

# THE VOICE OF THE LORD

**H. D. Williams, M.D., Ph.D.**

A series of horizontal lines of varying lengths and colors (teal, light blue, white) extending from the right side of the text area across the bottom of the slide.



# VERSES

- THE FOUR TENETS OF HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHIES IN HISTORY

- (1) Yea, hath God said. (Genesis 3:1)
- (2) Ye shall not surely die. (Genesis 3:4)
- (3) Ye shall be as gods. (Genesis 3:5)
- (4) Ye shall know good and evil. (Gen. 3:5)

USUALLY, AT LEAST 3 OUT OF THE FOUR

# TEXT

- “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).  
(stoicheion = principle, proposition, element)

# VERSES

- “Even so we, when we were ...in bondage under the **elements** of the world:” (Galatians 4:3).

# VERSES

- “...how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” (Galatians 4:9).
- “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world,” (Galatians 1:4)
- “Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:” (Exodus 34:12)

# VERSES

- “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Timothy 4:16)
- “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)
- “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves,...” (2 Timothy 3:1-2).

# Dean Burgon's Comment

- Dean John William Burgon (1813 - 1888) said men would use conscience as their primary guide, to (eventually) dethrone God's words. He quotes his contemporary, a modernist:

- MODERNISM (External Truth)

- “The principle of private judgment,” (it is said,) “puts Conscience between us and the Bible, making Conscience the supreme interpreter.” “Hence,” it is said, “we use the Bible,—some consciously, some unconsciously,—not to override, but to evoke the voice of Conscience....”

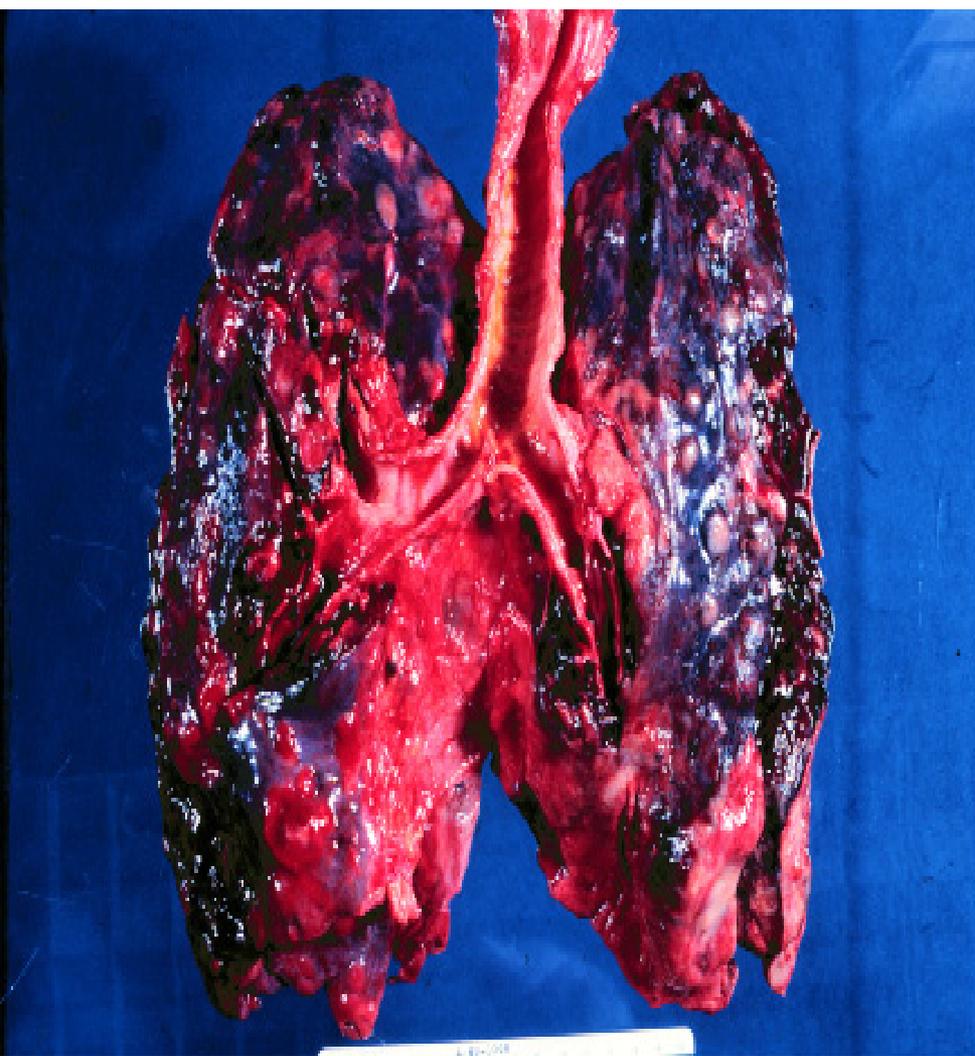
- Dean John William Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation* (Dean Burgon Society Press, Collingswood, NJ, originally published in 1861, 1999) xxii.

