



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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Interstate itinerary

**The August - October
itinerary for Qld., NSW and
Victoria is now updated.**

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Editorial

‘For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because 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 deity; so that they are without excuse:

Because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not proper; Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them’ (Romans 1:18-32).



The texts above vividly reveal God’s wrathful judgement of abandonment of a nation or nations, which is irreversible once declared. The Western nations have abandoned God, thrown Him out of their lives, and now He is returning the favour. This ‘*wrath*’ is a mixture of desire, grief, indignation, directed at sin.

Romans chapter 1 remains the most vivid explanation for what is occurring to individuals, to nations and globally in our day.

The reasons for God’s wrath is clear. Man and nations have rejected God’s revelation as He has shown Himself in creation, even to ‘*His eternal power and Godhead*’ (vs.19,20; Ps.19:1-5). They have abandoned the moral law written on hearts to increasingly degrading passions.

What does it mean to have a ‘*reprobate mind*’?...Morally depraved; unprincipled, rejected by God and beyond hope of salvation. It is a serious and eternally dangerous state. It is now blatantly obvious God is presently at work turning humanity over to their evil desires. It is the restraining of God’s Grace.

A certain and deepening insanity has overtaken the minds of millions, if not billions of people - truth is suppressed as never before, everything that proves divine creation and order is being torn down, overturned and trampled underfoot.

The judgement of abandonment has progressive outcomes - firstly sexual immorality, society becomes generally pornographic, then it is turned over to degrading passions, vile desires, moral chaos and confusion, all celebrated by an enthusiastic and proud population and media.

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When you see all these aberrations in play and applauded you know that the judgement of abandonment is in operation...

Men can become women, they can give birth, hundreds of genders now apparently exist, homosexuality and lesbianism is celebrated, the United Nations are actively promoting paedophilia, under the guise of health protection foetuses and newborns are murdered in and out of the womb, the list of unimaginable abominations is now endless. It's a perversion of the created order.

The nations engulfed in this horror show are greatly weakened....they lose all direction, their protection is lifted and they no longer see or understand the dangers that lie ahead. No preparations are made for the future, infrastructure begins to crumble, their cities become a living hell, and an already dangerous planet becomes violent and unmanageable. They are in fact headed for defeat and destruction.

Yet, until then there is a 'storing up' of His cup of wrath: *'...your hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds...But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath'* (Romans 2:5-8).

This wrath will finally overflow in a spiral of depravity the climax of which will be the Great Tribulation.

Our societies are self destructing and God has left it, handed it over to its own devices. We are coming into the last day. God has handed mankind over to their own lusts, sins, desires.

Are we able to see our situation? Well, some are, but they are few. It takes a very brave person who wishes to remain within society yet dares to speak against the current culture because they will be cancelled, vilified, and cast out.

The church is of little help. Apart from a remnant, it's salt has lost its savor (Matt.5:13). It is rapidly falling away to a different gospel, to the gods of the changing culture of the nations.

Is there any hope? Yes, but it is now never to be found in our civilisation - that is simply in its final death throes. Wars, famine, and tyranny now lie just ahead. Our creator has turned us over to our foolish desires, abandoned us and given mankind what they so richly deserve - a reprobate mind.

The only hope, [there is no other], is the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ - He has not, and never will, abandon His elect. His kingdom is not of this rapidly dying world, His reign is to be one of righteousness, purity, and peace. Yet this is anathema to the reprobate mind.

There is little time left before the gates allowing admission to that divine realm will close. Call out to Him who saves eternally while the drawbridge remains down.

'Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure...Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him' (Ps.2:5).

Mike Claydon

The Fruit of the World's Religion



An investigation report published this month by the Independent Commission for the Study of Child Sexual Abuse in the Portuguese Catholic Church found that priests and others have likely sexually abused 4,812 children within the church since 1950...Investigators validated 512 victim witness statements and estimate that these 512 victims knew of or were in contact with close to 4,300 other victims...

In a statement, Bishop Josè Ornelas apologized for the church's failure to grasp the extent of the problem, promising more transparency in the future...

The commission, founded by child psychiatrist Pedro Strecht...stated 'There is an approximate (number of accused priests) and it will clearly be more than 100...a priest in 77% of cases...with the average age of abuse victims being 11.2 years...Boys were more likely to be victims than girls, with the former accounting for 57.2% of cases...14.3% occurred at a confessional...12.9% at a rectory, and 6.9% occurred at a religious school.'

In 65.8% of cases, the commission reported no actions were taken to stop the abuser. However, 77% of the victims never complained to people within the church or organizations. Only 4.3% of victims took their cases to court.

'The data...must be seen as the 'tip of the iceberg' the report states...Most of the abuse consisted of 'manipulation of the sexual organs, masturbation, oral and anal sex as well as full copulation...'

In most cases, victims stressed that after the abuse had occurred they were expressly asked or ordered to 'keep it secret', abusers commonly resorting to various forms of blackmail...

The panel is to send to bishops by the end of the month a list of alleged abusers who are still active in the church...but church officials clearly do the bare minimum when it comes to protecting children'...

(Samantha Kamman, Christian Post Reporter, April 2023)

Editor's comment:

Similar statistics can be seen in most countries. An independent commission launched in 2018 found as many as 3,200 paedophiles had worked in the French Catholic Church. Pennsylvania had 301 priests abuse 1,000 children over several decades within six dioceses. Baltimore dioceses alone had 600 children abused over 60 years by 156 priests, deacons and seminarians. In most cases the victims were groomed and the abusers kept safe by hierarchy.

