



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 2.10.1

Series 2 of the Parables Bookshelf contains a variety of writings covering a wide range of topics related to the Kingdom of God. These writings originally appeared as posts on the Heart4God website, or the Parables Blog, both of which are the websites of Bible teacher Joseph Herrin.

Divorced From Truth

Divorced From Truth - Part 1

Despising Doctrine

Joseph Herrin
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II Thessalonians 2:13

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Yahshua Christ and our gathering together to Him..., let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy** comes first...

Apostasy: to divorce from truth

The Spirit of Christ has brought to my attention an alarming trend among the body of Christ. I have been aware for many years that most Christians do not study their Bibles. This becomes obvious when I receive correspondence from

believers. I have attributed much of this to a lack of interest in spiritual things. Christians find their attention drawn to a multitude of activities in this materialistic society, and the Bible often seems an unattractive choice to spend their time when they could be watching television, or pursuing some other worldly entertainment.

Many Christians have left it up to their pastors and Bible teachers to do the actual study of the Bible, looking to ministers to tell them the things they need to know. The great error of this is that the ministers know there are many

things the body of Christ does not want to hear. There are certain Scriptures that if taught upon would lead to personal strife and possibly cost the minister their job, so a great many doctrines and passages of Scripture are either avoided, or reinterpreted in some unsound manner. The apostle Paul prophesied that this would be the state of the last days of the church in which we now live.

II Timothy 4:2-4

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruc-

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tion. ***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine***; but wanting to have their ears tickled, ***they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires***, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

We find very little reproofing, rebuking and exhorting taking place among the body of Christ today. Sadly, many in the church have gone beyond a mere apathy toward studying the Scriptures, and now they will not “endure” sound doctrine. This was manifested recently when a brother told me he did not want to speak to me about doctrine, having concluded that to do so was divisive.

People of God, true doctrine is divisive. It divides truth from error. Many who are wed to myths and fables, who have embraced false doctrines, react very strongly when someone asks them to sit down and examine carefully what the Scriptures actually teach. A mindset has gripped many believers where they have concluded that it is okay for Christians to believe whatever they choose to believe, and that any interpretation of the Scriptures is legitimate if a person believes it. Such a conclusion is not only fallacious, but has resulted in much loss in the lives of the people of God.

II Peter 1:19-2:1

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that ***no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation***, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. ***But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies***, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

The apostle Peter in using the word “prophecy” is

not speaking merely of Scriptures that foretell future events. The word “prophecy” means “words spoken by inspiration.” The men who were inspired to write the Scriptures were prophesying as they penned every line. Peter goes on to speak of false teachers arising among the body of Christ who will introduce destructive heresies. How will these heresies be discerned and refuted since the people of God have abandoned the study of the Scriptures and have concluded that doctrine is divisive and therefore to be avoided?

The apostles appointed by Christ to establish His church upon a sure foundation emphasized the need to study the Scriptures and to discern them correctly. They would be appalled to discern what has occurred in the church at this hour. The Bible may be a best seller, but it is little read, and seldom studied. In addition, many new translations of the Bible have been produced to make it more “readable,” but in the process, many errors and inaccuracies have been introduced. Accuracy in translation has been replaced by a focus upon creating a translation that is entertaining, that will attract people’s interest.

There are some truly abominable Bible translations around today. The publishers of the NIV Bible have produced a gender neutral translation in order to be politically correct. The great error of doing so is that the Holy Spirit did not inspire men to write the Scriptures in gender neutral language. Gender is indicated throughout the Bible. Such translations reveal a lack of fear of God, and a destructive pride that places man’s thoughts above those of man’s Creator.

Another translation horror is Eugene Peterson’s The Message. This Bible reads like a slangy, casual conversation. It is not really a translation at all, but rather a paraphrase. No one who wants to seriously study the Bible would choose this translation, for there is such a wide divergence from the original Spirit inspired Scriptures as to make a study of original intent and meaning impractical.

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Some believers have written to me to ask what translation I use in my studies, and which translation I am using when I provide Scripture quotations. Since I was an adolescent I have not relied upon a particular translation of the Bible in my studies. As a child I was given the King James Bible, and this was what was predominantly used in the churches I grew up in. Even so, when I was no older than a very early teenager I acquired a copy of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible with Hebrew and Greek word definitions, and I spent uncounted hours looking up specific words to ascertain their original meaning and to see how the translators rendered the word in various occurrences.

I was often astonished to find that the translators would render a single Hebrew or Greek word in more than a dozen different ways, often contradictory, frequently obscuring the true meaning of the original writer. For over ten years now I have used PC Study Bible as my chief study tool. In this computer based program I have the following translations, which I frequently cross reference and compare:

New American Standard Updated

New American Standard

New King James

Young's Literal Translation

The Amplified Bible

King James Version

American Standard Version

New International Version

Darby Bible

Greek New Testament (transliterated)

Hebrew Old Testament (transliterated)

Hebrew and Greek Interlinear

In addition to this I have hardcopies of a number of Scripture translations that I often refer to when

studying, including the following:

The Concordant Translation

The Scriptures (Divine Name Translation)

The Companion Bible (E.W. Bullinger's extensive notes included)

The Holman Bible

The Recovery Bible

And lastly, I at times reference other Bible translations through the Internet which I do not have in my possession.