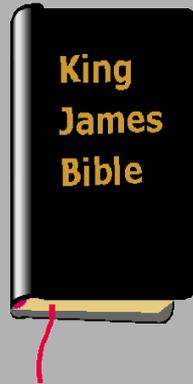
**Burgon continued: (He described the full blown problem to come in postmodernism)**

- **POSTMODERNISM** (Internal Truth, No Bible)
- “‘The Book of this Law,’ (as Hooker phrases it,) is dethroned; and Man usurps the vacant seat, and becomes **a Law unto himself!** **God Himself is dethroned,** in effect, and **Man becomes his own god.**”

- Dean John William Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation* (Dean Burgon Society Press, Collingswood, NJ, originally published in 1861, 1999) xxii.

# A STORM OR A CANCER: BOTH CAUSE SYMPTOMS





**THE VOICE OF THE LORD**

**In Relation to  
Revelation, Conscience, Inspiration,  
Illumination, and Postmodernism**

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**H. D. Williams, M. D., Ph. D.**

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# OUR CONTRACT

- Tertullian (c155-230 A.D.) said:
- “Now, what is “the dead” but the flesh?

And what is ‘the voice of God’ but the Word? And what is the Word but the Spirit, So much has been settled by the voice of God; such is the contract with everything which is born:”

# OUR CONTRACT

- God said in His contract that His Words are “for ever” and that they may not be changed (Deut. 4:2, Psa. 117, 119, Pro. 30:5-6, Rev. 22:18-19, and **MANY OTHER PLACES!!!!**).

# What Started This Work?

- The primary reason: A Significant Symptom
- “What has caused so many people to SEEMINGLY NOT be able to understand simple language?”
- Jesus said:
- *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”*
- (Double negative, *ou me*, Matthew 24:35, Mk. 13:31, LK. 21:33)

# What Started This Work?

- Other reasons:
- The modern man-in-the-pew “prophet.”
- Pastors on TV claiming:
  - that angels were speaking to them, and they could see giant angels ministering to the audience.
  - that various colors over the heads of individuals indicated their spiritual status.

# What Started This Work?

- A Doctor claiming he heard an “audible voice of the Lord” calling him into the charismatic healing ministry.
- Dozens upon dozens claiming:
  - “the Lord told me....”
  - “God spoke to me”

- It is hoped the reflections in this work will help, that the Dx is correct, that the Rx is appropriate, and that the patient will recover.
- A physician is trained to look for one unifying “disease” which causes the symptoms he is seeing.



# **WHAT IS THE ELEPHANT?**

# THE CANCER

- EXTREME SELFISM

AND

TOTAL UNCERTAINTY

- “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:6)
- “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)
- This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... (2 Timothy 3:1-2)

# MODERNISM

- During modernism, there remained a belief that “truth” was external versus internal.
- Some modernists believed:
  - (1) science was the provider of truth;
  - (2) that the secular philosophy of humanism would lead to all truth (epistemology & empiricism);
  - (3) that the Bible contained truth, BUT NOT ABSOLUTE TRUTH and its application was relative to individuals, cultures, or nations. (e.g. the neo-evangelicalism of Billy Graham, Harold John Ockenga = non-separatism)
  - (4) they had the right to apply truth in situations (selfism) (e.g. Murder versus abortion). Unity and tolerance (no criticism) was exalted at all costs.
- (And MODERNISTS were arrogant about it.)

# **DOCTRINES EMPHASIZED DURING** **MODERNISM**

- These doctrines were primarily taught to the saved:
- Depravity, grace, regeneration, imputation, substitution, repentance, redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, sanctification, predestination, resurrection.