The fruit of this religious system has been ever so clear throughout history. There is a day of judgement to come. All that is evil and hidden will be made manifest.

'Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities' (Rev.18:4).

The Women in Ministry Issue...Again

A month after the Southern Baptist Convention cut ties with Saddleback Church for elevating Stacie Wood to the office of teaching pastor, the church's lead pastor, Andy Wood, has defended the church's position on women serving as pastors. 'It is the authoritative word of God that teaches us how to live, and it gives us instruction for our beliefs', Wood says, 'one of the Bible passages that often comes up in the discussion of women serving as pastors is 1 Timothy 2:12, which reads, 'I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent'...Wood argues...[and] points to Romans 16, where Paul commends Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. He also praised Priscilla and Aquila, who Paul calls his 'co-workers in Christ Jesus' who 'risked their lives' and 'all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them'.

Wood also points to Romans 16:7, where Paul praises a woman named Junia, who he says was an apostle and developed faith in Christ before he did...Wood said that in the New Testament, there are concepts called 'spiritual offices' and 'spiritual gifts', adding that there are five spiritual gifts that Paul talks about in Ephesians: prophets, apostles, evangelists, shepherds and teachers....In 1 Corinthians 16-19, we see very clearly that Aquilla and Priscilla were shepherds in a local church and were shepherding people...'

'...The office of elder and the office of deacon...We can see very clearly there is a description of deaconesses...A man who is an elder can empower women and utilize women to use their spiritual gifts in the local church' Wood said. 'We see this from a descriptive angle all throughout the course of the New Testament...And so when a woman teaches in a local church, she's teaching in conjunction with the authority of the Church' Wood said. 'She's not trying to overtake that authority. When she uses that spiritual gift, she's using it under the authority of the eldership or the leadership of that local church'. (Christian Post, May/2023)

Editor's Comments:

Year after year denominations struggle and are divided with the issue of women in leadership/ministry roles. The same tired arguments twist the scriptures and follow the culture of the world.

In 1980 Rick Warren founded Saddleback which grew to become the second-largest Southern Baptist church in the U.S. Warren retired last year and hand-picked Andy Wood as the successor. His wife, Stacie, is identified as a teaching pastor at Saddleback. In May 2021 this church ordained three women to be pastors.

Paul 'forbids' women to 'teach' in public and to 'usurp authority over a man' (1Tim.2:12). He also elsewhere lays down the qualifications of an elder/pastor clearly as being the 'husband of one wife' (1Tim.3; Tit.1), clearly referring to a male. No amount of semantic gymnastics, strawman arguments, or arguments from silence as is common today, can change Paul's words. In 1Timothy 2:12 the verses following refer to the headship of Genesis which shows where this teaching is rooted and it being transcultural.

'To teach' ('didaskain') in the Jewish rabbinical context of the New Testament church carried with it an authority. This is also supported by the connection of the term with the function of an elder/pastor/overseer in 1 and 2 Timothy. The basic instruction in 1 Timothy 2 is that women learn; that they not teach the men; and that they be in submission in a quiet manner and not exercise authority.

Re: Phoebe (Acts 16) - nothing is said of Phoebe teaching or holding any *office* in the church. Phoebe was a *'servant'* in the church as we all should be! *'Servant'* here does not refer to the *office* of a deacon. *The office of a deacon is clearly male* in 1 Timothy 3. The Greek word for *'servant'* here, *'diakonos'* (29 times in NT), has a wide usage of *servicing* or *ministering* for both men and women, including serving meals (Martha: Lk.10:40). Everyone is supposed to be doing the work of *'deaconing'* (serving), but not everyone has the *office* of a deacon. Paul never refers to women deacons *as an office*. Women are never found to be holding ordained offices.

Re: 'Aquila and Priscilla' (Acts 18:6) - Far too much is argued from silence here. They took Apollos aside and *'expounded'* (*'ektithemi'*) a better way. This does not have to include teaching or taking any authority over a man. It was not public preaching/teaching by Priscilla and there is no evidence that Priscilla was *'usurping authority over'* Aquila or Apollos. *No office of ministry or teaching or authority is ever implied here.*

Re: 'Junia' - there is no certain evidence Junia was female. Some church fathers were undecided, but a single quote by Chrysostom (347-407), is used to attempt to prove Junia was a female. However, what is not shown is that Chrysostom and the church fathers were *against* women teaching men in public! It must also be recognised that the word *'apostle'* in Greek (*'apostolos'*) literally means *'sent one'* and is used in a wide context of meaning, including that of *'messenger'*, (eg. Epaphroditus a *'messenger'* in Phil.2:25; and *'messengers'* in 2Cor.8:23). Jesus selected 12 male apostles and the book of Revelation also states that the 12 apostles will have their names on the walls of the city of the New Jerusalem. He did not choose any women.

Most arguments for Women pastors argue from strawman arguments - scriptures that do not teach what is affirmed, and the silence of scripture. Cultural philosophies are also subtly imposed upon texts. These arguments weakens God ordained male leadership and bows to the spirit of the age. What is most importantly missing is the *headship/order* issue in verses which follow 1Tim.2:12. The rule of *'I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man'* is because of two reasons - the original creation order - *'Adam was first formed, then Eve'* (vs.13); and the original order of sin - Eve took the lead being deceived (vs.14). Male leadership is rooted in the headship issue. Adam was named as representing the whole human race, not Adam and Eve. The New Testament also teaches Christ as the head, then man, then woman (1Cor.11:3). The order has not been changed from Genesis and is played out in many scriptures (Col.3:18,19; Eph.5:23).