Very frequently in my studies I will use the Interlinear Bible. This places an English Translation beside the original Hebrew and Greek words, and includes the Strong's reference numbers for each word. A simple click on the Hebrew or Greek word will pull up the definition from Strong's Concordance. Robert Young also has produced a similar concordance, which I have in hardcopy, as well as being the translator of Young's Literal Translation of the Bible which I reference very often.

A click on the Hebrew or Greek word will also allow me to pull up the following:

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

New Unger's Bible Dictionary

Easton's Bible Dictionary

Fausset's Bible Dictionary

Nelson's Bible Dictionary

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

Nave's Topical Concordance

And various other reference works.

When I include Scripture quotations in my writ-

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ings I do not cite the translation unless I have made no changes to it. Oftentimes I will use a translation such as the New American Standard Bible as the basis for a quotation, but I will make changes where I have discerned that a word has not been translated accurately for understanding. I also place the divine names of God back into the text where the translators have replaced them with titular substitutes, a practice I find to be unfaithful to accurate translation.

Some of the study aids in PC Study Bible I use regularly, and others rarely, but I have found them all helpful on occasion. Because I long to discern the truth of God's words, I have accumulated these various resources to help me in my studies. The apostle Paul admonished Timothy in the following way:

II Timothy 2:15

Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.

[The Amplified Bible]

It requires patient study to rightly divide the word of God. I know Christian men who have spent hundreds, and even thousands of dollars, upon some hobby. Men who are hunting, fishing, automobile, stereo, ham radio, sports, and bicycling enthusiasts have often spent a great deal of money, devoted great amounts of time, and educated themselves to become both knowledgeable and skillful in the area of their interest. Yet these same men will often argue that they are unable to manifest the same attention to the study of Scriptures.

People of God, we will pursue that which is important to us. Our actions reveal what is in our hearts. If a man will buy a fishing boat costing thousands of dollars, a truck to pull it with, equip it with rods

and reels and bait and tackle, and spend the money for licenses and fuel; if he will read the fishing magazines, and study where the fish are, when they are feeding, what they are biting; if he will find others with similar interests and spend hours conversing with them, learning new things, and increasing his knowledge and skill, but will not apply the same devotion to study of the Bible, it is not because he is incapable, or does not have the skills necessary. It is because he does not have the desire.

Christ did not go down to the local seminary or university to choose His disciples, men who would later become the apostles of the church. He chose fishermen, a tax collector, a political zealot, and other common men. These men traded a passion for other things for a passion for knowing God. This led them to apply themselves with great devotion to new interests. We read of these men:

Acts 6:4

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

These men did not reason that they lacked the ability to study the word of God in order to teach it accurately. They did not say, "I am a fisherman, not a Bible scholar." They became Bible scholars, devoting themselves to its study and teaching, relying upon the Spirit of Christ to instruct them as they did so, and they were able to lay a foundation upon which the church of God could be firmly established.

There is no less need in this hour for men and women to manifest this same devotion to Christ and His word. I am appalled at the attitude that would seek to place these two things at opposition to one another. Some say "Let's just focus upon Christ and avoid doctrine." What folly this is. The Scriptures include doctrines of the Christ, and any who fail to rightly discern these doctrines will find themselves running their race in vain.

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I Timothy 4:6

In pointing out these things to the brethren, ***you will be a good servant of Christ Yahshua, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine*** which you have been following.

I Timothy 6:3-4

If anyone advocates a different ***doctrine*** and does not agree with ***sound words, those of our Lord Yahshua Christ***, and with the ***doctrine*** conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing...

A people who “will not endure sound doctrine” will find themselves led away from godliness and from a correct understanding of Christ and His kingdom. Men and women are divorcing themselves from truth at their own peril. There is an incredible amount of deception abounding in this late hour, and conditions will grow worse. The people of God will be urged to embrace one error after another until there is no truth left in the foundation upon which they are standing. Already the foundation has been seriously eroded, and rotten planks have replaced that which was once sound.

Many are saying, “All that is truly important is relationship. We must lead people to relationship with Christ and relationships with one another.” The subtle, yet insidious error of this mindset is uncovered when one sees that this Christ with whom they are in relationship is not the Christ described in the Scriptures. It is a Christ of their own imagination and creation.

Many are proclaiming a Christ that bears no resemblance to the Son of God. Like the Israelites in the wilderness, they have formed a golden calf and called it Yahweh.

