

Dear Terry, Thank you for the monthly sermon tapes. I listen to them at home and when travelling. It is my heart's desire to move to Hervey Bay and fellowship at the Hervey Bay Bible church and attend a church that teaches God's word in truth. In the meantime I thank you for your ministry from afar...

(Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Dear Terry, have enjoyed the latest Diakrisis...My husband passed away this week...we had over 66 years together but I praise God he is free of pain now...All the articles in 'Diakrisis' I find quite informative. I don't want to give away my copy so I am asking you for multiple copies...Many thanks.

(J.B. Qld)

Prayer / Praise Points

- Pray for many subscribers in some areas of Australia who express difficulty in finding Bible believing churches. (The editor would like to hear of any sound churches in the northern suburbs of Brisbane).
- Praise the Lord for several more new people who have come to the Hervey Bay Bible Church. Prayer is needed for the increased load of discipleship work ongoing in the fellowship. Pray for 12 people who are preparing to go to Fiji on a mission trip in September - Pray as they attempt to raise their airfares and prepare testimonies and devotions to be given in Fiji.

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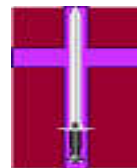
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Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry, **teaching, informing and equipping** the church.

Editor: Terry Arnold (Dr.Th; MABS; Dip.Bib.&Min.)

The editor may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments or items contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

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This Newsletter is distributed bi-monthly *free* of charge. The cost to this ministry is approximately \$20.00 per subscriber annually. Any donation to help with these expenses is received with gratitude.

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Editor's Comment

The world is changing fast. We live in a rapidly changing society. Increasingly we are seeing 'shock' events on the world stage. Events are occurring that few predicted or could imagine. There is upheaval of nations, revolutions, politicians and world leaders falling and people on mass rebelling against authority like never before.

The world is changing fast. Men are scampering everywhere to find solutions to various global crises. Conferences gather to deal with one human crisis after another. Royal commissions and investigations attempt to find out just how horrible crimes and evil calamities occur.

The world is changing fast. It is not uncommon for unsaved people to be now saying 'What in the world is going on?' 'Why are people so evil?' Of course that gives an open door for the Christian to tell the truth about sin - where it came from, where it resides now, and why the world is more depraved by the day! The Bible believing Christian knows it comes from Adam and Eve who broke God's law not to eat of the tree of *'the knowledge of good and evil'* (Gen.2:17), lest sin enter their hearts and it be imputed to their offspring and into the world (Gen.3). Their hearts *'within'* (Mk.7:22; Rom.7:21) would then forever be tainted with sin unless God should intervene. *'For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts...'* (Matt.15:19).

The scriptures show past eras reaching a limit in depravity before judgement by God. *'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually...it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth...But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord'* (Gen.6:5-8).

Before the end of time as we know it on earth *'evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived'* (2Tim.3:13).

Yet God is not interested in saving this world system! He calls it *'evil'* - that which is decaying now at a rapid rate. But he has a rescue plan for believers within it. *'Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father'* (Gal.1:4).

At the very root of the word *'evil'* is the word *'sin'*. But will the world ever accept this, even in a moral sense? The *'good'* in man and his ability must be uplifted at all costs. Yet psychologists and psychiatrists themselves struggle to come to conclusions on why people are increasingly following evil ways.

All along the Bible has the answer!

The modern church increasingly lacks understanding of how depraved this world really is and its impending judgement. If I am wrong here then why is the church adopting the methods, the philosophies and the very thinking of the world? Why has it changed its views 180 degrees on issues that the world is now accepting as no longer moral issues - homosexuality, same sex marriage, women in ministry (*'equality'*), etc. Increasingly the church is agreeing with the very world that God has promised to judge.

Continued next page >

Hey Terry, what is the definition of a 'sub-apostle' and what was their role? What was the definition of an 'Apostolic Father'?

(Z.R. Qld)

Editor's reply:

'Sub apostle' is possibly a term only used in Roman Catholic circles? It is not in the Bible. Some say Paul was lesser than the other apostles. But it seems this is an idea to promote Peter, James and John? There were conditions to being an apostle - they were to be 'eye witnesses of the resurrected Jesus' and have 'signs of an apostle'. The true apostles fulfilled these requirements. The NT books were written by apostles.

The 'Apostolic Fathers' were the church leaders (many bishops) who followed the apostles themselves. For example Polycarp was a disciple of the apostle John. Bishops like Clement and Ignatius were apostolic fathers because they followed in the generation immediately after the apostles.

Following them were the 'church fathers' of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. All these were mostly church leaders or bishops of major areas, until a Roman hierarchy began to dominate near the 4th C and then later a papacy.

Terry, the other night my wife and I were watching ABC2 when this unbelievable show came on titled 'Sex Box'. In front of a large and enthusiastic audience; hetero, lesbian, bi, and homosexual, couples are interviewed about their sex lives with nothing left unsaid. They then go into 'the box' which is an onstage bedroom with TV cameras. They then proceed to have sex. This you are not shown, but I guess it will be eventually? After they finish they emerge and are interviewed again as to exactly, in graphic detail, what they did to each other. The audience chime in too - telling the hosts how they perform oral sex etc. We could hardly believe it! My parents would have died on the spot if they saw it. The world is now spiralling into total debauchery - and one has to watch oneself that you don't become fascinated by it! This was on a free-to-air Australian taxpayer funded channel!

(Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Editor's comment:

Arguably there is little to watch on TV except to keep up with news (which on many stations is now biased, often 'fake?') The MA15+ shows were recently moved earlier to 8.30pm instead of 9.30pm which event sneaked under the radar of many Australians.

