bible is literally full of verses which tell us that we are to praise the Lord through word, song and deed. Being as we are specifically dealing with the topic of song, consider the following sample verses which are found in both the Old and the New Testaments. Please note that there are many more which I have not listed here:

"Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises."
Psalm 47:6, KJV

"[To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm.] Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:"
Psalm 66:1, KJV

"[To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of Asaph.] Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob."
Psalm 81:1, KJV

"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."
Psalm 95:1-2, KJV

"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King."
Psalm 98:4-6, KJV

"[A Psalm of praise.] Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be

thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

Psalm 100:1-5, KJV

"I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee."

Psalm 144:9, KJV

"Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely."

Psalm 147:1, KJV

"Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp."

Psalm 149:3, KJV

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

Acts 16:25, KJV

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

Ephesians 5:18-19, KJV

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16, KJV

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms."

James 5:13, KJV

Clearly then, the Lord truly enjoys when His children sing praises to His Name; for as King David also wrote "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." Of course, as I also point out in other articles, such as in "Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?", we must make sure that our praises to the Lord are not just dry words. They must be backed by sound Christian doctrine and good Christian living as well. In other words, we must not simply offer the Lord lip-service through our songs, while our lives are void

of any semblance to the real Christian life. As I make clear in a number of other articles, this was the problem with the Jewish religious hierarchy which was in control of the Temple during the time when our Lord walked the Earth almost two thousand years ago. Allow me to remind you again of the following verses:

"Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."

Matthew 23:2-3, KJV

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

Mark 7:6, KJV

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

James 2:26, KJV

To reiterate, singing songs to the Lord is worth absolutely nothing -- in fact, it is pure hypocrisy -- if we're not truly living the Christian life, and obeying and pleasing the Lord as much as lies within us. Sadly, I have felt for some time that this truth applies, at least in part, to the extremely popular Contemporary Christian Music -- or CCM -- which is now broadcast on many Christian radio stations across the United States of America. While I occasionally enjoy some of the songs which are aired on some of our local Christian radio stations, at the same time, I cannot ignore the dark feeling which comes over me, which gives me the impression that there is something dreadfully wrong with the CCM industry. In other words, I sense something rather fake and plastic about it.

While on the surface the music sounds quite wonderful and sincere, I must question how much of it really comes from the heart, and how much of it is just dry, meaningless words coming from the mouths of spiritless Christians who are more interested in musical perfection, and who have discovered that CCM is an extremely profitable business venture for Christian musical artists in the United States of America. What further disturbs me about CCM, is the way some of our traditional hymns and psalms of praise have been so modernized and given a rap beat, or jazzy tempo, etc. If

one didn't listen carefully to the words -- that is, if they can even be heard -- he could easily mistake some of these so-called "Christian" songs for the evil, lustful music which is found on many ungodly worldly radio stations. Borrowing from the proverbial phrase, I can only wonder if some of the original writers of these sacred hymns aren't rolling over in their graves because of the way in which some of these modern musical butchers have corrupted their beautiful musical praises to the Lord.

What further alarms me concerning modern Christian music in America, is the way in which some of these Christian musical artists are idolized by their fans to the very same degree as their worldly counterparts. Sadly, some of the CCM artists apparently love to have it so. Brethren, these things ought not to be! Consider some of the wise counsel which has been offered to us by the humble Apostle Paul:

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth . . . Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."
1 Corinthians 10:17-18, 31, KJV

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."
2 Corinthians 4:5, KJV

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."
2 Corinthians 10:17, KJV

"Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me."
2 Corinthians 12:5-6, KJV

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."
Galatians 5:26, KJV

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."
Galatians 6:14, KJV

"Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ."

1 Thessalonians 2:6, KJV

For those of you who are involved in the CCM industry in the United States of America, or in any other part of the world for that matter, allow me to ask you a few questions. Who is really being glorified and lifted up through your musical ministry? Is it the Lord; or is it yourself and your band? If you have adopted the practice of passing out autographed pictures of yourself, just like worldly musicians, while you present the excuse that this is merely to appease your fans, it is obvious that you are seeking your own glory, and not the glory of the Lord, and the furtherance of His Gospel. If you think otherwise, then you are only deceiving yourself, and the Lord knows the vain imaginations of your heart.

If you happen to be guilty of this particular sin, I call you this day to repent of your pride and your vanity, and to humble yourself before the Lord and seek His forgiveness. If you have been given the gift of music and songwriting, then I hope that you constantly remember who it is who has given you your gift to uplift the spirits and encourage the hearts of other Christians. As the Apostle James tells us:

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

James 1:17, KJV

Allow me to ask you a few more questions. Are you and your music becoming more like the world; or is the world becoming more like you through your godly music and shining Christian example? Are people coming out from among the worldly body of unbelievers and joining our Christian ranks; or are you, and your fans, being slowly sucked into their ungodly and worldly ways? As you can see, you carry a big responsibility on your shoulders, don't you?