For more on *'Women in Ministry'*, see our website under *'Articles'*.

The Conscience - 'God's Deputy'

The conscience is an amazing faculty of the mind given to all, Christians and non Christians (Jn.8:9; 2Cor.1:12; Tit.1:15). The conscience argues there is a God, for who gave man a conscience no computer can match, yet denied it to animals? Who enables man to have a second self capable of witnessing to and judging himself? The court of conscience is the nearest thing to the bar of God for it reveals a law written on every heart, a judge which '*accuses or excuses*' (Rom.2:15).

How important is it to understand the conscience when the word is found at least 29 times in the New Testament. How powerful is the conscience, when it compelled Judas to give back the blood money (Matt.27:4); and compelled the hard hearted Pharaoh to admit '*I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked*' (Ex.9:27)?

Further, the conscience is not just a judge now, but also a forerunner of a judge and executioner in the day of judgement!

What is the Conscience?

The word '*conscience*' is made up of '*to know*' and '*with*'. The scriptures equate the conscience with the spirit of a man - '*For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?*' (1Cor.2:11). The conscience is an internal monitor which reflects upon itself, having two parts, two actions - one that thinks thoughts and the other that reflects upon the former. The reader may have experienced this when one part of us thinks something but the conscience reflects upon the first thoughts, sometimes as 'two minds' capable of being in disagreement!

The conscience is the motivator for moral principles that govern a person's thoughts and actions. Unlike animals, we *think about thoughts*. *The conscience prompts us to think or to do something and with a moral implication*, a compass of right or wrong. A synonym of '*conscience*' is the word '*conviction*'.

The conscience is a *warning device*. Everybody has this God given conscience, an inbuilt moral voice, an inner eye towards the law of right and wrong in the soul. This conscience is not the light itself, which is the law (Pr.6:23), but it acts as a '*skylight*', a warning or indicator of the inner law. The conscience uses the Law written on every man's heart to testify of conviction: '*Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness [testimony], and their thoughts...accusing or else excusing one another*' (Rom.2:15).

The Puritans who wrote and meditated deeply concerning the conscience, wrote of it as '*God's deputy*', '*a divine court with the soul*' (Richard Sibbs).

The Conscience - 'good' or 'defiled'

The conscience is built and determined by how it is fed and what knowledge is put into it. The conscience will be developed to be either '*pure*' (1Tim.3:9; 2Tim.1:3), '*good*' (Acts 23:1; 1Tim.1:5,19; Heb.13:18; 1Pet.2:18,19; 3:16,21), '*void of offense to God and men*' (Acts 24:16; Rom.13:5; 1Cor.10:25-29;

2Cor.4:2) *spirit affected* (Rom.9:1; Acts 23:1; 2Cor.1:12; Heb.9:9,14; 10:2,22); or ‘*weak*’ and ‘*defiled*’ (1Cor.8:7,10,12; Tit.1:15), and at worst ‘*seared*’ (1Tim.4:2).

The ‘Good’ Conscience

The more we know and understand the Law of Christ in the Word of God, the more information we have for a solid foundation for a ‘good’ conscience. Such a conscience must have a high view of the Word of God. *‘The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes’* (Ps.19:7,8).

A ‘good conscience’ was important to the apostle Paul: *‘And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day’* (Acts 23:1). The conscience must be clean in the sight of God and men, not ‘offended’ or pricked without dealing with the conviction thereof: *‘And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men’* (Acts 24:16). Paul’s defenses of the faith were not what people wanted to hear but it was important to him that his own conscience was not offended or violated. *‘Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation [conduct; behaviour] in Christ’* (1Pet.3:16).

A ‘good conscience’ will bring with it a peace and joy: *‘For our rejoicing is this, the testimony [confirming] of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward’* (2Cor.1:12). This ‘rejoicing’ is the peace and joy of a conscience which can only come when the heart is being trained by an honesty with no hypocrisy: *‘Now the end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned’* (1Tim.1:5). Paul was here comparing a good conscience built up by the Word of God in comparison to false teachers who do not have a ‘*faith unfeigned*’ [genuine, sincere], but speak and live in hypocrisy. Paul’s admonition to Timothy was to *‘holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck’* (1Tim.1:19).

The Weak, Defiled Conscience

Many years ago when a new believer, I had a personal conviction that Sunday was the day of corporate worship and not to be replaced with pursuits of sport. That conscience was once defiled when away from home and persuaded to miss church and compete in a sporting event. One self was against the other self - a conviction not to compete. Near the very end of winning the event I suffered a serious injury which saw me hospitalised and out of that sport for life. The breaking of a personal conviction at the time disturbed me. One lesson learnt that day was the importance of the conscience and the cost to follow one’s convictions.

The results of ignoring the conscience can be more devastating spiritually. Again, I can personally testify to a ‘*shipwreck*’ of faith Paul speaks of when a conscience is put away *concerning things of the faith* (1Tim.1:19). For years I was

occasionally convicted that what I was teaching and practising in the Pentecostal movement was unscriptural or mixed with exaggerated experiential and extra biblical leaven. In consistently ignoring these convictions came a conscience which was dulled and blind to truth. I have met many similar, who having ignored or justified their consciences, have become ‘shipwrecked’, and sometimes with disastrous consequences to person, mind, family and faith. In my own case I personally justified challenges to the conscience by thinking that ‘so many others could not be wrong’. Zeal took pride over knowledge. ‘Decisions’ and ‘signs and wonders’ blunted a conscience that would be Berean (Acts 17:11), and one which would ‘*study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, but rightly dividing the word of truth*’ (2Tim.2:15).