The media drives the public with fascination and entertainment, amusement...Christians need to guard and take the necessary steps to avoid the 'debauchery' thereof.

But its the preacher who grows too and if that be the case then he leads the sheep into more knowledge also...And it does get easier with time...for the preacher. Also, there is another benefit - it does grow a church with the people you want. Topical preaching can turn people off if they do not agree with it, whereas this is less likely with expositional as they see the point in the text if one is accurate to the text. You arguably get the people you want and are suitable for this church. When I finished the book of Acts after nearly 2 years I had new people with vastly different doctrinal backgrounds stay and admit they could see the text was not what they had previously learned or 'experienced' but that nevertheless the text was 'true'...

Topical has its place but long term pastoring would do well to look to expositional preaching for its benefits.

Dear Terry, Blessings for this new year...Greatly appreciated your recent newsletter, especially the article 'Why Expository Preaching?'. I love how your love for God and his word shines through when you say 'The excitement and desire to exposit has only increased...' The day before I read your article, I read the following from Richard Baxter's sermon 'The Mischiefs Of Self-ignorance, And The Benefits Of Self-acquaintance': He stated: '... It is one of the mysteries of godliness, that teaching others doth inform themselves, and the light which they bring in for others, will serve themselves to work by; and that reproving others doth correct themselves; that exhorting others doth prevail with themselves; that persuading the obstinate wills of others, doth tend to bend and resolve their own; and that comforting others doth tend to revive and raise themselves: their own spirits may be a little revived, by the very smell of the cordials they prepare for others...None thrive more than they that grow in the sunshine of God's blessing: for God blesses those most that are most faithful in his work...'

How blessed we are to have you as a faithful brother in Christ to encourage us in the narrow way (Matt.7:14). I also love to read your newsletter prayer/praise points, because it focuses on things of eternal value.

We have just finished listening to the 'Strange Fire' Conference set of sermons by Grace To You Ministries which were very good indeed...Thanks again for your diligent effort in putting together the newsletter, it is still our favourite mail. Love in Christ our Lord

K.L., (Brisbane)

Editor's Comment:

The book 'Strange Fire' is a must read for all Christians today. It is a devastating critique and a warning concerning the modern Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, its various gospels, and the direction in which it is heading. Available from this ministry (\$24.90).

The world is changing fast. Homosexuality and same sex marriage used to be sin and deserving of Hellfire. Now it can be a 'loving relationship' even 'honouring God', as some liberal church leaders claim. Ministers used to be '*the husband of one wife*' (1Tim.3:2; Tit.1:6); now it's the 'partner' of one same sex woman or one same sex man. 'Fornication' used to be a sin deserving of Hell (1Cor.6:9; Jude 1:7) and requiring church disciplinary action (1Cor.5). Now many churches turn a blind eye to this and take no action.

Other religions used to be 'false religions' which could not lead anyone to God or Heaven. Now they are to be praised, included and to have fellowship with and having pathways to the same God and the same Heaven.

The modern church is now rushing to adopt the same marketing methods of the world and agree with the world's thinking.

My great concern with all this has somewhat morphed over the years to a more pastoral concern for Christians. That concern is to see Christians '*abound more and more*' in sanctification (1Thess.4:1). The constant theme and admonition of the epistles is to be sanctified. Sanctification is the work of the Spirit separating us from sin and the world. It is a *separation* by definition. The agent for this transformation is the truth of the Word of God by the Holy Spirit. '***They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth***' (Jn.17:16,17).

But the work of sanctification can be hindered and even counterfeited by a self transforming by the world, instead of the Holy Spirit. A.W. Tozer graphically warned of this: '*Religion today is not transforming people; rather it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society; it is descending to society's own level, and congratulating itself that it has scored a victory because society is smilingly accepting its surrender. Never has there been more activity in religious circles and, I confidently believe, never has there been so little of God and so much of the flesh. Almost everything the Church is doing these days has been suggested to her by the world. The true church has never sounded out public expectations before launching its crusades. Its leaders heard from God and went ahead wholly independent of popular support or the lack of it. They knew their Lord's will and did it, and their people followed them - sometimes to triumph, but more often to insults and public persecution - and their sufficient reward was the satisfaction of being right in a wrong world. The Holy Spirit is not necessary to the church; we have arranged it so that he is not required. He has been displaced by what we call 'programming' and by social activity. If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference*'.

It is the truth of the Word that transforms us to be more Christlike. Despite whatever plan the world can entice the church with, this is still God's eternal plan.

The world is changing fast but we are to swim against that tide. Our Lord and his eternal plan is still '*the same yesterday, and today, and forever*' (Heb.13:8).

Terry Arnold

Scientists Use Calculations to PROVE the Existence of God

Scientists have 'confirmed' the existence of God after proving correct a mathematician's theory which suggests that there is a higher power...In 1978, mathematician Kurt Gödel died and left behind a long and complex theory based on modal logic. Dr Gödel's model uses mathematical equations that are extremely complicated, but the essence is that no greater power than God can be conceived, and if he or she is believed as a concept then he or she can exist in reality. The equation reads:

“Ax. 1. $\{P(\phi) \wedge \square \forall x[\phi(x) \rightarrow \psi(x)]\} \rightarrow P(\psi)$ Ax. 2. $P(\neg\phi) \leftrightarrow \neg P(\phi)$ Th. 1. $P(\phi) \rightarrow \diamond \exists x[\phi(x)]$ Df.
1. $G(x) \iff \forall \phi[P(\phi) \rightarrow \phi(x)]$ Ax. 3. $P(G)$ Th. 2. $\diamond \exists x G(x)$ Df. 2. ϕ ess
 $x \iff \phi(x) \wedge \forall \psi\{\psi(x) \rightarrow \square \forall y[\phi(y) \rightarrow \psi(y)]\}$ Ax. 4. $P(\phi) \rightarrow \square P(\phi)$ Th. 3. $G(x) \rightarrow G$ ess x Df.
3. $E(x) \iff \forall \phi[\phi$ ess $x \rightarrow \square \exists y\phi(y)]$ Ax. 5. $P(E)$ Th. 4. $\square \exists x G(x)$ ”.