As I explain in some of the articles which are listed at the end of this series, it is dangerous for any church to place more emphasis on music and song, or even on the Gifts and the manifestations of the Spirit, than on the serious study of the Word of God. Some people have become so sidetracked with playing with their spiritual toys, that they have seriously neglected the Giver of those Gifts, and the truths which are

found within His Word. Their churches have been reduced to a night club atmosphere, and they only serve as weak Christian entertainment centers. I find this truly sad.

Returning to my friend's email message, while my response may surprise some of my readers, I can actually agree with some of the wisdom which is found in this Catholic priest's words regarding how much preaching we should do with others. In fact, the main thought behind his words appears to be very Scriptural. That is, if this priest's words are applied in the context of the following verses:

"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

Proverbs 10:19, KJV

"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

Ecclesiastes 5:2, KJV

"A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."

Proverbs 29:11, KJV

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:"

James 1:19, KJV

Clearly, the previous verses admonish us to first be good listeners, and then to choose our words wisely, and to limit them to only that which must be said. Why? Because the more we say, the more chance there is that sin and error will be found in our words. I discuss this same topic of doctrinal error in the article "Exposing the Tactics of the Enemy". As I point out in that article, the Apostle James -- who wrote some excellent advice regarding bridling the tongue -- wrote the following in his Epistle:

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."

James 3:1, KJV

In the previous verse, the word "masters" is translated from the Koine Greek word "didaskalos". Pronounced did-as'-kal-os, it is normally translated as "teachers". Thus, what James is telling us, is that we should not desire to be teachers;

because if we should teach something which is doctrinally incorrect, the Lord may indeed hold us accountable, and will judge us for it, unless we are open to His correction. I am reminded of something that Jesus said in the Gospels:

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Matthew 12:36-37, KJV

As I have mentioned to my readers before, it is for this very reason that you will find a "Last Updated" date at the top of all of my articles. Being as I am only a fallible human being who possesses limited human understanding, I must not only remain open to a newer and clearer understanding of God's Word as the Lord reveals more to me by His Spirit, but I must likewise reflect those changes in attitude and understanding in my articles, so that the Lord's hungry sheep are not led doctrinally astray. In short, as I explain in the article "Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word", performing this kind of work for the Lord does require a certain level of humility, because no one knows it all. So as you can see, I take this writing ministry very seriously. I am reminded of the following verses:

"Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

1 Corinthians 8:1-2, KJV

While the Bible teaches us to be careful about what we say with our tongues, at the same time, as I explain in articles such as "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" and "Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?", there is a balance to be found in the Scriptures. While we are told to guard our tongues, and to watch our words, and our anger, we are also clearly told that, as Ambassadors of Christ, we are to boldly preach the Gospel, following our Lord's very own example. Consider the following group of verses:

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

Matthew 7:28-29, KJV

"And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

Mark 1:21-22, KJV

"But, lo, he speaketh BOLDLY, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?"

John 7:26, KJV

"Now when they saw the BOLDNESS of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus . . . And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all BOLDNESS they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with BOLDNESS."

Acts 4:13, 29-31, KJV

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."

Acts 5:29, KJV

"But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached BOLDLY at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake BOLDLY in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."

Acts 9:27-29, KJV

"Long time therefore abode they speaking BOLDLY in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands."

Acts 14:3, KJV

"And he began to speak BOLDLY in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Acts 18:26, KJV

"And he went into the synagogue, and spake BOLDLY for the

space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God."

Acts 19:8, KJV

"Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more BOLDLY unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,"

Romans 15:15, KJV

"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth BOLDLY, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Ephesians 6:19-20, KJV

"For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

2 Corinthians 10:10, KJV

"So that we may BOLDLY say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Hebrews 13:6, KJV

"He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."

John 5:35, KJV

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:16, KJV

"Quench not the Spirit."

1 Thessalonians 5:19, KJV

So as you can see, there is definitely a time to keep quiet, and to wisely guard our tongues, and there is also a time to open our mouths as widely as possible in order to make known the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we fail to do this; if we fail to let our spiritual lights shine brightly before the world because of our pride, or because of our fear of the opinions of men -- that is, because of the social disease of political-correctness -- then the Lord will be ashamed of us when we finally meet Him. So we must not be ashamed of our faith. This truth is made evident by the following group of verses:

"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."

Mark 8:38, KJV

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 10:32-33, KJV

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Romans 1:16, KJV

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all BOLDNESS, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death."

Philippians 1:20, KJV

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

2 Timothy 1:12, KJV

While I do not agree with a lot of Roman Catholic doctrine, it is possible that what this priest was trying to say, is that God does not necessarily require that we speak a lot of words in order to get His message of Salvation across to the hearers. The primary truth of the Bible can be summarized in a few short phrases and key verses which do not require a lot of explanation; such as John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8 and Romans 6:23. The simple fact is that God's message of Salvation was easily understood and accepted by common people two thousand years ago, and it is equally understood and accepted by many receptive hearts in the world today as well. In fact, the Lord made it so simple, that even young children could understand Him. It is all just a matter of having faith, and believing it, just because God said so. This is a topic I discuss in the article entitled "The Faith of a Little Child". Consider the following group of verses:

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the

kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:3, KJV

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:14, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

2 Corinthians 11:3, KJV

If the simplicity of the Gospel message has become difficult and hard to understand in our modern day, it is due in large part to the worldly preachers and theologians of organized religion who have made the message that way through their implementation of large words and difficult phrases which are beyond the education of the common man. They use so many doctrinal phrases to describe their particular position that it really becomes confusing. It seems that today, one cannot simply be a Christian. He has to be a Christian who adds a variety of doctrinal and denominational adjectives before or after the word "Christian".