# DATES

- Age of Modernism: Bastille, 7/14/1790, to  
Berlin Wall, 1989
- Age of Postmodernism: Berlin Wall, 1989  
to ?
- ? Age of Spiritism: 9/11/01

# THE NEW DISEASE

- In the postmodern age, PPM (philosophy of postmodernism) is the new spiritual disease. It is comparable with the physical disease of AIDS, which incidentally, sprang up as the postmodern age began. AIDS is a disease worse than previous diseases; similarly, PPM is worse than all other philosophies including modernism.
- PPM has acted like AIDS. AIDS is like a cancer. PPM is affecting every part of our society, including the individual, the educational systems, government, art, entertainment, and **particularly the church.**

# PPM: THE NEW DISEASE

- It is the elephant. It is stomping & trampling “Truth”
- It is the reason people cannot accept or cannot understand (secondary to the teaching of deconstructionism of PM, e.g. exegetical manipulation):
  - Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Matthew 24:35
- It is the reason clear truthful explanations are rejected.
  - Such as: problems with the *critical* text, proper translations of God’s Words<sub>24</sub> the providential history of the essentially identical *Received Texts* or Manuscripts.

# The Purpose of this Work

- Therapy must be started at the most basic level, just like cancer and AIDS must be Rxed at the “cellular” level.
- Neglected doctrines will need to be taught:
  - Conscience
  - Illumination
  - Revelation
  - Inspiration
  - the voice of the Lord
  - And how are they interrelated
  - Why do these need to be taught?

# Postmodernism

- The humanistic postmodernist sincerely believes that his “conscience” and “thoughts” are “the voice of ‘truth’”. **There is no external truth.**
- The postmodern theologian believes that his conscience, thoughts, or imagination is the audible voice of the Holy Spirit bringing “revelation”, “illumination” (or “enlightenment”). Therefore, He does not need external written truth. (e.g. they have angels speaking, they are packets of truth).

# Postmodernism

- Any “enlightenment” of truth according to the postmodernist does not come from reason, science, philosophy, and **particularly not from the Bible**, but it comes from listening to their thoughts **influenced by their experiences**.
- The Bible is simply “narratives” to assist in the quest; they are helped by a narrator—no pastor—in home churches or small gatherings.
- (Incidentally, their thoughts emanate from a defiled, seared, and evil conscience).

## OUR NEED

- **“If a man love me, he will keep my words.”  
(Jn. 14:23)**
- **‘The best offense is a strong defense.’**
- **To defend our beliefs, we must “know our enemy;” we must know where he is attacking; what is his strategy; who are his soldiers and what are their weapons and; where he is lurking.**
- **This work is an attempt to define and delineate the enemy’s “latest” battle and methods in his war which he began in the Garden against God’s Words with**
  - **“Yea, hath God said...?”**

# The Problem Is Real

- R. Albert Mohler, Jr., President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said in 1995:
- A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a postmodern world. The principles forged during the Enlightenment... are crumbling
- TCOP, 55-56

# THE PROBLEM(S)

- 1. The Philosophy of Postmodernism:
- Some say: Postmodernism is “the rejection of every expression of certainty.”\*
- This author prefers to call postmodernism extreme selfism and the rejection of truth from any external source. Truth is “centered in the self.” (i.e. internal)

\* John MacArthur, *The Truth War, Fighting for Certainty in an Age of Deception* (Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 2007) 12.

# The Essence of Postmodernism

- **The postmodernist believes there is:**
  - **no external absolute written truth.**
  - **nothing that can be known with certainty.**

**An important cause of PM: Uncertainty about God's Words, promoted by Westcott/Hort, and supported by scholars like D. A. Carson. (who are now disturbed with PPM)**

# THE PROBLEM(S)

**2. There seems to be no understanding of the Biblical meaning of :**

- (a) The Voice Of The Lord**
- (b) The Conscience**
- (c) Revelation**
- (d) Inspiration**
- (e) Illumination**

**as a result of PPM being taught in most secular and Biblical institutions.**

# **THE PROBLEM(S)**

- **3. Consequences: Many are calling themselves prophets:**
  - who are receiving ‘new’ revelations.
  - who believe they can add to the canon of Scripture.
  - who see “giant angels.”
  - who see colors dancing above the heads of individuals in the pews.
  - who believe the Canon of Scripture is open.

# THE PROBLEM(S)

- 4. Consequences: seminary professors going astray by:
  - (A). Teaching the Bible is “ultimately unnecessary in a faith community.”
  - (B). Teaching the Bible contains myth and narratives.
  - (C). Teaching that KJB supporters are either a cult, or a sect, or heretical. (e.g. James Price, Greenville Conference)
  - (D). Teaching Biblical miracles are fables.