You get it, right? ...However, the point of the researchers' argument was that they were not directly trying to prove the existence of God, but rather to showcase the power of computers. Christoph Benzmüller of Berlin's Free University stated: 'It's totally amazing that from this argument led by Gödel, all this stuff can be proven automatically in a few seconds or even less on a standard notebook'...

(Apostasy Alert, Jan/2017)

Editor's Comment:

If such scientists have now confirmed the existence of God or a 'higher power' then what of the natural and written revelation of that same God for thousands of years? Are they also unaware of the Bible available on a computer? – there the truth of a 'higher power' lies undetected by these 'scientists'?

Are they unaware of the natural revelation of God when 'that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse' (Rom.1:19,20)?

The wisdom of such scientists is shown by their ever changing theories of creation, physiology and climatology. Such wisdom is like chaff which is blown away by more chaff in the the next theory!

'The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that does good' (Ps.14:1).

'For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He takes the wise in their own craftiness' (1Cor.3:19).

'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...' (Rom.1:22).

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Hi Terry, appreciate your article on expository preaching. I also start next February preaching through Daniel, and leading a group on the same book at one of the churches I preach in. Looking forward to it.

(L.W. Qld)

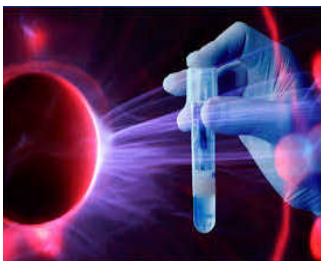
Hi Terry, I'm now the pastor at...I've been enjoying shepherding the flock and it's a privilege, blessing, and challenge to preach God's word every week. We've been going through Philippians which is a wonderful book. I enjoyed your article on expository preaching...I had been wrestling with whether to preach expositionally or topically as there are pros and cons to both methods. I think there is a place for topical preaching and it can be very helpful as it has the benefit of just preaching about one thing in depth, but expository preaching forces me to think harder about what God's word is saying rather than preaching about what I already know. Expository preaching forces me to study the text. Can you elaborate on the effects expository preaching has had on your church?...It's also encouraging to know that it gets easier as you have said to me...

(Brisbane pastor - pastoring his first church)

Editor's reply:

At first preaching expositionally was hard work...I try to use application and practical topical examples in the exposition as much as I can to keep interest and for those who might not be used to following a text rigidly. It can be done in a way that is also 'topical' in 'application' if and when various things come up in the text. But I now have more and more people looking forward to the next text and not wanting to miss out. More regular attendance of our people has also increased. People also have grown more under the expository style, especially in the Bible studies which are more in depth and with some discussion. In the expositions I also often show people the method I use to do the exposition. This has caused a few people to come forward and want Bible programmes, word study methods, etc. Those people have gone ahead in leaps and bounds and some wanting to preach...Some people might also feel 'safe' that what I am speaking on is actually in the text...A lot of churches get so far off the track today with topical preaching and some pastors are often unqualified theologically in the areas they are addressing or that they may feel strong about...Expositional preaching/teaching also gives a sense of direction for the people. It gives them a far greater knowledge of the Bible and a more full orbed view of it. People who have never understood certain passages before often now understand better what the overall theme is on a book.

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‘Calvinists’ taught! The invitation is to all. We do not know who the ‘whosoever’ or who the elect are.

The ‘whosoever’ fallacy:

More confusion then comes in this word ‘whosoever’. Ironside says: *‘Whosoever means whosoever. Only a biased theologian, with an axe to grind, could ever think that it meant only the elect’.*

In recent centuries the ‘*whosoever*’ in John 3:16 has derived a meaning of ‘*anyone who chooses*’ or ‘*anyone who decides*’. However, this is neither the original English meaning when translated, nor the Greek meaning. The ‘*whosoever believes*’ is literally ‘*the believing ones*’. The literal Greek for John 3:16 is: ‘*For so loved the God the world that the His son the unique [only begotten] He gave that all the believing ones in [on] Him no perish but have life eternal*’. The ‘*whosoever believes*’ is literally ‘*all the believing ones*’! The Greek has the definite article ‘*the*’ (‘*pas o pisteuon*’) - ‘*all the believing ones*’.

There is no word ‘*whosoever*’ in the Greek. The Greek ‘*pas*’ (‘*all*’) is translated over 1,000 times in the New Testament and in only a few places is it translated ‘*whosoever*’, in comparison to the hundreds of times it is translated ‘*all*’; ‘*every*’; ‘*every one*’. As in John 3:16, often ‘*pas*’ has the definite article ‘*the*’ with it, referring to a *definite number, quantity or entity*.

The common misconception is that ‘*whosoever*’ is an indefinite phrase, but this is plainly refuted by the definite article ‘*o*’ (‘*the*’) which is attached to ‘*believing ones*’. *This is a definite group of people, not an indiscriminate or indefinite group!** The verse is not about ‘*anyone*’ but about ‘*the believing ones*’! Any good Greek-English interlinear Bible will show this phrase ‘*whosoever believes*’ as ‘*all who believe*’ or ‘*every one who believes*’. The verse cannot be literally translated as ‘*anyone who believes*’.