Exodus 32:4-5

He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, “***This is your god***, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, “***Tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh.***”

What has happened in times past was written for our instruction. The people of God took their gold jewelry and asked Aaron to fashion for them a god like the gods of Egypt, one they could worship and who would applaud their carnality. Aaron fashioned this idol and the people said, “This is your god,” and they called it “Yahweh.”

Can you not discern that the same idolatrous actions are being carried out in this very hour among the people of God? Do not be fooled because Christians say they are worshiping Christ. Many are worshiping an image of Christ they have created. They have commissioned ministers to fashion an acceptable image of Christ for them, but this image bears no more resemblance to the Son of God than the golden calf resembled Yahweh.

The Israelites acted in an unrestrained manner in front of this calf. They danced and played the harlot, engaging in sexual immorality, all the while saying it was done as a festival to Yahweh. How many Christians today are acting in a similar immoral fashion? Multitudes who confess to worship Christ are focused upon material possessions, upon pleasure, and are engaging in all manner of behavior that is displeasing to God, but the god they have fashioned smiles on it all. The god they have fashioned even tells them they are blessed as their lives become more filled with the excesses of selfish living.

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The people and the ministers today have fashioned a new christ who is all love and tolerance. This christ does not punish sin, and never manifests anger or displeasure at man. This christ is not exclusive. He says he is one way to God, perhaps the best way, but not the only way. This christ does not make sin and repentance a focus of relationship to himself or the Father. His message is simply “come to me as you are, and remain essentially as you are, and I will embrace you and love you.”

This new christ makes men and women feel good about themselves, even while they are living self-focused lives. These men and women can be living in sin, seeking to serve both God and mammon, but the christ they have formed smiles upon it all, and says, “I love you. Do not trouble yourselves about such things.”

People of God, this is the subtlety of the deception of this hour. Satan knows he does not need to get people to deny Christ with their mouths. All he needs to do is get them to embrace an image of Christ that is false.

Matthew 24:24

"For **false Christs** and false prophets **will arise** and will show great signs and wonders, **so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.**"

Christ warned His disciples in advance that these things would happen. There are false Christs in profusion in existence at this hour. Multitudes have fashioned new images of Christ that are divorced from the truth. How will the people of God know the counterfeit unless they study the true. The Scriptures reveal the true image of Christ.

John 5:39-40

"You search **the Scriptures**, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and **it is these that bear witness of Me...**"

A people who do not study the Scriptures will be easily fooled by the counterfeit doctrines and counterfeit Christs that abound in this hour. In the next part of this writing I will address some of the specific counterfeits that are being embraced enthusiastically by those who have allowed themselves to become divorced from the truth.

Divorced From Truth - Part 2

Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah - The ONLY Way to God

John 14:6

Yahshua said to him, "**I am THE way**, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father but through Me.**"

John 10:7-9

So Yahshua said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **I am THE door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers**, but the sheep did not hear them. **I am THE door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved.**"

In part 1 of this writing I shared a great concern that is upon my heart concerning the present trend among believers in Christ to depart from sound doctrine and the study of Scriptures. This trend is leading many believers, and people of influence among the body of Christ, to embrace grievous error. I can see where much of this error is heading. It will lead to an eventual denial of Yahshua the Messiah as the ONLY way to restored relationship to God. Already, this trend is far advanced, and many believers are embracing doctrines that declare that God may be found through other ways.

I suspect that most who read this blog would read the opening Scriptures and agree that there is no other way to the Father other than through Christ. Some would be surprised, however, to find how

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far such an understanding has already suffered the effects of erosion as a stream of falsehood has been unleashed like a flood, and many Christians are beginning to depart from sound doctrine. I will cite a few prominent examples.

Some months ago I was made aware of an interview that Billy Graham had with Robert Schueller of the Crystal Cathedral in California. In this interview Billy Graham states that there may be other ways to God other than through Christianity. Robert Schueller was excited to hear Billy Graham declare this, for it fits in well with his own thinking and false doctrines. You can find this interview on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axxlXy6bLHO&feature=related>

Billy Graham made a similar statement in an interview with Larry King.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx29MRL4L6c&feature=related>

Please understand what is being said. It is being taught that “there is a wideness in God’s mercy.” A person can be a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Buddhist, and if they are seeking light in the religion they are familiar with, then they belong to Christ. They need not know Christ, or even be familiar with God’s plan of redemption. All they need is to be good people who are seeking light.

There are many fallacies being swallowed to arrive at such a conclusion. One fallacy is that good men and women will seek after God of their own initiative.

Romans 3:9-12

Both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, **“There is none righteous, not even**

one; There is none who understands, **there is none who seeks for God;** All have turned aside, together they have become useless; **There is none who does good, there is not even one.** ”

Man is never the initiator of a restored relationship with God. God is always the initiator of reconciliation.

John 6:37, 44

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out... No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”

The idea that there are good people in this world seeking for God is a fallacy. There are no “good” people.