## Continuation of previous slide

- (E). Teaching that some Gnostic writings should be placed into the canon of Scripture.
- (F). Teaching that competing “sects” resulted in our current COS.
- (G). Teaching Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, He was not born of a virgin, the resurrection is false, etc. etc. etc.

# EXAMPLE

- Stanley Grenz, a postmodernist theologian, professor of theology and ethics at Carey Hall/Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia believes:
- that Scripture in the ‘new’ world is “ultimately unnecessary.” He joins with other postmodernists who claim that “the faith community” (i.e. the church) contains individuals who interpret ‘narratives’ differently. Therefore, the Bible becomes “the book of the community,” subservient to the community.

# A Postmodernist Theologian

- Stanley Grenz continues:
- “Consequently, the divine nature of Scripture or its status vis-à-vis (i.e. concerning) **revelation** need **not** be demonstrated in the prolegomenon (i.e. first importance) to theology.”

# Increasing Spiritual Failures Attributed To Postmodernism

- Postmodernism is:
  - a change in thinking from previous philosophies.
  - NOT an academic exercise.
  - the rejection of every expression of certainty.
  - denial of (external) truth. Each individual is like a packet of truth. (So, no need for the Bible)<sup>38</sup>

# Postmodernism is NOT an academic exercise

- Dr. Dockery said:
- “As we move into the twenty-first century, a new way of viewing the world has emerged. The “modern” way of thinking, that dominated the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has become obsolete. The modern ideas are no longer relevant.”

Just as surely as the Humanist Manifesto of modernism is real, the Postmodern Manifesto is real.

- (David S. Dockery is president of Union University, TN, former NT professor at Southern Bapt. Theological Seminary) TCOP, 13.

# “Babes in Christ”

Postmodern philosophy has:

- greatly influenced the “babes” in Christ, which are most of those in the pews and in the pulpits; but particularly the young-in-age people
- led to an accelerated rejection of the *received* preserved, inspired, inerrant, infallible, perfect, Words of God.
- led to exaltation of the conscience and thoughts of individuals.

(i.e. This means things are going to get worse!)

# A Weak Conscience Causes Babes In Christ To Be Easily Influenced

- Why? The doctrine of the conscience is rarely taught.
- Roy B. Zuck, Senior Professor Emeritus of Biblical Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary, said:
- “A study of the conscience is perhaps one of the most neglected aspects in biblical anthropology and psychology. Comparatively few systematic theologies even make mention of it. And how many sermons on the subject of the conscience can the reader recall having heard?”

-

# A Weak Conscience

- A weak conscience results from “lack of knowledge of the Scriptures,” and the Devil is using it greatly in these last days.
- “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” (Hosea 4:6)

# Conscience

- A researcher has reported that he could not find any reference to conscience in all Christian writings prior to 400 A.D.
- The first to use the term was Chrysostom (c. 347-407 A.D.), who said:
- “the conscience, *with the created universe, is a means of knowledge of God.*”

# Conscience is not “the voice of the Lord” as many claim

- The American Tract Society (1859) said:
- “The existence of this faculty [the conscience] proves the soul accountable at the bar of its Creator, and its “*voice*” is an important sense, “***the voice of God.***”

American Tract Society Dictionary, “Conscience” (ATSD, A Dictionary of the Holy Bible, American Tract Society, 1859, SwordSearcher, Ver. 5.1, 2007).

# Conscience is not the voice of the Lord

- Lewis Sperry Chafer said:
- “Some maintain that the conscience is not an integral part of man, but is rather the voice of God speaking directly to the one who is exercised by conscience.”
- “On the other hand, and far removed indeed, is the notion that conscience is no more than a bent of mind received by the discipline of childhood.”
- “Neither one of these extremes is sustained by Scripture.”

# Conscience is not “the voice of the Lord”

## WHY?

- Congdon said: “The conscience of a Christian himself may be evil (Heb 10:22), weak and ignorant (1 Cor 8:7, 10, 12), or strong (1 Cor 10:25–27) and pure (1 Tim 3:9).” and witnessing, (Rom. 2:15) to the law written in our hearts.
- “Similarly the conscience of the unsaved may be convicting (John 8:9) or seared (1 Tim 4:2), witnessing (Rom 2:15) or defiled (Titus 1:15). According to 2 Corinthians 4:2 all mankind has a conscience.”