We do not know who the ‘*believing ones*’ or ‘*whosoever*’ are, as this is a ‘*mystery*’ (Eph.1:9), yet known by God from the beginning. Our commission is to preach *to all* and by this means God will draw those being saved.

The *context* of John 3:16 is also important. The whole passage in its context is referring to Nicodemus and being ‘*Born Again*’ (vs.3-7), as well as Jesus being lifted up - similarly as the brazen serpent was lifted up for the Israelites (vs.14). John 3:16 cannot be divorced from the rest of the passage which refers to only those who believe and are ‘*born again*’.

Sadly today many read into the John 3:16 passage a meaning for ‘*whosoever*’ that is simply not there.

* The plural ‘*believing ones*’ (‘*pisteuon*’) stands with the article ‘*the*’ (‘*o*’) when a definite number is implied, or without the article when the number is indefinite. In John 3:16 it stands beside the definite article ‘*the*’, so a definite number is implied - a definite group of people (‘*the believing ones*’), not an indiscriminate or indefinite group. For more on this see the author’s book ‘*Calvinism and Arminianism - Out of the Maze*’ (available from some Christian bookstores or from this ministry).

God and the Trump Phenomena



Many sincere and praying Christians today feel that Clinton’s defeat and Trump’s rise to power was indeed a reprieve from coming judgement and destruction upon America to be delivered by God Himself.

We hold to a different perspective on this. The condition of the world now...is very perilous. We see the election of Donald Trump as an event that was allowed to occur, not as a reprieve, but possibly as a prophecy accelerator. More a new prophetic time-frame?

Indeed, these could be interesting times. If Trump does fulfil his plan to officially acknowledge the capital of Israel to be Jerusalem, [something he may be backing off a little?] then America must expect the backlash from the world to be fierce, especially from Muslim nations. It could cause [false and real] terrorist acts in America to seriously increase. Perilous times could well come upon the globe in quick succession...and geopolitics could take an unexpectedly nasty turn.

...Has America received a reprieve by the election of Donald Trump? We doubt that? In fact the more Trump implements his promises the more dangerous the times could become.

As each day passes now more executive orders are being signed to unwind the atrocious policies of the Obama reign - and many powerful nations are becoming alarmed and protectionist...It would appear that the Lord is shaking the nations as never before - bringing Biblical prophecies into sharp relief before our amazed eyes.

We believe that to view the Trump presidency as anything else besides a dramatic leap into the scenario described in scripture for the last days, and the time of Jacob’s trouble, is to be deceived?

Time to stay VERY alert?

(Apostasy Alert, 25 January 2017)

Editor’s Comment:

Many Christians are hailing President Trump as a Christian who will bring America back to the Lord and more. Although he does have committed Christians in his team and the agenda is more favourable towards Christian principles and morals, we have yet to see real evidence or fruit of his own salvation?

The church in America is in a rapid slide to apostasy as are most churches in the west. God has sovereignly turned the tables in American politics for sure. But Christians should be now even more alert as to the perilous state of the world, the state of the church and the imminency of the return of the Lord.

Slipped under our door in South Australia yesterday, six four colour pamphlets from the American Ahmadiyya Muslim Community based in New South Wales – Australia. They are titled: ‘Muslims for Loyalty’, ‘The Holy Prophet Muhammad's Charter of Freedom and Security’, ‘Introduction to Islam’, ‘The Advent of Imam Mahdi in Islam’, ‘Muslims for Peace’, and a plea from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for the ‘unification of all faiths’.

Totally ignoring the fact that the Quran explicitly states that Muslims are not to befriend unbelievers, that the countries they now reside in must be brought under the sway of Islam, and that Allah is the one and only ‘god’ and has no son, throughout these publications it is claimed that ‘Our mosques and our teachings are filled entirely with peace, love and affection’.

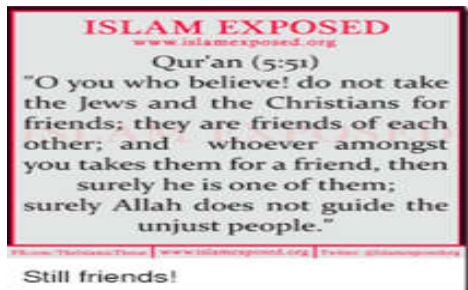
‘Australian Muslims - Loyal to Australia’ blares a headline ‘We openly proclaim love of the country in which we live. We are law abiding, our message is of peace and our slogan is “Love for all, hatred for none”.

In the production ‘The Advent of Imam Mahdi’, it is written; ‘The Holy Quran has announced emphatically that the coming of Mahdi will take place in the latter days and the signs of latter days are described in the Holy Quran at various places. Only a ‘reformer’ sent by God can change men’s hearts, removing hatred and bringing them together on one platform as members of one family. Only a heavenly sent reformer can resolve this unholy chaos with ‘God given powers’.

Under the heading ‘Unification of All Faiths’ this is written: [the community]... ‘believes in all the prophets and religious teachers appointed by God, including Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius, and Zarathustra’. The followers of all great religions await the advent of a promised one in the latter days’.

Now to quote the Quran...(5:51) - ‘O you who believe! do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends; they are friends of each other; and whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people.’; (5:80) - ‘You will see many of them befriending those who disbelieve; certainly evil is that which their souls have sent before for them, that Allah became displeased with them and in chastisement shall they abide.’ [Those Muslims who befriend unbelievers will abide in hell].