Mark 10:17-18

As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And Yahshua said to him, **“Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.”**

In asking this question, Yahshua was not denying that He was good. He was seeking to expose a fallacy of the man asking the question, and to get him to truly discern what he was saying. There are no “good” men. There are only fallen men who are sold as slaves to sin. Only God is good, so if this man called Christ “good,” he was in effect acknowledging that Christ was God. Yahshua knew the man did not intend to declare this, so He asked him why he made such a statement.

It came as a great shock to me when God first revealed to me the myth of the good man who seeks

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for God. I was raised in Baptist churches that taught this myth. I was told that God must give every man and woman a chance to receive or reject Christ, for to fail to do so would not be fair. What this “fairness doctrine” fails to understand is that all men ALREADY REJECTED God. They did so “in Adam.”

Romans 5:12, 18-19

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...Through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men... through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners...

We all sinned in Adam. When Adam rejected God and chose sin we all did the same, for we were in Adam as his seed. There is no doctrine of fairness that requires God to give all men an opportunity to receive or reject Him a second time. No! The Scriptures reveal that all now depends upon God Who chooses to have mercy on some, leading them to salvation through Christ, and Who also hardens some in their sin that they might remain vessels of wrath.

Romans 9:10-18

And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; ***for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*** What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For ***He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.*** For

the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." ***So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.***

A church that does not STUDY the Scriptures today has departed from such basic truths. What happens time and again is that when man's sense of fairness, of good and evil derived from eating of the forbidden fruit, clashes with the revelation of the character and ways of God, those who are not firmly anchored in the truths of Scriptures form new doctrines according to their own understanding. Through such means an image of God is fashioned that is pleasing to the fallen mind of man, though it be as foreign to the truth as Aaron's golden calf was foreign to the true image of Yahweh.

In adopting a “fairness doctrine” that says God must give all men and women an opportunity to accept or reject Christ, the next false doctrine is then embraced of necessity. This is the doctrine that teaches that good men and women will choose Christ, while wicked men and women will reject Him. As we have seen, this is great error. “There is none righteous. No, not one.” There are no “good” men or women. Only God is good.

Apart from a sovereign work of grace in the lives of those whom God chooses to have mercy on, none would ever come to Christ. Many look at Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus as exceptional. In truth, it is typical of all who come to Christ. Paul was going forth as an enemy of Christ. He was breathing out threats and murder against all who loved Christ. He was not “seeking” God. He was hardened in deception and sin. Yet, Paul was a vessel upon whom God chose to manifest His mercy.

Acts 9:3-6

As he was traveling, it happened that he was ap-

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proaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

Many years ago the Lord revealed to me that I would never have chosen Him if left to myself. My coming to Christ for salvation was totally an act of His choosing to have mercy on me. I remember when this understanding dawned upon me. I was reading Romans chapter 9 and as the truth entered my being I began trembling. I was shaken by the knowledge that I was under wrath, and would have remained there, had not God chosen to have mercy on me. The Baptist doctrines I had been taught fell to the ground when the light of truth broke through to my soul.

Billy Graham and Robert Schueller teach that there are good men and women who are seeking light throughout the world. This is not so. All are children of wrath. None seeks after God. No not one. None would come to Christ unless the Spirit draws them. Salvation belongs to the Lord and He will dispense it as He pleases.

What then of the thought that there may be people in other religions who are seeking God according to what light is available to them? Billy Graham stated that people were doing so. Did he cite any Scriptures as the basis for this concept? No! It is a concept totally born of man's sense of right and wrong obtained by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The carnal mind of man declares that such a conclusion is not only logical, but desirable. Certainly God must honor all those who are seeking light, even if the only light they have is Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, or some other false religion of demonic origin.

Can you see the error in such a conclusion? First, how can one embrace the thought that these false religions have any light?

II Corinthians 6:14-16

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

The Scriptures declare that these false religions are:

lawlessness

darkness

Belial (Satan)

Unbelievers

Idols

If the Scriptures declare false religions and their adherents to be darkness, then how does Billy Graham conclude that there is some light there? He does not do so by the Scriptures, but by Adamic reasoning.

Can God call people out of these religions into a knowledge of His Son to receive mercy and be reconciled to Himself. Absolutely. He has done so millions of times. However, it is erroneous to conclude that these people can be reconciled to God apart from entering in through Christ Yahshua, the Son of God. He alone is THE WAY.

I have mentioned in a couple of previous blog postings the wildly popular book *The Shack*. This book is wildly popular not only in the sense of it being a best seller, but in the effusive praise a great many Christians are heaping upon it. I have heard a number profess that it is the best book they have ever read. The more I come to discern about the book, the more appalled I am at the acceptance it is getting among Christians. Truly, many have departed from sound doctrine and no

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longer study the Scriptures to recognize truth and error.

USA Today had a review of this book in which the following was stated:

Now, his first novel, The Shack— centered on dialogues between a miserable main character, Mack, and three unorthodox characterizations of the Holy Trinity — telescopes Young's transformation to a man spiritually reborn and aware every moment of God's love. It slams "legalistic" religions, denominations and doctrines. It barely even mentions the Bible.