Convictions must be acted upon in prayer and study of the Word. Whether it be a preference or a command in the Word of God, we must never let our conscience become ‘weak’ and ‘defiled’: ‘*Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled*’ (1Cor.8:7). Although the ‘weak’ conscience here may be because of a lack of knowledge and immaturity, nevertheless we must not act against our conscience and thus ‘defile’ it. ‘*For if any man see you which has knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols*’ (vs.10). We must also never cause a person to go against their own conscience by what we say or do: ‘*But when you sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ*’ (vs.12).

This does not mean that we do not speak scriptural truth to people who have a different conscience on things. The Spirit can convict the conscience by truth through God’s Word and His Gospel. Jesus often addressed the conscience. When a woman was caught in adultery, Jesus challenged any who had no sin to cast the first stone: ‘*And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst*’ (Jn.8:9). Yet today psychology teaches against the concept of sin and states that a guilty conscience is not healthy.

The Conscience and Spiritual Discernment

The unsaved have a conscience that, although it can still operate by a moral law of right and wrong which is written on their hearts (Rom.2:15), it is not able to be subject to God’s laws of holiness and salvation (Rom.8:5-8), unless the Spirit illuminates the mind and changes the heart (Jn.6:44,65).

However, the Christian conscience *is built and determined by how it is fed with truth*. The conscience is a tool for conviction. If conviction is suppressed, discernment diminishes and worldliness or sin becomes less clear. For spiritual discernment the conscience needs to be programmed with divine truth, only found in the sure infallible Word of God.

The Christian needs to be moving as quickly as they can from ‘milk’ to ‘meat’ so as to be of ‘full age’ (mature) in discerning spiritual things. ‘*For every one that*

uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil' (Heb.5:13,14).

But what about matters not addressed specifically in the Word of God? It is here that the danger of 'legalism' lurks. Legalism can be primarily defined as *doing good works or obeying a law which attempts to earn and merit favour with God*. Man is by sinful nature legalistic. Religions are often the outworking of that legalism, taken up to appease the moral conscience and of sin, by works to merit salvation. True Christians are not immune to this. The flesh wars with the spirit and in the flesh we can pursue the spirit of legalism in a self righteousness.

What of matters not specifically commanded or taught in the Word of God? Sometimes these matters require necessary 'conscience decisions'.

The following is a scriptural guide to such decisions:

1. Will it be spiritually profitable? *'All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not'* (1Cor.10:23)

2. Will it master me? *'All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any'* (1Cor.6:12)

3. Will it cover my sins? *'As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God'* (1Pet.2:16); *'For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another'* (Gal.5:13).

4. Will it help others? Will it be a 'stumblingblock'? *'But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak'* (1Cor.8:9); *'Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense...'* (1Cor.10:31- 33). *'And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men'* (Acts 24:16); *'Abstain from all appearance of evil'* (1Thess.5:22).

The Holy Spirit and the Conscience

In the New Birth the conscience is enlightened by the Holy Spirit (Heb.9:14). The tender conscience of a true Christian always brings remorse for sin committed, wilfully or otherwise, and a repentance that longs for forgiveness and a restored relationship with Him who called us. The absence of that sets apart the true from the false believer.

The Christian conscience is one of the most important tools used by the Spirit in the process of Sanctification, that inner work conforming a Christian to the image of Christ (Rom.8:29; 2Cor.3:18; Col.3:10). The practise of Biblical holiness provides a pure conscience that is essential to a healthy and discerning pure mind.

The method the Spirit uses in this sanctification of the believer and his conscience, is the Word of God (Jn.17:17). At this point there is large scale confusion today with the understanding of the Holy Spirit and the conscience!

Many Christians believe and profess that they hear the voice of the Holy Spirit apart from the Bible, often described as an inner voice or a 'prompting'. The *voice*

of the conscience is confused with a *direct* voice of the Holy Spirit. But the conscience is not the voice of God speaking directly, but a faculty responding to what we believe God would say.

Any 'prompting' that may come from the conscience is not a direct voice or new words from the Holy Spirit, and must always be seen as fallible and to be tested by the written Word of God. The Holy Spirit 'has spoken' by the prophets, and then in the final revelation of Jesus Christ (Heb.1:1,2). He has not spoken more than the 'more sure word of prophecy...the prophecy of the scripture' - that which is in the closed canon of the Bible (2Pet.1:17-20). We become like false prophets if we assume God has spoken to us words separate to His final Holy Word!

Nevertheless, the conscience is a vehicle by which the Holy Spirit may witness to us: *'I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in ['en' - resting in] the Holy Ghost* (Rom.9:1). Any such witness or 'prompting', as some call it, by the Spirit to our conscience, is not a primary direct infallible voice, but a secondary fallible witness and should be the result of being '*renewed in the mind*' by the Word of God (Eph.4:23; 2Cor.4:16; Col.3:10). Any 'witness' or 'prompting' is *never* to be taken solely as a word from God and must always be tested if acted upon. Simply put, *many Christians today confuse the inner voice of their own conscience with what they think is the Holy Spirit speaking to them!*

One author addresses this issue: *'God guides through His Word and its principles. This is one of the most neglected dimensions of guidance today. It sounds terribly spiritual to say 'God led me', but I am always suspicious of a person who implies that he has a personal pipeline to God. When no one else senses that what the person suggests is the will of God, then we had better be careful. God has been blamed for the most outlandish things by people who have confused their own inverted pride with God's will. Occasionally I hear of a guy who, in the name of spiritual guidance, rushes up to a girl and says, 'Susie, God has told me you're to marry me'. I have news for him. If that is the will of God, then Susie is going to get the message too. If she does not, somebody's radar is jammed, and it's not hard to tell whose'.* (Paul Little, 'Affirming The Will Of God')

