

# Light Brings Salt

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## Iron Range Bible Church

*Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*  
*"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."*



### Does the Bible make a Difference in Your Life?

Dr. Chuck Wood

For some time I have been aware of a particular spirit in conservative evangelicalism (which I believe includes fundamentalism). It has always troubled me, and recently, it has come to the point where I find it deeply disturbing and even a cause of grief. The problem is the general ignorance of, unconcern for, or even deliberate disdain for the Word of God. I have been absolutely astonished (and somewhat devastated) by the degree to which the introduction of the teaching of the Bible brings negative reaction in our circles.

The responses to the insertion of Scripture into a discussion of polity, the making of decisions, or the elusive determination of the Lord's will seem to range all the way from general disinterest to outright hostility. Some seem, in the attitudes revealed by their responses, to say, "What difference does the Bible make?" Others plainly appear to say, "Would you mind leaving the Bible out of this? This is a decision for our particular ministry or personal lives, and the Bible really has nothing to do with it."

Extreme? I don't think so. Although I have had a fairly good idea of some of the causes of this "Bible allergy," I have been somewhat baffled by the extent and the intensity of it. I recently listened to a sermon, however, which provided some of the missing pieces in my own mind. The speaker listed a number of

reasons for the general aversion to the introduction of Biblical teaching.

1) One reason the Bible is so resisted is the fact that it often tends to disagree with personal opinions, etc. We live in a highly opinionated age, and we have a large segment of society that has been taught not only to question authority but also to resist it. Make no mistake - the Bible is authoritative and demanding. That cuts across the grain of modern autonomy and self-determination.

2) Another reason is our dependence on the opinions of others to determine our own. We are firmly convinced that we are right (whether or not we actually are right), and we tend to plunge ahead. If we are not so convinced (or even fairly sure we are wrong), we look to others to authenticate or affirm our wrong thinking or acting. Somehow the fact that others are doing it or think it is ok to do so makes us more comfortable in plunging ahead when we are not sure we are doing the right thing or even rather sure that we are doing the wrong thing.

3) We seek and cite results as proof that the Bible is irrelevant to our situation, ambiguous about our concern, or even wrong in a particular area. We know someone who did what the Bible condemns, and it all came out "well." What we don't know is how it really came out (we only know what we can see on the surface), and in many instances, the final count is not in, so it is impossible to determine the final outcome. Remember, "Results don't determine truth!"

4) We are logical, intelligent people. Therefore, we know beyond the shadow of a doubt that many things in Scripture have to

be wrong (or at least a "bubble-left-of-center") because what it teaches simply is not logical. It is not logical that the pathway to the top begins on the down slope of humility (see Philippians 2). Thus it cannot be true, and we are at liberty to shamelessly promote ourselves and to allow ambition to dominate our lives. It doesn't make sense that the "last shall be first," so we push our way to the head of the line without regard to the damage done to those we have shoved aside.

5) Repeatedly over the years I have heard people say, in one form or another, that what the Bible says is merely one of many options open to them. The Bible is recognized as the "good book," but it is seen as simply providing one of many options open to us as we make decisions or determine the courses of life. The Bible, however, is not a book of options or even something given to us "on approval." We are not free to pick and choose between a wide variety of authoritative sources, and we don't have the option of reading Scripture selectively.

6) A final item, although there is likely another list at least as long as this one. We tend to make allowances for "good behavior" and assume that God operates in the same way. We come to a Scripture that limits the exercise of our free will or gets in the way of our self-advancement, and we reason thus: I have been a good boy in a whole bunch of areas and have racked up more "good boy" points than you can imagine. Therefore, I won't be in big trouble if I do this particular thing my way instead of God's because I have built up a reservoir of "good deeds." God amply demonstrates in several places in the Old Testament that He has no interest in substitute obedience (not even a very good sheep in place of the very best). I don't know of a single Scriptural reference where it can be proved that God allowed someone *to get away with disobedience* because he had done so much good in other areas.

Call this a "rant" if you wish, but it is not. It is born out of deep concern for a growing attitude toward the Word of God and those who seek to proclaim it. More than a little of

what I write is based on fifty-two years of study of Scripture. You are perfectly free to disagree with what I say, but if I am dealing with a Biblical principle, your ignoring what I say is inadequate. If I am wrong, prove it directly from Scripture, otherwise, "take heed to yourself and to the doctrine." 

## 'Jesus was a Palestinian,' claims U.S. history text

A new study reveals that if Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wanted to criticize the nation of Israel before the United Nations, he could use American public school textbooks to do so. "It is shocking to find the kind of misinformation we discovered in American textbooks and supplemental materials being used by schools in every state in the country," said Dr. Gary Tobin, president of the Institute for Jewish & Community Research and a co-author of the study.

"Elected officials at every level should investigate how these offensive passages are creeping into our textbooks. Presenting false information in the classroom undermines the very foundation of the American educational system," he said.

Tobin teamed with institute research associate Dennis Ybarra for the study, titled, "The Trouble with Textbooks: Distorting History and Religion." The five-year effort, which looked at 28 prominent history, geography and social studies textbooks, reveals American public school students are being loaded up with indoctrination about Christianity, Judaism, Islam and the Middle East, to the cost of Christianity and Judaism and the benefit of Islam.

The new study by the IJCR found more than 500 erroneous passages in the books, including one textbook that charged that early Jewish civilization contributed little to the arts and sciences.

An excerpt from "World Civilizations," published by Thomson Wadsworth, for

example, said, "Excepting the Old Testament's poetry, the Jews produced very little of note in any of the art forms ... There is no record of any important [early] Jewish contributions to the sciences."

The level of outrageousness grew: "Christianity was started by a young Palestinian named Jesus," claims "The World," published by Scott Foresman.