Much is revealed in this paragraph. The book barely mentions the Bible. It presents an unorthodox view of God, and it defames those who take a stand upon doctrines of the Christ that are not flexible and inclusive as “legalistic.” What are some of the author’s beliefs? They are found in the following excerpts from the book taken from an online review.

On page 182, the character meant to represent Jesus says “Those who love me come from every stream that exists. They were Buddhists or Mormons, Baptists or Muslims, Democrats, Republicans and many who don't vote or are not part of any Sunday morning or religious institutions”. Mack (the main character) asks for clarification. “Does that mean...that all roads will lead to you?” “Not at all,' smiled Jesus...'Most roads don't lead anywhere. What it does mean is that I will travel any road to find you’”. Jesus then goes on to say “I am the best way any human can relate to Papa or Sarayu (the character who plays the Holy Spirit).”

There is much that is poisonous here. The author presents an image of Christ that is false. This Christ does not say, “I am THE WAY.” Instead, he says, “I am the BEST WAY.” What a wide gulf separates these two statements. The author is es-

pousing the false doctrine that there are other ways to relationship with God apart from Christ. God has made no other provision for restored relationship to Himself. All must enter in through the gate, which is Christ Yahshua.

This is the same error espoused by Billy Graham and Robert Schueller, that there is a “wideness” to God’s mercy. There are other paths to God aside from Christ. Today there are those who are saying Christ is the best way to the Father. Next they will be denying even this. They will say all ways are equally as good. Once truth is compromised and the Scriptures are departed from as the source to establish sound doctrine, the people of God become like a ship without anchor or rudder. They are blown about by every wind of false doctrine.

Ephesians 4:14

We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming...

The Shack is filled with Satanic deceit and false doctrine introduced subtly. It is no challenge at all for one who is grounded upon the word of God to discern the deception and falsehood present. Yet hordes of professing Christians are reading the book and heaping effusive praise upon it. Why? Because they have lost all discernment. They have fallen away from truth. They have become untethered from the Scriptures, and have failed to study them to know truth and avoid error.

This book contains other grievous errors such as portraying God the Father and the Holy Spirit as women. God the Father is depicted as saying, “I don’t need to punish people for sin. Sin is its own punishment, devouring from the inside.”

This is truly a case of fashioning a golden calf. What a wonderful god this is for those whose lives are filled with sin. This god does not punish sin.

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No wonder that the USA Today article stated that the Bible is hardly ever mentioned. You will not find support for such a concept of God in the Bible.

It is obvious that the author has been influenced by the study of false religions. The name given to the Asian woman who represents the Holy Spirit is Sarayu. Once more a subtlety of deception is employed. The name Sarayu is a feminine derivative of a Sanskrit word meaning "to flow." As a masculine stem, Sarayu means "air, wind," i.e. "that which is streaming."

[Source: wikipedia]

The Holy Spirit is also described with words that bear the meaning of air and wind in the Bible. Why use the name Sarayu, a name that is not found in the Bible, nor is it a common English name? Where is this name found?

The name Sarayu is mentioned repeatedly in the Rigveda. *"The Rigveda is an ancient Indian sacred collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns dedicated to the gods (devas). It is counted among the four canonical sacred texts of Hinduism known as the Vedas."*

[Source: wikipedia]

Sarayu is the name of a river in India, and this stream which "flows" is associated with the teachings of Hinduism. It is little surprise to find that the author says that Jesus is not the only way to relationship with God. He also has the character depicting Jesus declaring that He did not come to make Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and others into Christians, declaring that He is not a Christian Himself.

"Those who love me come from every system that exists. They were Buddhists or Mormons, Baptists or Muslims.... I have no desire to make them Christian, but I do want to join them in their

transformation into sons and daughters of my Papa, into my brothers and sisters."

[The Shack's "Jesus." [p.182]]

How is it that so many are embracing this book, and praising it so highly? They are only able to do so because this generation has fallen away from the study of Scriptures and an emphasis upon sound doctrine. Even as the author of this book describes those who would divide over doctrine as "legalistic," so too am I finding an increased tendency among Christians to accuse those who seek to emphasize sound doctrine as legalistic and manifesting a religious spirit. I have received this charge on several occasions in the past few weeks, often from believers who should know better.

Satan is shaping opinion by means of a flood of words. This shaping is subtly influencing even those saints who have been grounded in Scriptures and have been instructed by the Spirit. They are beginning to form an image of doctrine as divisive, and reproving, rebuking and exhorting as a manifestation of an argumentative and prideful spirit. There are fewer and fewer voices of truth, as the weight of opinion is driving many into silence. May God raise up men and women who love truth with steel in their backbone. Such are badly needed to lead the body of Christ back to a true image of Christ, and a correct understanding of the ways of God.