God, Satan, an angel, a demon, human emotions, hormonal imbalances, insomnia, medication, an upset stomach - all can cause a person to think that they have heard from God. Impressions, 'promptings', inner voices, etc, *are not authoritative and cannot be tested objectively.*

Further, *Scripture never commands us to tune into any inner voice, prompting or impression!* We are simply commanded to study and meditate on Scripture (Josh.1:8; Ps.1:1-2). How do we know that inner voices and mental impressions are not the lies of a deceitful heart, imagination, or even demonic, even if it does not contradict scripture? Again, *the voice of one's own conscience must not be confused with any supposed voice of the Holy Spirit.*

The author once was in conversation with a professing Christian man who described hearing God speak to him by impression/prompting that he could marry a certain person from a non Christian faith. After marriage the partner came to profess faith in Christ. He stated this was 'proof' his original impression was of God. However, he was challenged as to why God would disobey His own word at

any time in decreeing a marriage against His Word (2Cor.6). Can God do this even for pragmatic results? The scriptures answer: *'And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just'* (Rom.3:8). What does it prove if 'good' things happen as a result? Does that prove the voice was from God? The man's conscience was swayed by subjective motives to contradict the Word of God.

The Mormons teach that if you read the Book of Mormon and you have a 'burning in the bosom' it is then the Word of God. The conscience is well capable of being swayed by subjective means to speak contrary to the Word of God.

The Christian conscience must *confirm* the truth of the final revelation from God in the written scriptures. As Christians we bring this 'voice' in line with the voice of God. But the two are not intrinsically the same, as one is without error, the other, the conscience, is fallen from the Adamic world.

One author sums this up: *'Scripture never commands us to tune into any inner voice. We're commanded to study and meditate on Scripture (Josh.1:8; Ps.1:1-2). We're instructed to cultivate wisdom and discernment (Pr.4:5-8). We're told to walk wisely and make the most of our time (Eph.5:15-16). We're ordered to be obedient to God's commands (Dt.28:1-2; Jn.15:14) ...we are never encouraged to listen for inner promptings. On the contrary, we are warned that our hearts are so deceitful and desperately wicked that we cannot understand them (Jer.17:9). Surely this should make us very reluctant to heed promptings and messages that arise from within ourselves. Those willing to heed inner voices and mental impressions may be listening to the lies of a deceitful heart, the fantasies of an overactive imagination, or even the voice of a demon. Once objective criteria are cast aside, there is no way to know the difference between truth and falsehood. Those who follow subjective impressions are by definition undiscerning'*. (MacArthur, *'Reckless Faith'*, P.189-193)

The Bible speaks of a sanctification based on the Word of God only. The process of this points specifically to the *'truth'* of the Word of God: *'Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth'* (Jn.17:17). But sadly that is not enough today? Yet where does our daily 'manna' come from? Are we to be like the Israelites who had it supplied to them for 38 years until they rebelled and wanted more? So too, we live in an age that seeks after signs, visions, dreams, promptings, inner voices and impressions - all of which are often *confused with our own voice of the conscience and often are the products of our own heart*. Like the Israelites, *do we not accept what God has limited? We simply do not need to know or tell what God is doing or saying apart from His infallible Word. We become false prophets when we presume to hear from God other than the Word of God.*

How Does the Holy Spirit 'Lead'?

Although the modern ideas of 'promptings' 'impressions' used for the Holy Spirit supposedly speaking apart from scripture have no doctrinal basis in scripture, there is the 'leading' of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:14; Gal.5:18). *'Those who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God'* (Rom.8:14). This verse does not

suggest we look to inner promptings from the Spirit for guidance (the context is about abstaining from 'sin' and the 'flesh'). It ends with *'the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God'* (vs.16). It is this *'bearing witness'* that is a key phrase in understanding how the Holy Spirit 'leads'!

The Holy Spirit may well 'lead' us through the conscience. *'I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost'* (Rom.9:1). Here *'my conscience'* which is quite human, fallible, is witnessing to a *truth* in the Holy Spirit who is going *before* and *leading*. God 'leads' us through the conscience in shaping our lives with convictions, attitudes, judgments. In this *our conscience is fed and informed with the Word of God as the Spirit directs*.

God's 'leading' is also found in *God's providence* - the control of God in our lives. However, unlike the idea of instant 'promptings' and impressions, the biblical 'leading' of God is not seen until *after* the circumstances God brings to pass. Such leading of God and his providence is not as a genie at our beck and call, for *He goes before us and orders our steps* (Ps.37:23).

God's leading is also found in the *will of God*. It is His will for us to be sanctified (1Thess.4:3; Rom.8:27-29); filled with the Spirit (Eph.5:17,18); giving thanks in all things (1Thess.5:18); and the 'perfect will of God' for us to be *'transformed by the renewing of our mind'* - to prove that *'good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God'* (Rom.12:1,2).

The seriousness of *how we hear from God and our conscience* is shown that in the last days many will ignore the all sufficiency of scripture: *'Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron'* (1Tim.4:1,2).