• Roger Douglass Congdon, “The Doctrine of the Conscience” (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 103, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1969, Logos, 2002) 408

# Dean Burgon Agrees

- Dean John William Burgon said men are using *conscience* as their primary guide, to dethrone God's words. He said:
- “The principle of private judgment,” (it is said,) “puts Conscience between us and the Bible, making Conscience the supreme interpreter.” “Hence,” it is said, “we use the Bible,—some consciously, some unconsciously,—not to override, but to evoke the voice of Conscience.” ...

• Dean John William Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation* (Dean Burgon Society Press, Collingswood, NJ, originally published in 1861, 1999) xxii.<sup>47</sup>

**Burgon described ‘the child’ (modernism),  
and then the adult (postmodernism).**

- “The Book of this Law,” (as Hooker phrases it,) is dethroned; and Man usurps the vacant seat, and becomes a Law unto himself!  
**God Himself is dethroned, in effect, and  
Man becomes his own god.”**

•

- Dean John William Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation* (Dean Burgon Society Press, Collingswood, NJ, originally published in 1861, 1999) xxii.

**J. Oswald Sanders (1917-1992), China  
Inland Mission, said:**

- “Ignorance of the function of the **conscience** [from Scripture] and of the divine provision for its healthy exercise leads to **serious spiritual disorders**”
- The conscience’s “healthy exercise” is study of the Words of God, rarely done in the postmodern world.

# **The Apostle Paul said he studied to have a healthy conscience:**

- “... believing **all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:...**

“And **herein do I exercise myself**, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men.” (Acts 24:14d, 24:16)

# Dr. Waite agrees, saying:

- “You cannot depend upon a ‘conscience’ ... Conscience means knowing within ourselves. God has given us a conscience if we know and study the Words of God. When we sin, our conscience says this is wrong. This is true if we have a conscience that is functioning. If a conscience is seared with a hot iron, sin has no affect. To believers, when God the Holy Spirit is living in our bodies, we have a conscience.”

Pastor D. A. Waite, *Romans: Preaching Verse by Verse* (Bible For Today Press, Collingswood, NJ, 2005) 63.

# “What Is The Conscience?”

• The “conscience” is *your witness* (Heb. 9:14, 1 Pe. 3:16), and like a witness in a court room testifies:

- (1) to the law of God written in our hearts (Rom. 2:15),
- (2) to our thoughts, actions, and intents. It judges them.

The conscience is a faculty given to man by God like the mind or spirit of man.

(It is very helpful to the student of Scripture if he will substitute “witness” for “conscience” in the Scriptures, much like “Grace” can be substituted for “Christ” in the Scriptures, to help illuminate what the Scriptures want us to understand (Pro. 9:10) through the work of the Holy Spirit.)

# Conscience in Scripture

- Romans 2:14-15:
- 
- *“For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience [Greek, s uneidhs ij, meaning “to know with” (e.g. with you and God), a witness **with** you of your actions and thoughts] *also bearing witness [Greek, s umma rt urew, testimony] and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;**

# Conscience in Scripture

- Romans 9:1:
- *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience* (i.e. Greek,  $\sigma \nu \epsilon \iota \delta \eta \varsigma \iota \mu$ , “to know with” himself and God, e.g. a witness with you of your actions and thoughts) *also bearing me witness* (i.e. Greek,  $\sigma \upsilon \mu \mu \alpha \rho \tau \upsilon \rho \omega \nu$ , testimony) *in the Holy Ghost,*

# ILLUMINATION IS NOT A VOICE

- Dr. Walvoord said:
- “God is able, however, to speak to the heart of man with such reality that the effect is produced without the need of actual words. Such is the experience of the Christian who is frequently taught by the Holy Spirit the truths of God, and yet the Christian would have difficulty finding words to express all that the Spirit had made known.”

# “The Voice of the Lord” in Scripture

## Seven Concepts

- A survey reveals:
  1. The “*voice of the Lord*” is a metaphor
    - for a person who is the “*Word of God.*”
  2. The “*voice of the Lord*” is an audible voice **“from heaven.”**
    - From between the cherubim above the mercy seat.
    - at Jesus’ baptism, etc.

# “The Voice of the Lord” in Scripture Seven Concepts

- 3. The “*voice of the Lord*” is the words spoken to the prophets and Apostles and **not** recorded.
- 4. The “*voice of the Lord*” is identified with nature such as in thunder and lightning.
- 5. The “*voice of the Lord*” is the Words spoken or given by the Holy Spirit.