Divorced From Truth - Part 3

The Distinctiveness of Christ

II Corinthians 13:5

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, ***that Yahshua Christ is in you*** - unless indeed you fail the test?

I would like to give you a test of spiritual discern-

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ment. Recently I received a post from a brother in Christ who lives in Israel and maintains a mailing list. He sends out posts periodically, and I will include some comments from his most recent post. I would like you to consider what is written, and “examine it carefully.” I am giving you a heads up that I have discerned something to be amiss in it. I want you to see if the same concerns become readily apparent to you.

I have mentioned in previous posts that there is a flood of words being loosed upon the earth in this day, and this deluge impacts the opinions of believers in Christ. Many are having their opinions reshaped bit by bit without them having noticed. Unless one maintains a spiritual alertness, and is grounded in the word of God, they can find themselves beginning to drift off course in subtle ways. One day they will wake up and find that they have lost their bearings altogether.

With this in mind, I invite you to examine the following words sent out by this brother in Jerusalem.

The 2nd Jerusalem Assembly of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus

October 28-29, 2008

An Awesome event transpired this past week here in Jerusalem. From the opening of the Second Jerusalem Assembly of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus, there was a sense, an awareness, voiced in the expressions used both from the platform and from those in attendance that we were seated in one of those rare moments that transpire only every once in a while. In this instance, it was epochal (sic) - occurring only once in an age. The decision by the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) just four years ago to formally recognize and open dialogue with the Christian community here in the Land in order to promote a better relationship between the two is the propellant behind this transforming engine of convergence. This is a monumental overture from the govern-

ment in charge of this Jewish nation to those who have been perceived for over two centuries (he probably meant millennia) as having been the perpetrators of persecution upon them. It was a momentous event that we were able to participate in only because of decades of sacrifice by true believers seeded into this Land who have been dedicated to promoting harmony between the Christian and the Jew - often at their own expense.

The idea of meeting on the basis of our shared interest in the Land of Israel and becoming acquainted with people involved in the fate of this country, allowing them to listen to the heart of believers who love this Land as much as they was cathartic and healing in both its conception and implementation. Just the prior Saturday, the government of Israel fell due to newly elected Kadima Party leader and acting Prime Minister Tizpi (sic) Livni's inability to form a majority coalition within the Parliament (more answered prayer), thus forcing elections to be held within 90 days. It fell because the ultra-orthodox Shas party refused to join the coalition unless the PM publicly announced that a plank in the platform of that coalition would be to not divide Jerusalem. These are the brothers whom God has positioned on the front lines in this battle, manning the political bulwarks to stem this tide of madness toward giving away the Land. To witness the Shas party, represented at this event, being given a sustained ovation for their courage in this struggle by believers in Yeshua who feel the same as they brought tears to the eyes of many from both sides.

This conference concluded with an invitation to actually go into the Knesset itself for the final afternoon meeting on October 29, 2008 where Jewish MK's (Members of Knesset) held hands with believers in Yeshua and with one voice joined in prayer to this One True God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we both worship for His favor and protection upon this nation. Never has this happened in a formally sanctioned event here in this Land of Israel before. While everyone from both

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sides understood this to be just a beginning with many hurdles and obstacles to overcome between us, still - it was Awesome, just Awesome.

Did anything stated here cause you concern due to its departure from sound doctrine? Keep in mind what has been shared in the previous two posts in this series. We have been speaking about the attacks on the exclusivity of Christ as the only way to access to the Father, and a trend among those in and out of the church to obscure any distinctiveness inherent in Christian belief and doctrine. Many are altering the gospel in subtle ways until it has taken on a character foreign from the words of Scripture.

If you did not notice what stood out to me, go back and read these paragraphs again and look for what is stated concerning Christians and Jews being *brothers* and being joined in prayer to “*this One True God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we both worship...*” Did any warning bells go off in your spirit? Have you been subtly influenced by the flood of words poured forth for many years now, until you not only are not alarmed, but might be led to add your “amen” to this brother’s comments?

Many statements such as these made by this brother in Christ sound good and reasonable. It feels right and charitable for a Christian to call a Jew his brother, and to suggest that the Christian and Jew worship the “One True God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” But is this true? Can a Christian and a “Christ-denying Jew both stand hand in hand in prayer and worship to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Are they both worshipping this same God in their own way? Where will such reasoning lead? I wrote to this brother and shared the following thoughts.