(Apostasy Alert 29 January 2017)



The following is by the commentator Ironside and cited by the Berean Call, USA.

‘On Calvinism: Turn to your Bible and read for yourself in the only two chapters in which this word predestinate or predestinated is found. The first is Romans:8:29-30, the other chapter is Ephesians:1:5 and 11. You will note that there is no reference in these four verses to either heaven or hell but to Christ-likeness eventually. Nowhere are we told in scripture that God predestinated one man to be saved and another to be lost. Men are to be saved or lost eternally because of their attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ. Predestination means that someday all the redeemed shall become just like the Lord Jesus.

D.L. Moody used to put it very simply the elect are the ‘whosoever wills’ the non-elect ‘whosoever wont’s’. This is exactly what scripture teaches, the invitation is to all, those who accept it are the elect. Remember, we are never told that Christ died for the elect.

Whosoever means, whosoever. Only a biased theologian, with an axe to grind, could ever think that it meant only the elect’. (H.A. Ironside)

Editor’s comment:

The errors in this might surprise considering the stature of the author of the quote. But it reminds us that all preachers need to be checked like the Bereans checked even the apostle Paul (Acts 17).

‘Predestination’ is not mentioned in ‘only two chapters...Romans:8:29-30 and Ephesians:1:5 and 11’ as this author says. The same Greek word is found in other places and translated ‘determined before’, ‘ordained’ etc. In total the word for ‘predestinate’ is found in Acts 4:28; Romans 8:29,30; 1Corinthians 2:7; and Ephesians 1:5,11) - at least 6 places. And this is apart from many other references teaching the same concept!

The original word has a clear and precise meaning. ‘Predestination’ comes from the Greek word ‘proorizo’ (‘pro’ - ‘before’ / ‘orizo’ - ‘to determine’). It clearly means to determine or decree beforehand. It is a determination by God, done beforehand - hence the ‘pre’. It cannot be based on anything man does at a later time or event - that would be a postdestination, not a ‘predestination. The varying contexts, phrases (‘before the foundation of the world’) and tenses show this clearly.

The commentator then says: ‘Nowhere are we told in scripture that God predestinated one man to be saved and another to be lost’. But this is not historic ‘Calvinism’. It is a strawman of hyper-Calvinism or what some term ‘double predestination’. Most of the ‘Calvinists’ of history, including the likes of Charles Spurgeon, did not teach this.

The D.L. moody quote is simplistic but arguably correct: ‘the elect are the ‘whosoever wills’ the non-elect ‘whosoever wont’s’. That certainly is the end result. And yes, the ‘invitation is to all’ - but that is what the historic

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itself as the article itself claims to be!

Firstly, Revelation 3:20 has nothing to do with the unsaved! It specifically is to a church of *believers*. To use this scripture out of context is to deny what God himself is saying to *believers*.

The Saviour does not '*stand at man's door, seeking admission*'. This is utter nonsense and diminishes the sovereignty of God in salvation. It reduces God to being impotent in his work, the power being in the hands of man's decision and will, which contradicts many scriptures (Jn.1:13). The Saviour has not '*been kept outside a long time*'. And to contemplate such a person ever 'giving up' is to trivialise and humanise the almighty Saviour.

Yes, He is '*longsuffering, not willing that any should perish*' but that scripture (2Pet.3:1-9) refers to the '*usward*', the '*beloved*'; *not to the unsaved*! Nowhere is he like a salesman knocking and waiting for man to open the door. He rather 'draws' whom he wills and saves! (Jn.6:39,44,65).

Man's 'refusal' is not '*all the more irrational*' as this commentator says. In contrast, the Bible is clear as to why man refuses and will NOT come unless drawn by the Gospel and with the Spirit! The Scriptures clearly state his heart is depraved (Jer.17:9); there are '*none*' unsaved who seek God (Rom.3:10-20); the unsaved mind '*cannot*' be subject to God's laws (Rom.8:7,8) because they are '*dead*' in sins (Col.2:13; Eph.2:1) and are '*by nature*' following their own ways, unless miraculously '*quicken*' by the Spirit (Eph.2:2-5). The Scriptures teach that our '*understanding was darkened*' and we were '*alienated from the life of God...because of the blindness of our hearts*' (Eph.4:18); Jesus said: '*No man can come...except the Father...draw him*' (Jn.6:44,65). This may all be '*irrational*' to human thinking but it is God's Word and to be believed!

The commentary ends with an illustration of a '*knock at the front door*'...and the person is 'let in' and this is supposed to be '*the gospel in brief*'? But this is NOT the Gospel but an illustration that is nowhere found in scripture and it contradicts numerous verses.

Finally the commentary does end with something that is the Gospel: '*It's none other than the Lord of life and glory, the One who died as a Substitute for us and rose again the third day - the One who is now enthroned in glory and coming soon to take His people home to be with Himself*'.

Such commentaries and illustrations abound in today's modern church, evangelism and preaching.

Notice too that sin is not mentioned and thus what we might be *saved from* and *why* we need this Saviour.

Readers might find this critique judgemental of an innocent effort to call people to respond to Christ. But the doctrine in this commentary is nothing short of woeful. Christ is not a Saviour with his hands tied, an impotent door knocker waiting for the will of man which can never save (Jn.1:13). This does not match the all powerful Saviour who seeks and saves the lost (Matt.18:11); who draws whom he will (Jn.6:44,65) and saves to the uttermost (Heb.7:25), the author and the finisher of our faith (Heb.12:2)!