As some of my readers will know, personally, I try to avoid all of that confusing nonsense; which is why I only refer to myself as a Christian. No more, and no less. The BBB ministry remains totally outside of divisive denominationalism. In my articles, I try to write in a very straight forward manner. If I think that my readers may not understand something I've written, then I'll explain it further. I will try to simplify and clarify things as much as possible. After all, I am not trying to impress folks with large words. I am trying to feed their souls with the Word of God and to bring them to Christ. That is, if they are not already saved. If a person cannot even understand the message that is being preached, then how will they ever even come to a decision regarding Jesus Christ? So in my opinion, all of this modern doctrinal mumbo jumbo is really self-defeating. I discuss this subject in more detail in articles such as "The Only Credentials You Need" and "The Wisdom Of God vs the Philosophy of Men". The point is, we all need to keep it simple if we expect to reach the lost.

This was basically the same problem which existed 495 years ago when William Tyndale printed the very first English New Testament. Tyndale's goal was to reach the common man, whom he referred to as the ploughman -- that is, the man working

in the field -- with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As you may know, contrary to Tyndale's desire to win souls to Christ, the smug, religious elitists of the Roman Catholic Church of that period debated doctrines in Latin and Greek; while at the same time, they neglected the spiritual well-being of their followers by denying them the Salvation which they so desperately needed. In other words, they withheld the Word of God from them in the common man's language.

As I point out in a number of other articles, Jesus likewise accused the Scribes and the Pharisees of being guilty of a similar crime. In their case, those legalists used the harsh, rigid requirements of the Mosaic Law to prevent people from entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Just as the Roman Catholic Church has done for literally centuries, the religious Jews taught a form of Salvation that was based upon good works, righteous acts, and paying tithes, and not upon the Grace and Mercy of God. Is it any wonder then that Jesus blasted them in the following manner?:

"For they [the Scribes and the Pharisees] bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers . . . But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

Matthew 23:4, 13, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

Written by Bill Kochman

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

MUSICAL MINISTRIES AND WORDY PREACHERS : PART 2

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Modern High-Minded Theologians, Money-Making Bible Hucksters And Abundant Life Prosperity Preachers, Led And Empowered By The Holy Spirit, Put My Words In Thy Mouth, God's Word Bears The Fruit Which He Desires, God's Results Or Just Our Own?, Beware Of Hard Sell Tactics And Pressure Witnessing In The Flesh, Gospel Tract Passing Years, We Must Trust God For The Results, Drawn By Kept By And Known By The Father, Did Peter Forget His Script?, Prepared Sermons Vs Divine Inspiration, God's Program Or Just Our Own?, Those Eloquent Non-Offensive Socially-Acceptable Gospel Diatribes, The Cold Dead Churches, Religion: Opium Of The People, Known When To Stop Preaching, Circus Sideshow Of American Preachers, Abide In Your Calling

Continuing our discussion from part one, sadly, to our own shame, the situation hasn't changed much in our modern day. While there are some men of the cloth who do have a sincere desire to win souls to Christ, and to feed their flocks with the sincere milk of God's Word, there is likewise a growing number of modern preachers and theologians who appear to be more interested in impressing each other with their doctrinal dissertations which are full of impressive language which is native to their profession. They expound upon their beliefs in books, videos and DVDs which reap them a healthy profit.

Just as bad are their companions in crime -- the so-called fast-talking "Abundant Life" preachers a.k.a. the "Prosperity Preachers" -- who love to fleece their flocks for all they are worth, while they promise them the Moon. As I explain in the three-part series entitled "Money-Making Bible Hucksters and Mammon", as well as in a number of other articles, God's Word refers to this wicked and selfish practice as "filthy lucre". In fact, in his second Epistle, the Apostle Peter very specifically writes "And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." You should know that the Scriptures have absolutely nothing good or positive to say regarding these unscrupulous individuals who use their positions as overseers of the Lord's Church for financial advantage. Indeed, they are a plague on our modern Christian society. This becomes very evident by the following group of sample verses:

"And through COVETOUSNESS shall they WITH FEIGNED WORDS MAKE MERCHANDISE OF YOU: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

2 Peter 2:3, KJV

"Not given to wine, no striker, NOT GREEDY OF FILTHY LUCRE; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous . . . Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, NOT GREEDY OF FILTHY LUCRE;"

1 Timothy 3:3, 8, KJV

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, NOT GIVEN TO FILTHY LUCRE . . . Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, FOR FILTHY LUCRE'S SAKE."

Titus 1:7, 11, KJV

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; NOT FOR FILTHY LUCRE, but of a ready mind;"

1 Peter 5:2, KJV

"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 Corinthians 2:17, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for YE DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

Matthew 23:14, KJV

"And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: WHICH DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation."