Dear H.,

There is a particular thought expressed here that I would like to comment on for your further consideration. It is found expressed in the following statements:

*It is time for the Church to stop "stealing the fruit and destroying the root" of our heritage, to lay claim to our inheritance, to rise up and stand, shoulder to shoulder with **His chosen people - our brothers in this family of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - the same One True God whom we worship...***

*This conference concluded with an invitation to actually go into the Knesset itself for the final afternoon meeting on October 29, 2008 where **Jewish MK's (Members of Knesset) held hands with believers in Yeshua and with one voice joined in prayer to this One True God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we both worship for His favor and protection upon this nation.***

It is error to declare that a person who is Jewish by natural descent or by embracing the Jewish religion is a brother to one who is born of the Spirit of Messiah, or to declare that they worship the same God. Both Christ and the apostles made this distinction clearly. Consider the following words:

John 8:33-44

They answered Him, "**We are Abraham's descendants** and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, "You will become free'?" Yahshua answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. **The slave** does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. **I know that you are Abraham's descendants;** yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place

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in you. ***I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.***" They answered and said to Him, "***Abraham is our father.***" Yahshua said to them, "***If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.*** But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. ***You are doing the deeds of your father.***" They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; ***we have one Father: God.***" Yahshua said to them, "***If God were your Father, you would love Me,*** for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. ***You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father.*** He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies... "Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?" Yahshua answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; ***it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'; and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you,*** but I do know Him and keep His word."

H., there are some very important truths contained in these words of the Son of God. Christ makes a clear delineation between natural descent as children of Abraham and qualification as a son of God by being of the spiritual descent of Abraham. The majority of those who are born of natural descent have to this date not been considered as spiritual descendants of Abraham. The flesh profits nothing. It is the Spirit that makes alive.

We must keep these things in mind when relating to the natural descendants of Abraham. They are not our brothers. They have a different father. Believers in Christ have Yahweh as their Father, but

those who deny Christ have the Devil as their father. No matter how much they say that Yahweh is their God, they are liars, for if Yahweh were their Father they would love His Son.

There can be no fellowship between Christian and Jew apart from the Jew also being born again of the Spirit of Messiah and becoming a partaker of His spiritual life.

II Corinthians 6:14-16

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

For a Christian believer in Christ to be bound together with an unbelieving Jew is to form a partnership with righteousness and lawlessness. There can be NO fellowship between light and darkness. Christ told JEWS that did not believe in Him that they were of their father the devil. Here we are asked "what harmony has Christ with Belial?" This is a rhetorical question. The answer is implied. There is NO harmony between the two. There is NOTHING that a believer has in common with an unbeliever.

Those who say they are worshiping the God of Abraham, but have rejected Yahweh's Son are liars. They are actually worshiping a god of their own manufacture. They have committed the same error as those who formed the golden calf and worshiped it, calling it Yahweh.

Exodus 32:4-5

He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and ***made it into a molten calf***; and they said, "***This is your god, O Is-***

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rael, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "**Tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh.**"

This people have always gone astray in their hearts. They have formed images of Yahweh that are not truly Yahweh. They worship an idol, and call it Yahweh. Do not be deceived into thinking that these Jewish believers who have rejected Messiah are brothers, or that they worship the God of Abraham as do believers in Yahshua. The Son of God has declared that this is not so, and His holy apostles have added testimony to this fact.

Romans 11:28

From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers...

Notice that Paul says God has not fully rejected them "for the sake of the fathers." He says nothing of their faith or worship of Yahweh, for it is not on this basis that they are yet loved. On the basis of faith and worship they are "enemies" of those who are worshipers of Messiah. They do not worship the same God, nor do they walk in the same truth or faith. They are separated from the Spirit of Christ, which alone is the basis by which any who are in Christ might be called brothers.

I Corinthians 6:17

But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

H., there is a spirit of ecumenism present today that is of the Devil. It seeks to convince people that there is fellowship based upon some other foundation than being a partaker of the life of Christ. This spirit of ecumenism suggests that

Jews and Christians and Muslims are all people who share the faith of Abraham. I am sure you would revolt at the idea that Christian and Muslim both share the faith of Abraham. You should likewise revolt at the idea that Christian and Jew share the faith of Abraham, for Abraham manifested a different spirit from those who rejected the Son of God.

[end excerpt]

People of God, when a people begin to drift away from sound doctrine and no longer STUDY the Scriptures as they are admonished to do, they will inevitably begin forming their thoughts and opinions of what is true and false based upon a different source. Instead of seeking to know the mind of the Father in order to be found in agreement with His judgment, they will begin to form judgments according to the dictates of their own soul.

Isaiah 55:8-9

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares Yahweh. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

There is a vast disparity between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of man.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Apart from the Spirit and the Word, we cannot know the thoughts of God. A people who are not diligently seeking to know the mind of the Father, and who have departed from the study of Scriptures, will be led into great error. Their minds will present to them many conclusions that appear righteous, but are actually unrighteous, being contrary to the thoughts of God.

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In this hour there is a great pressure to be tolerant of diverse religious views and to embrace people of other "faiths." President Bush and other world leaders have brought into the current vernacular the expression "people of faith." Christians are lumped into one big melting pot of diverse religious beliefs along with Hindus and Muslims and Buddhists and Shamans and Roman Catholics and Mormons and Moonies. All are spoken of favorably as "people of faith." What is inferred in such rhetoric is that it is sufficient and acceptable to have any type of religious faith. It does not matter if the faith is in a demon, a false god, or the One True God testified of in the Bible whose name is Yahweh and whose Son is Yahshua.