The Illogic of Justification - a Testimony

I remember as a young Christian and having come out of Roman Catholicism, at times struggling with faith issues, being 'tossed to and fro' and even doubting my own salvation. But as time went on and the opportunity to study doctrine was available to me, I came across several salvation doctrines that increasingly brought me to understand the God that had saved me. One of them was the doctrine of *Justification* with its *imputed righteousness*.

I confess to not understanding these in any depth previously but now they began to grip me like never before. A whole realm of the Gospel had opened up. It was like a treasure hunt and finding more and more gold nuggets. *I testify that I have never struggled with assurance of salvation since*.

The doctrine of *Justification* with its *imputed righteousness* cannot be underestimated for its power. When preached in ages past it has begun revivals. It will give a power to Christian living that can banish any lack of assurance!

The Argument of Illogic

What stunned me at first was the illogic of God's actions in this 'Justification'. God's judgment to pronounce anyone righteous is simply not humanly logical because God's own law seemingly forbade such? (Deut.25:1; Pr.17:15). The unrighteous must be condemned. Sin has to be punished in some way. Previously, as a Roman Catholic it made *logical sense* that sin was to be purged in a place called Purgatory or punished in Hell.

The argument too was this: If God is so just and holy and no sinner can be in his presence, then how can the sinner be made righteous? The answer for me previously was to partake of sacraments and have 'grace' infused, to have sins absolved by a priest and then try afterwards not to ruin that state by more sin. But I kept having sinful thoughts and enticed to similar deeds. So, I kept running back to the priest as a mediator for more infused grace and sins forgiven. The cycle seemed endless.

Then came a time when God sovereignly drew me to seek him and to challenge the sin that had lordship over me. I tried to read the scriptures but did not much understand them. I deepened the quest for works and sacraments. I taught Catholic Religious Education hoping to gain God's favour...

It was then I was given a rather 'Protestant' book to read which spoke of sins forgiven by 'faith alone' and 'receiving Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord'. Jesus as 'Lord' was new to me, as I already accepted Jesus as 'saviour'...even if it was another 'jesus' that favoured works and human merit.

Saved by Substitution

Soon after, I came to read Romans chapter 4 and in particular vs.8 '*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*'. My initial question was '*who on earth are these people? How does one become such a person?*'. After a long

struggle with religion versus the scriptures, eventually I was led to trust and receive Christ as Lord and follow the scriptures alone. The most potent scripture that caused me to narrow my beliefs to the Scriptures alone was John 12:48: ***‘He that rejects me, and receives not my words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day’.***

I understood that he was the great *substitute* and mediator for my sins past present and future. I was in fear I had not kept the word of God but man’s traditions which often contradicted the Bible. I desired to trust him alone and his word alone for all beliefs. Somewhere in that time I knew something had changed from an intellectual seeking in religion, to something within that gave a newfound hunger for more of him and His Word. I could not describe the experience to others. I later understood it to be a New Birth, a new nature, a new heart. My entire outlook on life changed. Before I hungered to be rich in money, now I lost all desire for such. Before I sought to have control over every situation in life, now I was convicted to accept God’s control. Before I sought pleasures in the world, now I found pleasure in the person of Christ and treasures in his Word. Before I loved the company of the world, now I sought Christian brethren.

The Assurance of Imputation

With little understanding if any of the idea of God’s righteousness by ‘imputation’ it was a few years of stumbling growth before I began to study the scriptures for doctrine. Two passages fascinated me - Romans chapter 4; and one other verse gripped me - 2Corinthians 5:21. As I did the word study on the word ‘impute’ I found it was the Greek word ‘*logizomai*’ mentioned no less than 11 times in the one Romans chapter! I guessed it had to be something important.

Indeed the entire Reformation came to hinge around the answer to the question: *‘How is a man made right with God?’* It surely has to be the most important question in this life? One side had it by faith plus works, ultimately by sacramental works infusing grace; the other side had it by Justification by Imputation through the substitutionary work of Christ. It amounted to *two entirely different gospels*. Both sides are aware that a person has to be ‘perfect’ (Col.4;12; Jn.17:23; Heb.12:23) to enter Heaven. Sin has to be paid for, purged in some way. That’s logical.

‘But to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’ (Rom.4:5). The word ‘justifies’ comes from the Greek ‘*dikaiōo*’ - to regard as innocent; to render just as a judicial act. In its various contexts it is used as a legal declaration, as a judgment (1Cor.4:3,4 ***‘For I know nothing by myself yet am I not Justified’*** (*‘dikaioo’*); ***but He that judges me is the Lord’***; see also Lk.10:29; Lk.16:15).

The person is *declared* righteous. How is this done? - upon faith: ***‘...Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness’*** (vs.3). But is this done by faith *and* works or sacraments? ***‘Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’*** (vs.4,5).

An Impotent Saviour?

The following is written by commentator William McDonald and cited by the Berean Call, USA.:

Today’s Update: ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me’ (Revelation 3:20).

Here we are at the close of another year, and still the patient Savior stands at man’s door, seeking admission. He has been kept outside a long time. Anyone else would have given up long ago and gone home. But not the Saviour. He is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. He waits with hope that one day the door will be flung open and He will be welcomed inside.

It is amazing that anyone would fail to answer the knock of the Lord Jesus. If it were a neighbour, the door would be opened promptly. If it were a salesman, someone would at least give him the courtesy of opening the door and saying, ‘We don’t need any!’ Certainly if it were the President or the Governor, the family would compete for the privilege of welcoming him. Strange, then, that when the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer stands at the door, He is given the cold, silent treatment.

Man’s refusal is all the more irrational when we realize that the Lord Jesus does not come to rob but rather to give. He comes to give life more abundant.