The Conscience in Eternity

Our conscience is a register of all thoughts. Many Church fathers and the Puritans wrote of the conscience in the afterlife. The Puritan Richard Sibbs wrote of *'God's eternal judgement...when God lays open the the book of conscience, when it is written there by this register, we shall have much to do to excuse ourselves or to plead that we need many witnesses, for our conscience will accuse us...God has planted it with this main end that he might be justified in the damnation of wicked men at the day of judgement'* (*'The Nature of the Conscience'*, *Complete Works of Richard Sibbs*, Vol.3).

If the soul is immortal, so is the conscience. Hell is a place of the conscience turning on the sinner and the agony thereof, a place where one cannot silence the accusing conscience of thoughts. The 'worm' of conscience never dies - its purpose remains to bring evidence for or against at God's tribunal.

How important is the Christian conscience in the midst of a wicked world and an apostate ecumenical church which would dull the convictions of God's deputy thereof. It may cost us the favour of the culture of the day. But it will detract nothing from true discernment, the reward of which is in Heaven!

Your Comments and Questions

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

The 'Jesus Revolution' Movie

Terry, thousands of Christians rushed to see the 'Jesus Revolution' movie...Is it a Gospel presentation or just another untruthful narrative of the 1960's Hippie generation and their involvement with Chuck Smith of the Calvary Chapel in California and the subsequent introduction of the 'Seeker-Sensitive' false Gospel?
(S.M., Sth Aust.)

Editor's reply:

Firstly, the movie has *no gospel*. It is supposedly a true account of a hippie, Lonnie Frisbee, who revolutionised church movements in the late 1960's. His ex wife Connie who is still living claims *'90% of the movie isn't true'*. The movie also contradicts events in Greg Laurie's book of the same name.

The movie does not show that Lonnie was supposedly saved at age 17 while on the drug LSD, naked and in a trance, seeing a vision of the Pacific ocean, a multitude of people with himself preaching in what the Lord said would be a 'unique ministry'. He then had others supposedly saved while they were on LSD.

Lonnie was a drug taker and engaged in homosexual encounters during his life, as eventually admitted by him to some, including his wife Connie, that he attended gay bars of a night (and then preached on Sunday). Later people came forward testifying to sexual encounters with him, which caused Lonnie to be stood down from ministry and excommunicated from denominations.

Later he was filmed dressed as a Roman Catholic priest. He contracted AIDS from one of the homosexual encounters and died in 1993.

The movie arguably gives credence to a subculture which spoke to and changed the church. (Should it not be that the Gospel speaks to the culture?)

Jonathan Roumie who plays the part of Lonnie, is a Roman Catholic mystic who laid on Lonnie's grave to *'connect'* and *'pray the rosary with him...asking for a sign'* (an abomination in scripture - Dt.18:10,11; Is.8:19,20).

Lonnie's wife, Connie, says the flaws in the movie are that it leaves the impression that the many people getting saved was to the credit of Calvary Chapel church. But she says people were at that time being saved *'all over the place'* and the *'Jesus movement'* was happening well before Lonnie met pastor Chuck Smith. *'People are taking bows and getting credit...The truth is that dealing with people is very messy. They want to make it very tidy. They've tidied it all up so much that it just stinks to high heaven to me, and whitewashed it'*.

Connie says the church left them destitute and they never received any finances for ministry. *'Lonnie and I were still...eating garbage out of the back of the supermarket trash cans up until we left Calvary Chapel...Chuck Smith had a church for many years with 40-50 people. And all of a sudden we show up and within weeks, he's got 1,500 young people [hippies] coming to his church.'*

Continued next page >

Wouldn't you think that he would help us?'...

When their marriage started failing they went to Chuck Smith who said: *'Well, your marriage isn't important, Connie. The only thing that's important right now is that people are getting saved'* - this left Connie devastated. Smith's pastor son admitted that his father's philosophy *'harmed Lonnie and Connie'*.

Connie has stated that Lonnie put the ministry before their marriage and that *'he really did fall for the adulation of the crowd that he was so needing. Had Chuck Smith taken Lonnie under his wing like Paul would have taken Timothy or Titus a young brother in the Lord and done what the Bible said, Lonnie and I very well may have stayed married, and Lonnie might not have died of AIDS'*.

Later Connie was involved in an adulterous affair with a pastor in the church. This led to a divorce with Lonnie.

The movie lauds the Charismatic movement, leader Chuck Smith and Greg Laurie (a disciple of Lonnie). Connie states Lonnie built up the Bible study in Riverside that was taken over by Laurie...*'Greg Laurie took everything that Lonnie did and mimicked him, very successfully'*.

Lonnie faced opposition from the church for his Pentecostal practises and was told that if people fell in Lonnie's practise of *'falling in the spirit'*, Lonnie would *'lose his job'*. So he then accepted an offer to another church more Pentecostal, only to return 4 years later to Calvary Chapel and was made assistant pastor. He had changed his appearance, being more *'groomed'*.

Later Lonnie left to join John Wimber's Vineyard movement. The first meeting there was set up with Lonnie telling people (mostly young visitors) to *'expect a move of the spirit tonight'*. The extreme manifestations that followed shocked many members into leaving. Lonnie's ministry was full of all the manifestations seen in the extremes of today's Charismatic movement.

He was then exposed for homosexuality which he admitted to, when a man came forward convicted of being in a 6 month relationship with Lonnie. Yet Lonnie often state homosexuality was sin and he was not practising such. Many in the Charismatic movement defend Lonnie, believing God used his *'anointing'* despite his double life. He ended bitter towards the churches and had bizarre visions and spoke of flying saucers, before dying of AIDS.

Chuck Smith later made a false prophesy for the Rapture to be in 1981.