I believe that most professing Christians today cannot even define what it is that makes them a child of God and provides them entrance into the family of Christ. Most have some muddled idea that their confession of Christ as their Savior makes them a Christian. Some would add that one must also adhere to a few key doctrinal beliefs, such as the virgin birth of Christ, His sinless life, death on a cross, and resurrection from the dead.

Christianity is much more than adopting a core of basic beliefs and conforming oneself to a certain standard of behavior. To be a Christian one must become an entirely new creation. A man or woman must be born again spiritually, and become a partaker of the Spirit of Christ. This is the testimony of the verse cited at the opening of this article.

II Corinthians 13:5

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Yahshua Christ is in you - unless indeed you fail the test?

Beyond a doubt, Yahshua Christ is not "in" a Jew who denies that Yahshua is the Son of God and who denies that He is the Jewish Messiah. On

what basis then can a Christian call a non-messianic Jew their brother? On what basis can they assert that they worship the same God?

When a man or woman denies the Son of God, they are denying the Father. This is the testimony of Christ. He said, "If God were your Father, you would love Me." They do not love the Son of God, therefore God is NOT their Father, and if God is NOT their Father, then neither are they the Christians' brother.

Christ told the Samaritan woman at the well that a day was coming, and now was at hand, that all those who worshiped the Father must do so "in spirit and in truth." There is no basis upon which one can claim that a Jew who denies Yahshua as the Son of God, and who does not have the indwelling Spirit of Christ, is a worshiper of Yahweh God. Mankind is either darkness or light. They are either dead in their trespasses and sins, and separated from the life of God, or they have been made alive in Christ and a partaker of the Spirit of holiness.

I am finding more and more that deception is entering into the minds of believers. They are being led astray from the simplicity of devotion to Christ. They have departed from the doctrine conforming to godliness (I Timothy 6:3). Worldly philosophy, and carnal reasoning is everywhere encroaching into the life of the church.

I have sought to clearly teach the nuts and bolts of the gospel. I would recommend the book *Overcoming Addiction by the Spirit of Christ*. Although the title refers to addiction, this book is really a basic exposition on the gospel of salvation. It describes the path by which all the children of God are called to overcome sin, Satan, and the world.

Many Christians in reading this book find that the basics of the gospel are set forth in a way that they

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have never considered or understood before. Understanding what is written will reveal the error of those who espouse that there is any commonality between a Christian who has been born again of the Spirit of Christ and a person of another faith, including a Jew. We are not all “people of faith.”

Satan has a plan to merge all religions into one. He is even now promoting this mindset of all religions containing “people of faith.” If you read the teachings of Freemasonry, or the Rosicrucian beliefs, or even examine the trend of the Roman Catholic Church to be the gathering point of all religions, you will see where things are heading. The following links provide resources for further study into these matters:

Freemasonry - The Spirit of Babylon:
<http://www.heart4god.ws/id546.htm>

Deconstructing Babel - Part 2:
<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2008/10/deconstructing-babel-part-2.html>

Are you discerning the subtle encroachment of this trend into evangelical Christianity? Have you noted its pressure upon your own life? These things will continue to increase until those who stand firm, declaring that there is no other name than Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah, given under heaven by which men must be saved will be hated by all men on account of their testimony. Already I can discern the tide of opinion rising against those who maintain this confession.

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Charles Haddon Spurgeon - Bible Devotion

"Thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation."

— [Psalm 91:9](#)

The Israelites in the wilderness were continually exposed to change. Whenever the pillar stayed its motion, the tents were pitched; but to-morrow, ere the morning sun had risen, the trumpet sounded, the ark was in motion, and the fiery, cloudy pillar was leading the way through the narrow defiles of the mountain, up the hillside, or along the arid waste of the wilderness. They had scarcely time to rest a little before they heard the sound of "Away! this is not your rest;

you must still be onward journeying towards Canaan!" They were never long in one place. Even wells and palm trees could not detain them. Yet they had an abiding home in their God, His cloudy pillar was their roof-tree, and its flame by night their household fire. They must go onward from place to place, continually changing, never having time to settle, and to say, "Now we are secure; in this place we shall dwell." "Yet," says Moses, "though we are always changing, Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place throughout all generations." The Christian knows no change with regard to God. He may be rich to-day and

poor to-morrow; he may be sickly to-day and well to-morrow; he may be in happiness to-day, to-morrow he may be distressed—but there is no change with regard to his relationship to God. If He loved me yesterday, He loves me to-day. My unmoving mansion of rest is my blessed Lord. Let prospects be blighted; let hopes be blasted; let joy be withered; let mildews destroy everything; I have lost nothing of what I have in God. He is "my strong habitation whereunto I can continually resort." I am a pilgrim in the world, but at home in my God. In the earth I wander, but in God I dwell in a quiet habitation.