A Christian radio preacher once got a late night call from a listener who wanted to stop by for a brief visit. The preacher tried every excuse to dissuade him from coming, but finally relented. As it turned out, the visitor came with a large gift of money to help with the radio expenses. After he left, the preacher said, ‘I’m so glad I let him in’.

Joe Blinco used to describe a scene where an animated conversation was going on in the living room of a home. Suddenly there was a knock at the front door. One of the family said, ‘There’s someone at the door’. Another jumped up, went to the door, and opened it. Then someone in the living room asked, ‘Who is it?’ Back from the door came the answer. Finally the head of the house shouted, ‘Tell him to come in’.

That is the gospel in brief. Listen! There’s Someone at the door. Who is it? It’s none other than the Lord of life and glory, the One who died as a Substitute for us and rose again the third day - the One who is now enthroned in glory and coming soon to take His people home to be with Himself. Tell Him to come in!

(William MacDonald, One Day at a Time (Gospel Folio Press: Colborne, ON, 1998) cited in the Berean Call, 1/1/2016)

Editor’s comment:

The errors in this may not seem obvious if one is not aware of the Arminian doctrine behind it. But these errors are quite serious considering it is about the person and work of Jesus in Salvation and the very Gospel

did in the first century. The reason for this is because the *purpose* for the healings in the first century is now fulfilled - *it was to prove the Messiahship of Jesus* (Jn.20:30,31; Lk.7:21,22; Acts 2:22). The gifts in 1Corinthians 12 were called 'sign gifts' because they *pointed to* and approved the *Messiahship of Jesus Christ* and the credentials of His Apostles (2Cor.12:12 'signs of an apostle').

We are also not saying that the atonement on the cross does not have a *future* plan of healing in glorification. But that 'healing' is *future* (Rom.8:23). That healing is not guaranteed in this life is further attested to by 2Corinthians 12:9 where Paul glories in his physical '*infirmities*' which were *not* healed. Further, Epaphroditus was '*sick nigh unto death*' (Phil.2:27), Trophimus was '*left at Miletum sick*' (2Tim.4:20) and Timothy took medicine for sickness (1Tim.5:23).

D.A Carson, observed: '*The cross is the basis for all the benefits which accrue to believers; but this does not mean that all such benefits can be secured at the present time on demand, any more than we have the right and power to demand our resurrected bodies*'.

Unlike the *healing of sin* through the 'stripes' of Jesus, there is no Scripture that guarantees bodily healing in this life. False teaching using the phrase '*by his stripes we are healed*' adds to the Gospel and diverts attention away from *salvation from sin*. It becomes 'another gospel'.

Jesus did not die for our sickness. He died for our sin! Yes, it is the original Adamic sin that caused sickness, but that sin has not yet been eradicated from the world. Thus the redemption of our bodies is future in a place where there is no sin whatsoever.

If there is bodily healing in the atonement during this earthly life and we are healed 'by his stripes', then why are our bodies dying every day? Praise God if He heals a body, but to misuse Scripture for the spiritual healing of sin and read into it bodily healing, is to preach 'another gospel'. *The true gospel is about the healing of sin, not anything to do with bodily healing!*

This is just another way Satan can divert people from the Gospel of *Christ crucified for our sin* to something else - bodily healing, which is not the Gospel. '*By his stripes*' concerns the 'transgressions' as spoken of in Isaiah 53. The promise of the healing of sin is at the heart of the Gospel. Isaiah 53 is all about Christ offering His body as a substitute to have sin credited to himself on a cross as a sacrifice to satisfy the justice of a Holy God! To use '*by his stripes*' to claim bodily healing is to take a classic passage *on salvation from sin* (Isaiah 53) and turn it into something that it was never meant for.

Our spirits need to be Justified once now, our souls need to be sanctified continuously now and the 'hope' is our bodies will one day be glorified.

What was Jesus crucified for? What was he wounded and bruised for? What were the 'stripes' for? What do we need to be healed of?

'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities...with his stripes we are healed...the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all' (Is.53:5,6).

Terry Arnold

Justification - the declaring of a person as righteous is done here to the person who '***works not, but believes***'. This is no less than *faith alone* which agrees with many other passages (Eph.2:8,9; Rom.11:6, etc). The person has done no work and merited *nothing*. That's not 'logical'!

But then how is this transaction effected - by *imputation*. The word 'imputation' ('*logizomai*') is translated as different words - 'credited', 'counted', 'reckoned', 'numbered', 'accounted'...' In Romans chapter 4 it is used no less than 11 times (vs.3,4,5,6,8,9,11,22,23,24).

'...His faith is counted ('*logizomai*') for righteousness' (vs.5). But how is this faith counted (imputed) as righteousness? What has been done to merit the salvation that results? The answer is in *substitution*. Jesus Christ acted on our behalf for our Adamic sin (1Cor.15:45). We are justified on the basis of justice done. How was it done? - by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf which satisfied ('propitiated') God (Rom.3:25,26). Christ's righteousness and perfection is credited to (imputed to) our account. The merited work here done culminated on the cross when Jesus said '***it is finished***' (Jn.19:30).

The whole process would seem illogical to some unless perhaps it is seen through the prism of *substitution*. God does not deal with the sin problem in a vacuum. He does not declare something sinful to be suddenly holy. He does not declare us holy in ourselves. *We are credited with someone else's holiness and sinlessness only because our sins have been credited to that person!* He still punishes, condemns and pays for it - but upon his Son Jesus instead of us! The logic of this cannot be apprehended unless one is Born of the Spirit (Rom.8:7)!