Mark 12:38-40, KJV

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; WHICH DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation."

Luke 20:46-47, KJV

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold

doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Matthew 21:12-13, KJV

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

John 2:13-16, KJV

"And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Mark 11:15-17, KJV

You will find a more thorough discussion of this topic in the articles which are listed at the end of this current series. This brings us to our next point of discussion. The primary requirement for any preaching of the Word of God, is that in whatever form it takes -- in the pulpit, or online, or in the public square, or in books and on DVDs -- it absolutely must be God-inspired. That is to say, it must be inspired by and empowered by the Holy Ghost. Otherwise, it will just be dry, boring and fruitless. In speaking of how His Disciples would appear before kings and the mighty men of the Earth, you may recall that Jesus said the following in the three Synoptic Gospels. That is, in Matthew, Mark and Luke:

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Matthew 10:17-20, KJV

"But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

Mark 13:9-11, KJV

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

Luke 21:12-15, KJV

In case it isn't already evident, what Jesus is basically saying here, is that we should not trust in ourselves, or in our own human wisdom when it comes to sharing the Gospel of Salvation. Rather, we must trust in the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us, and in fact to empower us, as we carry out our witnessing endeavors. We must let God's words flow out of us -- and not our own words -- as Jesus appears to be saying in the following verse. I have added a few more verses below it as additional support for this Biblical concept:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

John 7:38, KJV

"The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook."

Proverbs 18:4, KJV

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8, KJV

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the

word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

Zechariah 4:6, KJV

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

1 Corinthians 2:4-5, KJV

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, [that is, the Holy Spirit] that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2 Corinthians 4:7, KJV

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake."

1 Thessalonians 1:5, KJV

The truth of the matter is that God has been working in this same fashion since the days of the Old Testament era. The Scriptures make it very plain that it has been God, by way of His Holy Spirit, who has spoken through the mouths of His holy men and Prophets. Consider the following set of verses which verifies this point:

"And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I WILL BE WITH THY MOUTH, AND WITH HIS MOUTH, AND WILL TEACH YOU WHAT YE SHALL DO. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."

Exodus 4:14-16, KJV

"And the LORD met Balaam, and PUT A WORD IN HIS MOUTH, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus."

Numbers 23:16, KJV

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will PUT MY WORDS IN HIS MOUTH; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Deuteronomy 18:18, KJV

"And I have PUT MY WORDS IN THY MOUTH, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

Isaiah 51:16, KJV

"Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have PUT MY WORDS IN THY MOUTH."

Jeremiah 1:9, KJV

"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, KJV

"ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

In fact, I will take this a step further by adding that we must likewise trust in the Lord to bear the fruit which He desires after we have planted the seed of the Word in a person's heart. As I explain in the series "Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service" and in similar articles, God's Word does not return to Him void. In other words, it does not return to Him empty. It accomplishes whatever purpose it was designed for, even if we don't immediately recognize it as such. Not only that, but we need to recognize that God is really the only one who can add lasting fruit to His Church, according to His own Will and Plan. Consider the following group of verses which substantiates these points:

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: IT SHALL NOT RETURN UNTO ME VOID, BUT IT SHALL ACCOMPLISH THAT WHICH I PLEASE, AND IT SHALL PROSPER IN THE THING WHERE TO I SENT IT."

Isaiah 55:10-11, KJV

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat

with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED."

Acts 2:46-47, KJV

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: ACCORDING AS HE HATH CHOSEN US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: HAVING PREDESTINATED US UNTO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

Ephesians 1:3-6, KJV

There was a time quite a few years ago when I was a young Christian, when I employed what you might refer to as hard sell witnessing tactics in order to try to win a person to Jesus Christ. I could sit with a person for hours sharing Scriptures with them, until they were finally pressured into accepting the Lord; even if they weren't really ready to do so in their heart. Now, while my zeal may have been laudable, today, many years later, I have to wonder how many of those poor people were actually saved by my actions, and how many of them remain Christians to this very day. In all honesty, I likewise wonder how many of them went through the motions of praying with me, just so they could get rid of me. I kid you not.

Well, obviously, I have grown older and wiser; and nowadays my witnessing methods and tactics are rather different from my former years. While I am still more than willing to share my faith, and my time, with any sincere, truth-seeker, I have also learned to trust in the Lord more for the results, and not just in my own flesh.

As I mention in a few other articles, for a number of years, before I became more housebound due to my age and certain health issues, I would pass out small Gospel tracts which I created on my computer. When doing so, I would rarely say a word. If a person asked me what I was offering them, I would simply tell them that it was about the Lord, or else that it was an important message for them to read, and that was it. That is, of course, unless they showed a deeper interest and began to ask me certain questions. Now, if I had a captive audience, such as when I was riding in a car, then I would

try to take advantage of the situation to deliver a fuller Gospel message, depending upon the person's receptivity.