# “The Voice of the Lord” in Scripture Seven Concepts

- 6. The “voice of the Lord” will be the “voice” heard in the future at the resurrection of the saints and at the Great White Throne Judgment.
- 7. \*\*\*\*The “*voice of the Lord*” is also all of the inscripturated words given to the prophets and Apostles.\*\*\*\*\*

# Our Job

- Our job is to keep doing what we are doing:
  - Defending the *received* Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Words that lie behind the KJB, and the most accurate and faithful translations into other languages.
  - Teach doctrine from those words as clearly as we can.
  - Place emphasis on certain doctrines to counter PPM

# The Three Umpires

- The pre-modernist umpire says: “There’s balls and there’s strikes, and I call ’em the way they are.”
- The second, a modernist, asserts “I call ’em the way I see ’em,”
- The third umpire, a postmodernist, claims “they ain’t nothin’ until I call ’em.”



08/09/2006

# The “Deformation” Versus The “Reformation”

- Since most believers are “babes” in Christ and since unbelievers are being influenced by postmodernist’s secular and theological pundits:
- The “deconstructionism” of PPM will return man under the banner of Rome’s good works salvation for any person in any religion”:
- PPM is an epistemological destruction of the literal reading of the Bible.

# Typology of Elijah's Experience

- THE STILL SMALL VOICE

- 1 Kg. 19:9-15
- Elijah was told to stand upon the mount (the Rock).
- Elijah was in a dark (cave).

# Typology of Elijah's Experience

- God was not in the dramatic loud wind, earthquake, and fire.
- Elijah was in the dark cave when he heard the still small voice (Heb. = silent, crushed = indiscernible). This was the beginning of illumination).

# THE STILL SMALL VOICE

- Elijah came out of darkness to the entrance of the cave. He came into the light to hear God's words.
- Elijah could hear "God's voice" in the light.
- For the believer today, we must be in the light to read, hear, and understand the inscripturated Words—the voice of the Lord.

# Typology of Leviticus

- Lev. 21 & 22.
- Nothing brought before the Lord:
  - Blind, broken, or blemished,
  - crushed, cut, or corrupted
  - Diseased, damaged, deformed, or dead (road kill)
- Nothing was to be offered or eaten by strangers (e.g. bread)

• **THEREFORE**

# “THEREFORE”

- The Tabernacle typologically represents
  - God’s home in heaven
  - The Lord Jesus Christ
    - The perfect Man
    - The perfect Word(s)
    - The perfect God
    - The perfect Sacrifice
    - The perfect life
- Does it mean God does not accept the deformed, diseased, defective person,...

# “THEREFORE”

- Leviticus 22:31-33

“Therefore, shall ye **keep** (Heb. shamar) my commandments, and do them: I *am* the LORD. Neither shall ye profane (Heb. chalal) my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I *am* the LORD which hallow you, That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD. Leviticus 22:31-33

shamar = KEEP, GUARD, PROTECT, PRESERVE

chalal = BORE, WOUND, POLLUTE, STAIN, BREAK

# The Emerging Church of Postmodernism

- Brings blemished, broken, and defective “bibles”, and theology before the Lord to worship.
- It is a stranger to “the voice of the words of the Lord.”
  - WHY?

|                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Church                    | Community of faith            |
| Pastor                    | Narrator                      |
| Bible                     | Book of the Community         |
| Prayer                    | Quietism                      |
| Written Bible             | Language of Gutenberg<br>book |
| Truth                     | Reality                       |
| Preaching the Word church | Alphabet community            |
| Context appeals           | Nebulous appeals              |
| Born-again                | Transformation                |
| Bible                     | Symbolic language book        |
| Bible                     | Narratives                    |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Evangelical              | (W)holistic                                     |
| Rationality of discourse | Ascendance of image                             |
| Old Testament Books      | Hortatory discourse (urging a course of action) |
| Spirituality             | Activism  |
| Testimony                | Your (Web of) belief                            |
| New Testament Gospels    | Peepholes                                       |

# Process Theology of the PM

- Also known as **neoclassical theology**.
- School of thought influenced by the metaphysical **process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead** (1861–1947).
- The concepts of process theology include:
  - God is not omnipotent in the sense of being coercive.
  - The divine has a power of persuasion rather than coercion.
  - Process theologians interpret the classical doctrine of omnipotence as involving force, and suggest instead a forbearance in divine power.
  - "Persuasion" in the causal sense means that God does not exert unilateral control.

# Process Theology

- God cannot totally control any series of events or any individual, but God influences the creaturely exercise of this universal free will by offering possibilities. To say it another way, God has a will in everything, but not everything that occurs is God's will.
- Because God interacts with the changing universe, God is changeable (that is to say, God is affected by the actions that take place in the universe) over the course of time. However, the abstract elements of God (goodness, wisdom, etc.) remain eternally solid.