They also found that Judaism and Christianity are treated as matters of believing, while Islam is treated as a matter of fact. In the glossary of "World History: Continuity and Change," the Ten Commandments are described as, "Moral laws Moses claimed to have received from the Hebrew God Yahweh on Mount Sinai." But the same glossary states as fact the Quran is a, "Holy Book of Islam containing revelations received by Muhammad from God." 

### From the Desk of Dr. Vanhetloo

\* Cogitating is thinking. Sometimes seriously, sometimes frivolously. From email received recently, here are items which merit serious consideration.

\* The most frequent objection of those who fear the presence of believers in government is, "What right do you have to impose your morals on us?" Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council tells them, "The same right you have to impose your lack of morals on us." Someone's values will always be reflected in public policy. Almost every government policy decision is a value judgment. In this postmodern world, where moral relativism is the philosophy of choice, these value judgments are often based on the conditions of the moment rather than objective, transcendent, biblical truth. This is where the two sides diverge.

Bible-believing Christians believe there is absolute truth, a view that was held by all Christians until the turn of the twentieth century. Belief in objective truth is the first step in developing a Christian worldview. A Christian worldview is based on the belief that

there is a personal God who is directly involved in the activities of man and who authoritatively communicates to man through His Word and the Holy Spirit. – B. M.

\* One of the preeminent voices to emerge in defense of absolute truth shortly after the turn of the century was a Princeton Theological Seminary professor and Presbyterian minister, J. Grescham Machen, who would later participate in a split from the Presbyterian Church over the rejection of biblical orthodoxy. In his definitive work, *Christianity and Liberalism*, Machen said that liberalism was not only theologically wrong but was not connected at all to true Christianity. "What the liberal theologian has retained after abandoning to the enemy one Christian doctrine after another is not Christianity at all, but a religion which is so entirely different from Christianity as to belong in a different category." Machen felt that the argument was no longer between two views of Christianity, conservative and liberal, but rather a conflict between two religions. Liberalism is "a type of faith and practice that is anti-Christian to the core," Machen wrote.

\* Unfortunately, a growing number of Christians are influenced more by the popular culture than by Scripture in establishing their worldview. Many do not consistently view the world from a biblical perspective. In late 2003, Christian sociologist and pollster George Barna conducted a fairly extensive poll on the prevalence of a "biblical or Christian worldview" in the United States. He defined biblical worldview as being based upon a foundation of eight beliefs:

1. Absolute moral truths exist.
2. The Bible defines these absolute moral truths.
3. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life during His ministry on the earth.
4. God created the universe and continues to rule it today. He is omnipotent and omniscient.
5. Salvation is a gift from God. It cannot be earned through good works or behavior.
6. Satan is a real living entity.

7. Christians have an obligation to share the gospel with the unsaved.
8. The Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.

What did he find? Only 4 % of the total population of American adults have a biblical worldview. The fact that only 9 % of born-again Christians have a biblical worldview was almost beyond belief. 📖

## America Cries, "Give us a King!"

By Jan Markell

There is a story in II Samuel 8 where we see Israel demanding a king. God was not sufficient for them, so they asked for a "real king." **They got an evil one -- Saul.**

America has been in a similar mood. We want a "king" to solve our many problems starting with the economy. So Israel said to Samuel, "Now appoint a king to lead us such as all the other nations have" (II Samuel 8:5). But all the other nations had pagan kings.

God lamented to Samuel and said, "Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

Two years ago came a charismatic man named Barack Obama who was engulfed in a cult-like atmosphere. **Some actually called him "the messiah." Shrines were built to him. A Web site said, "Obama is god." There has been a messianic fervor, adoration and a worship-like atmosphere surrounding him.** At some rallies people fainted at the sight of him. Young children recorded on YouTube sang songs to him stating he would change the world.

**The intrigue with this man is global.**

*Newsweek* magazine had a headline recently titled, "**The World Hopes for its First President.**" Imagine, a world president! *Newsweek* states, "In country after country, polls show a record-high fascination with the outcome of the U.S. elections."

*Newsweek* basically said "The international audience really cared less about John McCain, Sarah Palin, or Joe Biden. Somewhere along the road to the White House, Obama became the world's candidate."

Even for those with proper eschatology this sounds alarming. **But on the positive side, a**

**barometer as to how late the hour is has been revealed.** *Newsweek* continues, "Obama is a 21st century man with whom the whole world can identify."

**In Obama's speech in Berlin, Obama said that we are all citizens of the world! Talk about a message on globalism. Will he establish the one-world system?**

**America longs for a king to take care of us.** We demanded change and change we will get! There are YouTube clips of people jumping for joy that Obama will take care of them. As one says, "Obama will pay my mortgage and buy my gas." The entitlement mentality reigns and it is cross-cultural.

As Jack Kinsella says in his recent *Omega Intelligence Digest*, "In October capitalism passed away after a long illness." He is right. **Socialism now is very appealing and being implemented in America. The government is buying up many industries and turning them over to a new Socialist president!**

None of the candidates who ran in "Campaign 2008" can save us! Only the Lord God of Israel can do that! But as in Samuel's day, God is not good enough for America. Thus, I believe He has allowed "strong delusion" to filter across the nation and around the world. It says in Isaiah 66:4, "I will choose their delusions." Thus, all has happened for a reason. God removes kings and establishes kings for His own purposes. (Daniel 2:21)

Here's what we do know for sure. In spite of troubling and even perilous times, the Bible still has all the answers, the Holy Spirit is still active, God will still inhabit the praises of His people, there will still be room at the cross, Jesus will still save the lost, and Jesus will still return to the holy city of Jerusalem to establish perfect government: A Theocracy for 1000 years.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end...."(Isaiah 9:6-7). 📖