The point I am trying to emphasize here, is that unlike in former years when I felt I had to rely upon my own strength and wisdom to win a person to Christ, I eventually learned to demonstrate more faith by simply, and passively, passing out my Gospel tracts, and then letting the Lord speak to a person's heart while they read the Salvation message printed therein. This more passive approach makes their Salvation a work of God's Spirit, brought about through Godly conviction and genuine repentance, and not through a work of my flesh, or as a result of high-pressure witnessing tactics.

In short, the bottom line is that no matter how hard and how long we witness to a person, unless they are drawn by God's Spirit, and convicted in their hearts by God's Spirit, all of our hard work will be in vain. The length of our words, or wordiness, won't make a bit of difference if God's Spirit is not present. Yes, we may quite possibly reap a soul, but the question is, will that convert endure in their newfound faith? Or will they eventually fall by the wayside and perish, similar to the seeds in the Parable of the Sower?

To reiterate, as I mentioned earlier, it must be the Lord who adds to the Church such as should be saved; because they are the only ones who will last. So instead of being a wordy preacher, endeavor to be a Spirit-led witness. This idea of being drawn by the Father to Christ, and in fact being known by the Father, is made evident by the following group of verses:

"ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out . . . No man can come to me, EXCEPT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day . . . And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

John 6:37, 44, 65, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. MY FATHER, WHICH GAVE THEM ME, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

John 10:28-29, KJV

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for THEM

WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME; for they are thine . . . And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name THOSE WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, that they may be one, as we are . . . Father, I will that they also, WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

John 17:9, 11, 24, KJV

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

John 12:32, KJV

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Philippians 2:13, KJV

As I was working on this series, I began to imagine how funny -- or perhaps sad would be a better word -- it would have been, if when the Lord called His first Apostles, and then sent them out two by two to preach the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom throughout the towns and villages of Israel in the tenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, they would have said to Him something like the following:

"But Jesus, please forgive us, and please try to understand that we are really quite ill-prepared to take on such an important job as preaching the Gospel. After all, Lord, we have received very little proper theological training to do this. At the very least, please allow us some time first to write out our sermons on parchment."

Or can you imagine Peter or Stephen standing on the steps of the Temple in Jerusalem, frantically fumbling around in their dusty robes, searching for that prepared sermon? "Oh; I am sorry folks. There won't be a sermon today. It seems I have lost my script." Imagine how many souls wouldn't have been won on those days; and maybe Stephen would have saved his life for a while longer. But you see, God's Spirit was present on those days; and that is all that was needed;

because He was doing the talking, and not them.

Please don't misunderstand me and think that I am totally against prepared sermons. After all, in a sense, all of my online articles are exactly that. They are Bible lessons which I have laboriously researched and typed out for more than twenty-five years now. In fact, to my delight, I know from a few online communications that some pastors have used my work in their sermons. However, at the same time, we need to recognize that the potential problem with preaching from a long prepared sermon, is that we may share what we want to share, instead of what the Lord may really want us to share. There is very little room -- and possibly even no room -- for intervention by God's Holy Spirit, unless the preacher is really yielded to the Lord, and is willing to deviate from his prepared sermon.

Perhaps the hearers are really in need of something entirely different from what may be included in the prepared lesson; but they may never get it if the preacher is following just his own program, and is not in tune with God's Spirit. Maybe the sermon of that slick preacher was indeed eloquent, and worthy of worldly praise, but was it really God speaking, or was it just the preacher? Let's be honest with ourselves for a moment. Many of the sermons which are preached in churches throughout America today are lukewarm, politically-correct, socially-acceptable diatribes that are specifically tailored to offend no one, lest church members be lost, and the weekly offerings drop. And we certainly don't want to lose our (501)(c)(3) tax exemption, do we? I am reminded of the serious warnings which the Lord gave to the Churches of Sardis and Laodicea in the Book of Revelation:

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead . . . And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Revelation 3:1, 14-16, KJV

As some of you will know, some of these modern theological teachers and pulpit preachers are paid to spout off a very

non-offensive, non-inflammatory, patriotic, worldly, secular humanistic, ecumenical gospel which moves and motivates very few people. How can it when it is so spiritually dead? Not only that, but I have read a few online accounts here and there where it has been reported that some pastors have even been fired from their job by the church board, because they refused to go along with the program. Now, whether or not such stories are really true, I honestly do not know. So as lamentable as it may be, in the words of German philosopher and economist Karl Marx, in many modern churches, religion has indeed become "the opium of the people", because the people there are either spiritually drugged, fast asleep, or already dead. And, as Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead." -- Matthew 8:22.

Another potential danger of relying upon prepared sermons, is that while the Lord may have already said by His Holy Spirit what He intended to say, the preacher may continue speaking in his own spirit, by his own strength, and in his own wisdom. While we want to follow the Apostle Paul's wise advice by not quenching, or holding back, the Spirit -- 1 Thessalonians 5:19 -- we also need to make certain that it is still God who is doing the preaching, and not just we ourselves. Let's face it. It is very easy to become lost in one's own zeal, and lifted up in one's own pride, possibly due to a favorable audience reaction.