# Process Theology

- Charles Hartshorne, a postmodernist process theologian, believes that people do not experience **subjective** (or personal) immortality, but they do have **objective** immortality because their experiences live on forever in God, who contains all that was. Others believe that people do have subjective experience after bodily death.
- Dipolar theism, is the idea that God has both a changing aspect (God's existence as a Living God) and an unchanging aspect (God's eternal essence).

# Open Theology

- Essentially compatible with process theology.
- The only difference is an Armenian-like emphasis on free-will by open theology. But, God is learning by our free-will.
- But the bottom line of both theologies is the removal of God's omniscience

# Open Theology

- Open theology proclaims man's free-will has influence on God's knowledge because:
  - (1) if God gave man free-will, then He does not know what the future will precisely hold,
  - (2) if God does not know the future, classical (orthodox) theology is wrong.

# Open Theology

- **(3)** it harbors the same old claim that classical theology is rooted in scholasticism of the Greeks and other influences (like political power).
- **(4)** They deny that Scripture came first and influenced various cultures and their myths. For example, this is similar to the Babylonian fables, like Semiramis and her virgin born son, which are claimed to have influenced the writers of the Bible.

# Open Theology

- **(5)** Finally, the postmodern churches are espousing dipolar theology, which teaches God has characteristics that are conflicting, such as:
  - one / many (trinity),
  - merciful / just,
  - spiritual / material,
  - absolute power / persuasiveness, etc.;
- So, God has only the good in each set of characteristics.
- Conclusion: This limits God's omniscience because they claim He can not be omnipotent and persuasive at the same time.

# CONCLUSION:

Their theologies are not Scriptural

- These are obviously theories by midget minds. It is “a retrograde form of Christianity.”
- Obviously, grace and mercy, judgment and justice, love and punishment, God and man, and similar characteristics;
- Including the substitutionary death of Christ on the Cross is not understood by postmodernist theologians.

# Other Features

## of the Postmodern Church

- Change from preaching/teaching/verbal to image/sacrament/verbal presentation of Christianity.
- The postmodernists point out the image characteristic of Biblical language and passages such as:
  - **(1)** Christ is the “express image” of the invisible Father,
  - **(2)** the tabernacle is an image of God’s “home” in heaven and of Christ,

# Other Features of the Postmodern Church

- **(3)** the striking imagery of smoke, fire, and thunder at Mount Sinai demonstrated God's power,
- **(4)** general revelation calls upon creation to create a picture of God's glory, abilities, and power,
- **(5)** Jesus is the image of the word, **o[logoj**, etc. They call upon the second Decalogue "*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*" (Ex. 20:4) as a warning to not worship inanimate idols.

# Problems

- They fail to identify several important problems when image-communication becomes a significant means to convey a message.
  - **(1)** The image may lose preciseness and specificity.
  - **(2)** Image presentations such as plays, movies, character acting may become theatrical entertainment rather than WORSHIP.
  - **(3)** The inspired Words of Scripture become secondary to the image/media display.

# Problems

- Their image/media presentation of the Gospel is not theoretical:
  - The plans of the American Bible Society

# American Bible Society

- “Lately the Society has been asking the question, “How can the message of the Holy Scriptures be faithfully translated and communicated from one medium to another?”
- “Or to put it another way, is it possible to make a video version of the Bible that has as much authority as a print version of the Bible?”

# American Bible Society

- “This is a rather interesting question, which the Society has answered in the affirmative. Beginning in 1989 the Society launched an experiment to test the limit and possibilities of a screen translation and has since come to the conclusion that “screen and electronic technologies could transfer and inculturate the very message of the Holy Scriptures and do so with faithfulness and integrity.”

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# Quotes of PM

- *Frank Viola: “The emerging church phenomenon has dumped the modern penchant to always be certain in answering every spiritual question under the sun. Instead, **it has rested content to embrace mystery and paradox in our God.**”*

# Quotes of PM

- *Frank Viola: “The emerging church phenomenon has re-ignited a healthy interest in the Christian mystics who emphasized spiritual encounter over against mere academic knowledge of God and the Bible.”*

# Quotes of PM

- *Frank Viola: “The emerging church phenomenon has placed a new emphasis on the importance of narrative.”*

# Quotes of PM

- Wikipedia: “Emergents allow for a plurality of Scriptural interpretations. They exhibit a particular concern for the effect of the modern *reader's* cultural context on the act of interpretation in contrast to the emphasis of historical orthodoxy on the primacy of the *author's* intent and cultural context. The influence of postmodern thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Stanley Fish is evident in the emerging church movement's approach to interpreting Scripture.”