Today many will not discern and research, but be duped by these feel good *'Christian'* movies, this one lauding the openly sorry sinful history of a movement that many believe was not of God and popularised Charismatism and gave birth to the modern Contemporary Christian music industry.

(For information on Greg Laurie's false teaching see *Diakrisis* 2016 Nov/Dec P.6; 2021 Jan/Feb, P.4).

(Sources: For a more accurate history of the movement see *'Lonnie Frisbee - the Life and Death of a Hippie Preacher'*.

Other sources: *'A Review of Jesus Revolution'*, Mike Oppenheimer Part 1, Part 2; <https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/new-booklet-tract-truth-or-consequences> <https://thewordlikefire.wordpress.com/2023/03/29/jonathan-roumie-prayed-with-deceased-lonnie-frisbee-and-asked-him-for-a-sign>

Your Comments and Questions

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

'Tongues' - 1Cor.14:3-5, 27-29

Terry, thank you very much for the Charismatic Confusion Conference in Sydney - it was very rewarding. Could I please get your comment on the below verses re. Tongues? - especially the 'no man understands him' (I would have thought, if Tongues was in a foreign language, at least the relevant foreigner would have understood), and the 'speaks mysteries' (suggesting it is not an earthly language). May God continue to bless you, Terry.

G.C. (NSW)

1 Corinthians 14:2-5,27-28 'For he that speak's in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him ; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 3. But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 4. He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself; but he that prophesies edifies the church. 5 I would that you all spoke with tongues, but rather that you prophesied: for greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying...27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God'.

Editor's reply [Excerpts only]:

Most of the interpretations fall into one of the two categories, apart from the Charismatic ones which assume a 'heavenly language' of which there is simply no evidence textually, exegetically or in history...

One interpretation is that the 'unknown tongue' in verse 2 was ecstatic. The late Greek scholar, Zodhiates, believes the 'unknown tongue' was a '*loud emotional outburst of sounds by which they thought they could communicate with God.*' The evidence he gives is the pagan temples nearby where there were ecstatic utterances (exactly as it is like in the Charismatic movement today).

The other interpretation is that the person was speaking an unknown dialect not fully recognised in Corinth. That would arguably be true to the meanings of the Greek words for 'tongues' - '*glossais*' (Acts and Corinthians) and '*dialektos*' (Acts 2:6,8).

The person would be speaking '*not unto men*' because '*no man understands him*'. He would be speaking '*mysteries*' in his spirit to any who hear...It is not inconceivable that with the numerous different travellers from various parts of the then known world that there would have been dialects not known by many or all in Corinth.

This interpretation would also agree with other scriptures where tongues is mentioned as a known language (Acts 2 and 10). Added to this again is the

plain meaning of the words ‘*glossais*’ and ‘*dialektos*’ in Acts and Corinthians. (Corinthians was written before Acts - the meaning of ‘*glossais*’ would not and has not changed).

In verse 2 we have the ‘*unknown tongue*’ contrasted with the ‘*prophecies*’ of verse 3. This unknown tongue does not speak to men; Why? - Because ‘*no man understands*’. The person is speaking in their own *human spirit*. (The ‘*spirit*’ in 1Cor.14 is the human spirit - small ‘s’; see vs.14 ‘*my spirit*’). The speaking is *unintelligible*, as almost every verse in the chapter reiterates.

Zodhiates says the man would be speaking ‘*unto God*’ in that God does not require speech to be understood, considering He can know the thoughts.

Paul is *correcting this unknown tongue* because it is *not understood*. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is never found speaking a language that cannot be understood (Acts ch.2 &10); neither are angels ever found speaking a language that cannot be understood.

Paul is encouraging the Corinthian Christians to prophesy rather than speak in an unknown tongue that does not bring ‘*edification and exhortation, and comfort*’, as ‘*prophecy*’ does. The contrast between verses 2 and 3 - between the unknown tongue and prophecy, is strong throughout the chapter.

Whether it was ecstatic utterance or a real language unknown to the church at Corinth, it was *not understood* and useless to the church. *That is the context that Paul is strongly teaching throughout the chapter.*

The summary of this can be seen in vs.18,19 ‘*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue*’. The verses following this then *rebuke* the Corinthians for speaking in unknown languages, whether ‘*mysteries*’ or not.

Whether you run with one interpretation or the other, both refute anything to do with ‘*heavenly languages*’, which is an invention of the mid 20th C. (Word Faith teachers and Oral Roberts...). There is simply NO case of such in scripture (the ‘*tongues of angels*’ in chapter 13 is hypothetical, hyperbole, and regardless in scripture angels always spoke in a *known language*).

The other verse quoted (vs.27,28) - vs.28 matches vs.2...The ‘*unknown tongue*’ in verse 27 is challenged by Paul to be interpreted. But you cannot interpret an unknown language that is not a real language! The word ‘*interpret*’ is always in scripture by definition and context, referring to *translating something known to something else that is known* (Jn.9:7; Acts 9:36; Heb.7:2). And if it is not able to be translated then that person again ‘*can speak to God*’. The ‘*to God*’ in vs.2 becomes ‘*to himself and to God*’ in vs.28, unless there is interpretation! These verses again show Paul was referring to languages known but not known by all or some.

I would also suggest to be careful not to over interpret one phrase (such as ‘*mysteries*’) and miss the context. The question is ‘*What is the author saying to the audience...What is the main point...*’. The main point again I see is in vs.18,19 (see above). The whole passage is a correction of the ‘*unknown tongue*’, whether one sees that as a language or ecstatic speech.

Your Comments and Questions

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

'Tongues' Test?