For those of my readers who are Americans, you are no doubt aware of the fact that certain Southern Baptist preachers, traveling Evangelical preachers, and Pentecostal preachers are notorious for putting on quite a show in the flesh. They know how to emphasize just the right words, when to stomp their feet, when to clap their hands, and do everything just right in order to captivate their audiences. But how much of it is really inspired by the Lord's Spirit, and how much of it is just to make sure that the collection plate is filled when it is passed around at the end of the spiritual circus sideshow? You'll have to forgive me, but I just can't get into all of that nonsense. I more amply discuss this topic in articles such as "God's Golden Teeth, Or Satan's Delusion?" and "Have You Been Slain in the Spirit?".

Just as we saw earlier in our discussion regarding Christian musicians, what may start out being Christ-glorifying, can easily result in glorification of the preacher if one is not careful. In the United States of America, it seems that many Christians have their favorite preacher. Sometimes I'm asked

by my readers what I think of preacher so-and-so. More often than not, I don't have an opinion, because I don't know the person in question and I am not familiar with their doctrine or ministry. I simply don't pay much attention to organized religion, unless the Lord happens to place a certain issue in front of me, and I am motivated to look into the matter and then present my perspective on the issue. For the most part, I mind my own business, and strive to keep busy by abiding in the calling and ministry which the Lord has seen fit to give me. This is in fact what the Scriptures counsel us to do, as we can see by the following group of verses:

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand."

Romans 15:20-21, KJV

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."

1 Corinthians 7:20, 24, KJV

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

2 Corinthians 10:12-18, KJV

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was

mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Galatians 2:7-9, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

Written by Bill Kochman

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

MUSICAL MINISTRIES AND WORDY PREACHERS : PART 3

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Cult Of The Glorified Preacher, Vain Scribes And Pharisees, Divisions Caused By Man Worship, Modern Idol Worship, Our Jealous God, Apostle John, Dangers Of False Doctrines, False Prophets And Teachers On Social Networks, Strange Doctrines And False Prophets In The Early Church, Fruit Of The False Gospel And The True Gospel, The True Gospel Is Offensive And Divisive, The Rising Tide Of Persecution In Western Nations

Continuing our discussion from part two, this problem with preacher worship is nothing new. It causes problems today, just as it caused problems almost two thousand years ago. While I suppose it is okay to admire a preacher who has been instrumental in your personal spiritual growth, and who has perhaps served as a mentor to you, some people take it too far, to the point of it becoming actual man worship or woman worship. Even worse is when Christian bands, church founders, preachers and cult leaders encourage or even demand this kind of special attention from their followers. Over the years, I have witnessed this dangerous behavior occurring with quite a number of individuals; some of whom I discuss in a few other

articles. As I note in "The Gospel of Thomas: Introspection or Heaven-Spection?", the Scribes and the Pharisees were most certainly guilty of doing this, and Jesus did not hesitate to expose their vanity. Consider the following group of verses:

"BUT ALL THEIR WORKS THEY DO FOR TO BE SEEN OF MEN: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted . . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

Matthew 23:5-12, 27-28, KJV

"And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation."

Mark 12:38-40, KJV

"Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets."

Luke 11:43, KJV

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation."

Luke 20:46-47, KJV

"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

John 12:42-43, KJV

The Apostle Paul likewise dealt with this issue of preacher worship, or man worship, on at least one occasion when he wrote to the brethren at the Church of Corinth. The Apostle Jude also mentions a similar problem in his Epistle as well. Consider the following verses and be warned:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

1 Corinthians 1:10-13, KJV

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase . . . Therefore let no man glory in men . . ."

1 Corinthians 3:3-7, 21, KJV

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

1 Corinthians 4:6-7, KJV

"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, HAVING MEN'S PERSONS IN ADMIRATION BECAUSE OF ADVANTAGE."

Jude 1:16, KJV

As I said, today is no different. So many Christians flock around certain preachers, or certain Christian bands, or the

teachings of certain church leaders, or certain cult leaders, as if they are gods. My friends, this is modern idol worship. But beware because our God is a very jealous God, and He will not endure such foolishness forever. Now, while some of the following verses are referring to physical idols, the spirit and intent of these verses can just as easily apply to the worship of real people as well:

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;"
Exodus 20:5, KJV

"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:"
Exodus 34:14, KJV

"For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God."
Deuteronomy 4:24, KJV

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,"
Deuteronomy 5:9, KJV

"(For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth."
Deuteronomy 6:15, KJV

You may also recall that in the Book of Revelation, when John made an attempt to bow down and worship the Angelic Messenger who spoke with him, he was prevented from doing so, as we see by the following set of verses:

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
Revelation 19:10, KJV

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto

me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."

Revelation 22:8-9, KJV

Worship God. Can it be any simpler than that?

Aside from self-glorification and man worship, yet another danger which exists with some long-winded preachers is that because of their pride, or their rebellion against Biblical truth, they can become vehicles or conduits for teaching erroneous and false doctrines. In other words, instead of listening to the Voice of the Spirit, and gaining a proper understanding of the Scriptures by the same, they instead rely upon their own knowledge and human wisdom. As a result, they end up with some really strange and twisted doctrines. This reliance upon human wisdom is contrary to what the Apostle Paul wrote in the following verses:

"And my speech and my preaching was NOT WITH ENTICING WORDS OF MAN'S WISDOM, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should NOT STAND IN THE WISDOM OF MEN, but in the power of God."