# Quotes of PM Emerging Church

- **Religion & Ethics Newsletter: LAWTON:**
- “Worship is participatory and multisensory. People are encouraged to tangibly express their spirituality. Many are weaving together elements from different religious traditions, especially Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. Some are discovering medieval mystical practices such as walking the labyrinth, but adding decidedly modern twists. It's a pick-your-own-mix approach that also stresses community and social justice.”

- Scott McKnight, Westminster Theological Seminary, What is the Emerging Church?
- Language is inept to talk absolutely about God.
- Some fluff incense around the room,
- some light candles, and some have a service where there is multi-tasking.

- *Considerable serious work is being done concerning postmodernism and Buddhism. See Newman Robert Glass, Working Emptiness: Toward a Third Reading in Buddhism and Postmodern Thought (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995)*
- *Healing Deconstruction: Postmodern Thought in Buddhism and Christianity (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).*

- From the mid 1970s to the late 1990s a cluster of irrationalist or anti-rationalist ideas became increasingly prevalent among academic sociologists in America, France and Britain. The ideas were variously known as Deconstructionism, Sociology of Scientific Knowledge, (SSK), Social Constructivism, or Science and Technology Studies (STS). The umbrella term for these movements was Postmodernism.
- All forms of post-modernism were anti-scientific, anti-philosophical and generally anti-rational. The view of science as a search for truths (or approximate truths) about the world was rejected. According to SSK, the natural world has a small or non-existent role in the construction of scientific knowledge. Science is just another social practice, producing ``narrations" and ``myths" with no more validity than the myths of backward and pre-scientific peoples.

- We may infer that in postmodern faith, *horizontal* interaction among religious followers will take on an increasingly important role in comparison with the vertical (top-down) structure of traditional doctrines.
- (<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue3/fukamizu.html>)

# Bauman said:

- **The 'postmodern ethics' outlined by Bauman** is an attempt to develop a persuasive critique of post-Enlightenment ethical philosophy as being obsessed with rules, rationality and coercion. As an *historical* critique it suffers from being too sweeping and all inclusive, and comes dangerously close at times to misrepresenting the complexity of post-Enlightenment ethical philosophy. Yet its usefulness lies in its clear critique of a major tendency in ethical debate. It also sets out an alternative ethics, an ethics of infinite responsibility, pointed to in Levinas' philosophy of 'being *for* the Other'. **Buddhist ethics is similarly open ended rather than rule bound and hence serves as a useful elaboration of this trend in ethical theory.** It should be clear that an ethics based on Buddhist principles could never be an ethics of 'coercion', in which obedience to authority (whether that be God or the state) has become the *raison d'être* of morality. Rather it speaks to the individual in his existential predicament and invites the individual to try out a new way of being – a way of being that ultimately transcends any narrow preoccupation with self-interest. Particularly useful for Westerners searching for a new basis to moral conduct is the Buddhist understanding of the centrality of emotional dispositions as a basis of morality and the importance of mindful awareness in the cultivation of positive emotional states. The Buddhist tradition also shows us that we have nothing to fear from broad ethical principles which help guide us in our attempts to move from an unsatisfactory state of greed, hatred and ignorance to one of compassionate wisdom and freedom. **Postmodern Ethics: A Buddhist Response**

# Continuing, Bauman said:

- It should be clear that an ethics based on Buddhist principles could never be an ethics of 'coercion', in which obedience to authority (whether that be God or the state) has become the *raison d'être* of morality. Rather it speaks to the individual in his existential predicament and invites the individual to try out a new way of being – a way of being that ultimately transcends any narrow preoccupation with self-interest. Particularly useful for Westerners searching for a new basis to moral conduct is the Buddhist understanding of the centrality of emotional dispositions as a basis of morality and the importance of mindful awareness in the cultivation of positive emotional states. The Buddhist tradition also shows us that we have nothing to fear from broad ethical principles which help guide us in our attempts to move from an unsatisfactory state of greed, hatred and ignorance to one of compassionate wisdom and freedom.
- ([http://www.westernbuddhistreview.com/vol4/postmodern\\_ethics.html](http://www.westernbuddhistreview.com/vol4/postmodern_ethics.html))