Terry, have you read about the test that is available for tongues speaking? ...You get a voluntary recording of a person speaking in tongues, then you take the recording to several - 4 or 5 Charismatic interpreters for independent interpretation. We are told to 'test the spirits to see whether they are from God' (1Jn.4:1). Apparently wherever this test has been carried out, the interpretations are all different! I would recommend this test to every Charismatic tongues speaker, providing the test was independent, with no possibility of human interference (might there be demonic interference?)...Apparently too...volunteers from a church were subjected to listening to tongues speaking recordings for a time and many of them could do it, some quite proficiently...

(E.D., Qld)

Editor's reply:

...I mentioned this in the Sydney conference this year. I have in earlier years challenged a few Pentecostal pastors to do this test with their 'tongues'. One of them was...a former leader in the Australian AOG...He became angry and said it was just a 'fleshly test'. Neither would any other church accept. I have yet to hear of anything like it being done in Australia...

The 'Shack' Book/Movie

Hi Terry...I recently declined offer of The Shack DVD being sent me...after the reviews I've read...it being blasphemous and side steps telling the plain Gospel truth via JESUS as the Door...Did you once pen something on this book/movie...?

(H.R., Qld)

Editors Reply:

'Diakrisis' has no articles on this...but I found some notes I once collected...The Shack presents an unbiblical God the Father personified as a large black lady named 'Papa'...(which basically is goddess worship?) The Bible never teaches God the Father takes on a physical form...(John 4:24; 1Tim.6:16). 'Papa' has scars in her hands (P.95); yet only Christ bore sins...and God the Holy Spirit is personified by an Asian woman...

The Shack presents an unbiblical salvation, suggesting there is more than one way to be saved...*'Those who love me come from every system that exists...Buddhists, Mormons...Muslims'... 'I have no desire to make them Christian'* (P.182). The Bible disagrees (Jn.14:6)...The Shack embraces Pantheism...*'God, who is the ground of all being, dwells in, around and through all things'* (P.112)...*The Shack* is a blasphemous portrayal of the Godhead.

Itinerary August - October 2023

NSW

Aug 20th (Sun) 3.30pm Sovereign Church, Port Macquarie (Church of Christ building), 81 Clifton Drive Ph.0421353803

Aug 25th (Frid) 7.30pm Evangel church, cnr Neville & Clarke St, Bass Hill Ph.0412670995

Aug 27th (Sun) 10am Fellowship Baptist, 226 Nuwarra Rd, Moorebank Ph.0488555981

Aug 27th (Sun) 2.30pm St. Johns Park Baptist (Sydney), 178 Humphries Rd, Ph.0417179610

Victoria

Sept 3rd (Sun) 10.30am Heritage Baptist Church, Ballarat, 4 Remembrance Dr. Cardigan Ph.0403161522

Sept 10th (Sun) 10am Kangaroo Flats Baptist, 32 Church St, Ph.0413179268

Sept 15th (Frid) 7pm study, Mt. Cathedral Baptist, 37 Grant St Alexandra, Ph.0409382041

Sept 17th (Sun) 10am & 1.30pm Mt. Cathedral Baptist, (details as above)

Sept 20th (Wed) 7.30pm Numurkah Gospel Fellowship 60 Meiklejohn St. Ph.0407040820

Sept 24th (Sun) 11am Numurkah Gospel Fellowship (details as above)

NSW

Sept 27th (Wed) 5pm Aboriginal Evangelical church, Eden, Cnr Moorehead & Clare St. Ph.0401340393

Oct 1st (Sun) 11am & 5pm, Aboriginal Evangelical church, Eden (details as above)

Oct 8th (Sun) 10.30am & 6pm St. Johns Park Baptist (Sydney), 178 Humphries Rd, Ph.0417179610

Oct 10th (Tues) 7.30pm Evangel church, Sydney, cnr Neville & Clarke St, Bass Hill Ph.0412670995

Oct 13th (Frid) 7.30pm Evangel church, Sydney (details as above)

Oct 15th (Sun) 9.30am Evangel church, Sydney (details as above)

Oct 15th (Sun) 5pm Central Mountains Baptist, Sydney, Hazelbrook school hall 159 Great Western Highway Ph.0466590132

Qld

Oct 22nd (Sun) 9.30am Hervey Bay Bible Church Hervey Bay Bible Church (Urangan Community Hall, Elizabeth St. (entrance opposite Miller St) Ph. 0411051118

Oct 22nd (Sun) 6pm Gin Gin Baptist, English St, Ph.0428385852

Your Comments and Questions

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

Hi Terry, encouragement for you... Thank you for faithfully putting together the 'Diakrisis' newsletter. I particularly enjoyed... Nov/Dec 2022 issue, 'part 17 on Revelation' ...looking at the New Jerusalem. When I think 'city', I think Sydney, New York size. I had no idea the New Jerusalem was so big! I also like the description of the precious stone colours. God's creation of colours is amazing. In these days of evil waxing worse and worse, it is nice to be reminded we have much to look forward to.

Praying that your travelling ministry to encourage our brothers and sisters would be fruitful, and above all that our Lord would be glorified.

Continue to 'Preach the word; in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine'. As we await. Love to you and Beth.

(K.L., Qld)

Newsletter by Email

If any subscribers on hardcopy newsletter have e-mail, please consider changing over to e-mail delivery. The e-mail version can also be sent in booklet form for printing.

Prayer/Praise Points

- Pray for the August-October itinerary - for the planning, for safe travel, and for Spirit led preparation and meetings.

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