1 Corinthians 2:4-5, KJV

"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."

Colossians 2:8, KJV

Please note that this problem with false doctrines is not just something that happens within cults. There are certain churches and denominations which likewise embrace doctrines which are contrary to the Scriptures. Some Christians also view them as cults as well, because the members of those churches blindly follow their leader without question, or else they adhere to the doctrines of their denomination's founder, as if that person's teachings are the very word of God. If you are observant, then you probably already know who some of them are. I mention a few of them in a number of my other articles as well.

If you are a frequent user of the Internet, and particularly of the social networks, then you will no doubt know exactly what I am referring to, because for years now, these sites have been flooded with all kinds of wannabe, self-proclaimed "prophets" and "Bible teachers" who spew forth all manner of

ridiculous nonsense. In fact, earlier today I came across a post on Facebook where this man had posted an image, taken in Arizona, I believe, which showed the legs and clawed feet of an unknown animal. The appendages were kind of red in color, and seemed to be covered in mange.

Well, believe it or not, but this fellow was apparently so deceived -- and apparently deeply involved with conspiracy theories -- that somehow he was trying to make a connection between the image he had posted, and the beast which is mentioned in the Book of Revelation. I mean, it was totally off-the-wall, folks. It was utter nonsense. I come across this kind of stuff all the time, and it just really makes me shake my head. Such people have no business preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They need to stick their heads in the Bible for a number of years, and learn the truth before they try to be teachers of God's Word. They also need to ask the Lord for some Wisdom and Spiritual Discernment, so that they aren't so easily deceived by all of this online crap.

At any rate, I have harped about these self-promoting online deceivers for many years now. The tragedy is that not only do they make the rest of us Christians look silly, but they also discredit the Cause of Christ as well. Nonbelievers see all of the nonsense that is posted by our misguided brethren, and they wonder why in the world they would even want to embrace our faith. They already believe that we belong in the loony bin. So just seeing all of this nonsense makes the situation even worse, insofar as us reaching them with the true Gospel. Deception truly runs deep. I am reminded of the following verse that was written by the Apostle Paul in his second Epistle to Timothy:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

Sadly, just as occurs with man worship, this problem with false prophets and strange doctrines has also existed since the Christian Church was first established during the First Century. In studying the New Testament, we find quite a few verses which demonstrate that Jesus and the Apostles found it necessary to admonish their flocks against embracing the strange doctrines which prevailed even at that time, and the false prophets who claimed to have an anointing from God. Consider the following group of verses:

"Then understood they how that he [Jesus] bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Matthew 16:12, KJV

"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:"

Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"BE NOT CARRIED ABOUT WITH DIVERS AND STRANGE DOCTRINES. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to SEDUCING SPIRITS, AND DOCTRINES OF DEVILS;"

1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"For the time will come when they will NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And THEY SHALL TURN AWAY THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH, and shall be turned unto fables."

2 Timothy 4:3-4, KJV

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Matthew 7:15-20, KJV

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Matthew 24:11, 24, KJV

"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

Mark 13:22, KJV

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 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."

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

2 Peter 2:1, KJV

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

1 John 4:1, KJV

As we have now seen, the fruit of the false gospel that is preached and embraced in so many churches today is spiritual lethargy, deception, compromise with the world, and sleep. Should I even add death to that list? Because of this false gospel, we have churches that look more like night clubs than holy places of worship. We willingly accept gay and lesbian bishops, pastors and priests. We give blessings to same-sex couples. We freely throw our money at fast-talking preachers. We give a pass to adultery. We dress as if we are not in the presence of a holy God. And so much more.

In contrast, the fruit of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ is lives changed, as well as souls saved. Furthermore, unlike the socially-acceptable, politically-correct, false gospel which the majority of people like because it makes them very

comfortable, the true Gospel of Jesus Christ is offensive to this increasingly rebellious and sinful world. It tells them that they are not okay, that they are sinners, and that they are in eternal danger unless they repent. It makes them very uncomfortable. The true Gospel stirs up people one way or the other, and it forces them to make a decision. They either embrace the Gospel of Christ, or else they get angry, resist it, and fight against it. As Jesus said in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke:

He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

Matthew 12:30, KJV

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

Luke 11:23, KJV

The Apostle Paul said something similar in his two Epistles to the Christian brethren at Corinth. Consider the following set of verses:

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

1 Corinthians 10:21, KJV

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? . . . 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, 17-18, KJV

So again, the true Gospel forces people to make a choice. It does not allow them to remain on neutral ground. Contrary to the false gospel which has been embraced by so many people in organized religion, the real Gospel is divisive. Furthermore, as many of us have already observed, it is quickly becoming even more offensive, as well as more divisive, just as we Christians are likewise becoming more offensive, and more divisive, to the world, as each year passes, and as humanity strays further and further away from the manner of living which is ordained in the Scriptures. If you happen to be an awake Christian, it is not difficult to see this. It is as

if God is separating the wheat from the tares more and more. He is forcing everyone to choose their side. What side are YOU on?