The scripture that sums this all up and never ceases to amaze me with its compactness is 1Corinthians 5:21 '***For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him***'. This one verse, (apart from other doctrines in the same verse), combines Justification ('***the righteousness of God***'); substitution ('***sin for us***'); and double imputation ('***made him to be sin***' / '***made the righteousness of God***').

The Father ('***he***') did this! He poured out his fury on his only Son who was credited (imputed) with sin! '***The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all***' (Is.53:6). The victim was substituted for the offender. *The innocent Jesus was punished voluntarily as if guilty, so the guilty might be rewarded as if innocent!* That's not humanly logical! In 2Corinthians 5:21 we see how 'reconciliation' is achieved. *And here is assurance!*

If you have believed and will trust Christ as Saviour/Lord - then He has exchanged your weakness for His strength; your inability for His abilities; your death for His life; your failings for His success; your selfishness for His love; and most importantly - your *filthy rags for His robes of righteousness!*

'On the cross God treated Christ as if he had committed all the sins of every sinner who would ever believe, so that He could treat believers as if they have lived Christ's perfect life' (MacArthur).

Many see this as illogical and foolishness but the ones justified will never cease to marvel at this the Father's eternal plan of redemption!

Terry Arnold

By His Stripes We Are ‘Healed’?

Often I hear people and ministries preaching or writing on the subject of bodily healing and they use the phrase *‘by his stripes we are healed’*. Many are unaware of the error of this and it being taken out of context and that the words are actually *a direct quote from the Old Testament*. Many also link this phrase with healing being provided in the atonement made by Christ on the cross.

The Context

The phrase is found in 1Peter 2:24,25: *‘Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls’*.

But this passage above is a quote from Isaiah 53:5,6 *‘But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all’*.

Both passages have absolutely *nothing* to do with bodily healing in the atonement. One can search early commentaries for this in vain to find any reference to bodily healing in Christ’s atonement. All tell it as it is in Isaiah 53 - it is *healing of sin!*

The phrase *‘in his own body’* refers to the sufferings of Jesus on the cross. The phrase *‘on the tree’* refers to the cross. (The same Greek word referring to the cross is used in Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Gal.3:13). The word rendered *‘stripes’* is literally the swollen mark of a blow from beating or scourging, (in modern English we might say the marks of ‘black and blue’). The phrase *‘you were healed’* is referring to the *‘transgressions’* in the same verse of Isaiah 53:5.

The word ‘salvation’ is closely related to the word ‘healing’ (Ps.41:4). In the Bible sin is often spoken of as a disease from which we can be ‘healed’. The fact that this is *spiritual healing for sins* is further attested to in the verses following in both 1Peter 2 and Isaiah 53 from which Peter quotes. The comparison between the two verses shows the context is *sin*, not bodily healing:

1Peter 2:25 *‘For you were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls’*.

Isaiah 53:6 *‘All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all’*.

In Isaiah this was specifically healing of, and forgiveness for, sin. The *‘bore our sins’* (1Peter) and *‘laid on him the iniquity’* (Isaiah 53) is not our ‘sicknesses’!

Atonement for what?

Almost all the references to healing in the Old Testament are spiritual healing.

There are some references to bodily healing but the sacrifices in atonement to God were for sin, not bodily healing. The Old Testament atonement offerings were not for sickness but for sin (Lev.16:3)! On the cross Jesus did not bear our diseases, but rather our sin. This has been the teaching of the church for 1,900 years until the turn of the 20th Century when ‘healing ministries’ were spawned within the new Pentecostal movement and later furthered in the Charismatic movement in the mid 20th century.

Some also attempt to use Matthew 8:16,17 to teach that healing for the body is in the atonement in this life: *‘...He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses’*.

Matthew 8:16,17 was spoken three years *before* the cross and the verse claims that Isaiah was fulfilled there and then. It refers to the *earthly public ministry* of Jesus as verse 16 clearly shows. It also refers back to the prophecies in Isaiah which teach that the Messiah would come with proof of his Messiahship which included healings.

The promise and assurance of healing from sin following repentance is clear in Scripture, but there are no such assurances for bodily healing. *The redemption of our bodies did not occur on the cross, but is future!*: *‘Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body’* (Rom.8:21-23).

We are not here saying God cannot heal a body. Miraculous healing is not ruled out in the Bible. But it is not guaranteed in the atonement for this life. Some Christians today seem desperate to see genuine healings and must find Scriptures that supposedly prove God will heal now in the atonement.

We must here also distinguish between ‘healing’ by God Himself and the ‘gift of healing’. The two are today sadly confused. In the sovereignty of God, miracles and healings can occur at any time, but this author has yet to see a single human with any real ‘gift’ of healing as it was in the first century as described in the Bible. If such a person exists, they will have the gift as it was in the first century! Compare the following descriptions of the true gift of healing with the counterfeits of today who claim to have the same: Jesus and the apostles *healed ‘all’ and ‘every’* (Matt.4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 10:1; 12:15...); they healed *instantly* (Matt.8:3; 20:30...*‘immediately’*); they healed *completely* (Matt.12:13,15 *‘whole’*; 14:36 *‘perfectly whole’*...); they healed *at will* and there were *no failures* (Matt.8:3); and they healed *organic diseases* (Matt.4:23,24; 9:35; 15:30) - diseases that cannot be cured by psychosomatic means (eg. AIDS, Downs Syndrome, etc). Why do faith healers purposely shy away from such people who have these diseases and why do not the faith healers visit the hospitals where increasing numbers die of cancers and organic diseases?

Some Christians seem not to have realised that God is just not healing like He