My dear friends, let's face it. We are in fact headed in very opposite directions. So how can a serious clash not occur at some point? As I point out in articles such as "He Who Fights and Runs Away: Choose Your Battles Wisely" and also in "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution", if we stand up for the Gospel, eventually, we will be subjected to persecution in one form or another. In fact, I think it is safe to say that while persecution against Christians in Muslim nations has been around for quite some time now, we are now seeing low levels of persecution against Christian people in Western Christianized countries as well. Two of the catalysts behind this rising tide of persecution are our Bible-based stands against same-sex "marriage" and abortion. Exactly how bad it will get in the foreseeable future remains to be seen. I am not about to make any predictions.

If you seriously doubt the divisive and offensive nature of the true Word of God, then may I suggest that you undertake a careful study of the audience reaction to the sermons which were given by Jesus and His early followers, before worldly compromise took its toll on the churches. As you will quickly discover, while many of the common people gladly received the Gospel, the organized religion of the day -- that is, the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees -- and the government of the day -- the various Herods -- did not. They were offended, and they did strike back. These truths are made quite evident by verses such as the following:

"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
Matthew 11:6, KJV

"And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."
Matthew 13:57, KJV

"Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?"
Matthew 15:12, KJV

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his

sisters here with us? And they were offended at him."

Mark 6:3, KJV

"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

Luke 7:23, KJV

"Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? . . . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

John 6:60-61, 66, KJV

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."

John 15:22, KJV

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."

Acts 5:33, KJV

"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth."

Acts 7:54, KJV

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

Galatians 4:16, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Matthew 10:34-39, KJV

"Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Mark 13:12-13, KJV

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law."

Luke 12:51-53, KJV

Please go to part four for the conclusion of this series.

Written by Bill Kochman

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

MUSICAL MINISTRIES AND WORDY PREACHERS : PART 4

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Divisive And Offensive Nature Of The True Gospel, Persecution Of The Early Church, We Are Not Alone In Our Sufferings, Our Common Trials, Concluding Remarks, BBB Suggested Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part three, as you can see, the real Gospel of Jesus Christ results in offense, and in division. The fiery truth of God's Word exposes the sins of the rebellious, and it also separates the believers from the

nonbelievers, oft times even within the same families. It divides the sheep from the wolves. Similar to myself, some of you who are reading this series can no doubt attest to this truth, because you have likewise experienced these things in your own lives as well. Exactly as Jesus stated in the previous set of verses, the First Century Apostles did in fact suffer a lot of persecution at the hands of their oppressors, due to their boldness in preaching the Gospel. Following are some additional verses which clearly reveal how this indeed came to pass:

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."

Matthew 24:9-10, KJV

"And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."

Luke 21:16-19, KJV

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me."

John 15:18-21, KJV

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

John 16:2, KJV

"Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison."

Acts 5:17-18, KJV

"When they [the Jews] heard these things, they were cut to

the heart, and they gnashed on him [Stephen] with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Acts 7:54-8:1-3, KJV

"Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people."

Acts 12:1-4, KJV

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks."

Acts 16:19-24, KJV

"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:"

Acts 24:5, KJV

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

Acts 26:9-11, KJV

"For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

1 Corinthians 4:9-13, KJV

"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;"

2 Corinthians 6:4-5, KJV

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

2 Corinthians 11:23-27, KJV

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:"

2 Timothy 2:12, KJV

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

2 Timothy 3:12, KJV

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Hebrews 11:32-40, KJV

"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

Revelation 2:13, KJV

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and

their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

Revelation 6:9-11, KJV

"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Revelation 18:24, KJV

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Revelation 20:4, KJV

Allow me to conclude this series by saying that if we modern Christians in the West do in fact become the subjects of even more serious persecution due to our willingness to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the face of growing adversity, at least we have the comfort of knowing that we are by no means alone. As we have now seen, our spiritual forefathers and ancestors down through the ages have suffered the very same thing for their faith. Thus, we are in very good company. Let me leave you with a few closing verses:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy . . . Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

1 Peter 4:12-13, 5:9, KJV

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:"

2 Peter 2:9, KJV

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

James 1:2-3, KJV

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server:

Abundant Life Doctrine: Scripturally Exposed!
Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?
Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?
Christian Witnessing: Winning the Sheep and Waging the Warfare!
Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution
Exposing the Tactics of the Enemy
God's Golden Teeth, or Satan's Delusion?
Have You Been Slain in the Spirit?
He Who Fights and Runs Away: Choose Your Battles Wisely
Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word
Lying Wonders of the Endtime
Money-Making Bible Hucksters and Mammon
MP3s, Commercialized Christianity and Christian Hypocrisy
Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service
Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
The Battle is Not Yours Alone!
The Faith of a Little Child
The Gospel of Thomas: Introspection or Heaven-Spection?
The Lord Will Lift You Up
The Only Credentials You Need
The Wisdom Of God vs the Philosophy of Men

Written by Bill Kochman

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>